

## **ALTOONA 09-13-16 CAC Meeting Minutes**

### **Minutes of CAC Meeting 9/13/2016**

#### Attendees

Lisa Phipps	Grace Johanssen	Mary Anne Cowfer
Charles Lansberry	Stacey Mellott	Robert Cowfer
Melissa Kruse	Denise Verchimak	Joe Fagnani
Larry Hanelly	Joe Strechay	Celia Fagnani
Tresella Green	Anne Strollo	Mark Harshberger
Lorie Silvestre	Beth Becher	Julie Patowsky
Tabytha Carr	Josie Dively	
Colleen Woodring	Jeanne Danison	

MaryAnne Cowfer welcomed everyone to the meeting. She stated that she is working with the PA Rehabilitation Council regarding assistance with increasing membership.

Denise Verchimak, Director of BVRS and Joe Strechay, Director of BBVS, introduced themselves and presented information on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Joe stressed the importance of involvement with CAC's to ensure our services are being utilized by all those in need.

WIOA emphasizes:

- (1) Transition. This requires State VR agencies to make pre employment transition services (PETS available to all students with disabilities. There are more than 104,000 students of transition age in PA.
- (2) Employer Engagement. Providing training and technical assistance to employers regarding the employment of individuals with disabilities, including disability awareness, and the requirements of the ADA and other employment laws. OVR has hired Business Service Representative staff to work on this.
- (3) Competitive integrated employment. Section 511. Limitation on sub-minimum wage employment. VR program services are designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities, including individuals with the most significant disabilities, to achieve competitive integrated employment through customized employment, supported employment, and other individualized services. They must make same wage in same environment as non-disabled individuals.

- (4) Limitations on Use of Subminimum Wage. Requires VR to be involved with any transitioning student to evaluate their potential for competitive integrated employment prior to them being permitted to enter a sub minimum wage environment.
- (5) Interagency Collaboration. Woven throughout WIOA. Improved collaboration for work force partners including a combined plan to provide a unified front for assisting individuals with disabilities.

Assistive Technology update. At can be bought when it is an auxiliary aid to help access programming for PETS services. OVR can pay for equipment, but not the training on equipment.

Question: Which offices offer Business Services Representatives?

Answer: Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Wilkes-Barre, Altoona

Question: Will there be required certification for Access Technology trainers?

Answer: Will utilize a civil service list, look at experience and education.

Question: Is there still a pre-test that Visually Impaired persons must take?

Answer: The Civil Service process has not changed regarding persons with disabilities. They require the individual to meet the qualifications prior to taking the civil service test. Joe asked for anyone who has experienced difficulties accessing the civil service web-site and testing process to send him the specifics.

Question: So you have to qualify for the position before you can take the test?

Answer: Yes

PETS Questions and Feedback:

Group services rate needs increased, \$7.50 per hour is not acceptable. Some school only have 5 students.

Student stipend of \$10.15 per hour is in excess of what most jobs are actually paying.

Student stipend/payroll cost is excessive.

Could agency get a pot of money/grant for stipends?

-Cannot give a block of money

- Innovation and Expansion Grants are being awarded
- grants are too much money to spend on small amount of people
- Can apply for smaller grant to serve only 15 students.

Is AT training available?

PETS funding cannot pay for AT training. However, VR funds can be utilized for AT training for OVR customers.

Question regarding certifications for job coaching services.

A new Supported Employment policy was passed by the State Board; the state is allowing 6 months to implement it due to the amount of changes.

Provider service rates were established based on regional areas. Discussion on rates and how an agency can be paid a different rate based on the county the customer lives in. Example Blair County and Cambria County have different rates.

The minutes from the June meeting were reviewed and approved.

Member News:

Julie Patowsky - Community College updates:

Will be able to file FASFA beginning in October, based on prior-prior year. Ex: File for 2017 based on 2015 income. They are holding information sessions.

American Sign Language Levels I & II will be offered this year.

Joe Fagnani - CIL:

Looking into significant expansions, cannot go into detail at this time.

OVR:

Activities regarding National Disability Awareness Month. Our staff will be participating at a Community Resource Fair at the Jaffa Mosque on 10/11/2016. BVRS and BBVS will be present, if CAC has the flyer completed, OVR will include it with their information.

The Altoona Curve is working with Altoona Area High School, will go to the school and talk about the hiring process for seasonal employees.

Geisinger Health Services is building a new customer service representative phone line in State College. Hoping to hire 25 people with disabilities to work at this call center.

NDEAM, Business Services Reps are going to have a workshop in Huntingdon on Assistive Technology, PIATT will be presenting.

Developing a relationship with UPMC, Project Power, in collaboration with the CareerLink.

Chick-fil-A approached OVR regarding hiring students with disabilities.

There was a discussion on increasing CAC membership:

Put CAC flyers in OVR closure letters.

Counselors can handout CAC flyers when completing intakes.

Move CAC meeting site around to give opportunity for other individuals to attend.

OVR asked for suggestions of what CAC members would be interested in as far as presentations by OVR. There were no suggestions.

Motion to adjourn, seconded.

CAC meetings for 2016: March 8, June 14, September 13 and December 13