



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Minutes for October 16, from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Lynn Heitz (P)
Twana Jones (P)
Susan Tomasic (P)

Christie Cyktor (P)
Jessica Keogh (P)
William Paz De Melo (NP)

Sylenthia Dent-Siebenlist (P)
Julianna Rodrigues (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: James Whitonis, Chris Harbert, Audrey O'Connor, Cheryl Novak, Denise Verchimak

Project Staff Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Lynn Heitz called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM after quorum was established.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

MOTION was made by Ms. Susan Tomasic to approve today's agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Julianna Rodrigues seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

OVR Updates

Discussion/Review of State Plan Amendments

- Ms. Audrey O'Connor and Ms. Cheryl Novak shared that the Financial Needs Test (FNT) policy will be delayed after receiving public comment. FNT policy workgroup will be reconvening on October 23, 2024, and an additional public comment period will be held in mid-November. PaRC members Mr. William Paz De Melo and Ms. Passle Helminski are a part of the FNT workgroup. Council members and the public

will have an opportunity to review the changes prior to Council and Board voting on the policy now planned for February and March 2025.

- Mr. James Whitonis and Ms. Denise Verchimak reported that the public comment period for the amendments to the State Plan for sections A, F, and G began last week and the first of two sessions was held today. Another session is scheduled for tomorrow October 17, 2024, and public comments will be accepted until October 28, 2024, at the following resource account email address ra-liovr-pol-rev-fb@pa.gov. Changes to definitions for the categories of Most Significant Disability (MSD), Significant Disability (SD), and all other Disabilities (D) are included on the OVR website and provided during the public sessions. 4 functional limitations are needed for a person to be considered MSD. Previously only 3 were required and the change is intended to provide a more accurate representation implemented for the Order of Selection (OOS). When the OOS is reinstated individuals categorized as MSD will be served and individuals categorized within the other 2 categories will be placed on a waitlist beginning February 7, 2024. This will not impact customers that are already in the system prior to February 7th, and they will continue with their planned services.

Discussion/Review of Revised Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Year 1 Interim Report

- Ms. Lynn Heitz inquired about where the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) data is acquired for Blind, Low Vision, and Deaf Blind individuals and would like to know what community groups were surveyed. Mr. Whitonis reported that some of that information is provided by OVR and will inquire who has been surveyed.

Continued Discussion of Bender Consulting Project Regarding Customer Satisfaction Surveys Goal and Objectives

- The Goal and Objectives for a potential project in collaboration with Bender Consulting were reviewed and include the following.
 - Goal:** Implementation of OVR Customer Satisfaction Surveys that improve customer engagement and that are accessible to all customers.
 - Objectives:**
 1. Investigate potential 3rd party entities with capabilities to successfully complete customer satisfaction surveys.
 2. Develop protocols for entity to achieve based on PaRC recommendations.
 3. Develop questions that the entity would ask customers.
 4. Ensure the entity can conduct surveys in multiple languages, use sign language, video relay, Assistive Technology, etc.
- These goals and objectives were reviewed by Executive Committee in September 2024 and moved forward for Full Council review for the November 13, 2024, Full Council meeting. Committee members explained that there were no additions or changes required.

- Mr. Chris Harbert suggested that members may want to look into if a vendor already does similar work or completes surveys with the Commonwealth as this vendor may be able to duplicate or provide similar services to complete a project more easily with OVR.

Schedule next meeting

- Members present confirmed availability for November 18, 2024, from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM. Staff was asked to poll any members not present during today's meeting.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Susan Tomasic adjourn. Ms. Julianna Rodrigues seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.