



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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## **OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Minutes for April 23, 2025, 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM**

### **Members Present (P)**

### **Not Present (NP)**

Lynn Heitz (P)

Julia Barol (P)

Christie Cyktor (P)

Sylenthia Dent-Siebenlist (P)

Cindy Duch (NP)

Twana Jones (NP)

Julianna Rodrigues (P)

Susan Tomasic (P)

William Paz De Melo (NP)

**Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present:** James Whitonis, Audrey O'Connor, Cheryl Novak, Ralph Roach

**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 10:00 AM after quorum was established.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions.

### **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES**

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

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **OVR Updates**

#### **Review and Discussion of Description (a) for the VR Services Portion of the 2024-2028 PA WIOA Combined State Plan 2 Year Modification (2026-2027)**

- Members reviewed Description (a) of the State Plan and requested the following changes for the 2 Year Modification of the Plan.
  - Remove the OVR Customer Satisfaction Survey from the list of sources used to develop PaRC's recommendations. Ms. Cheryl Novak explained that there

would not be an opportunity to add the survey back to the list of sources until the next State Plan which would begin in 2028. Members agreed to have the survey removed from the list.

- Add the most recent edition of the PaRC Annual Report (Fiscal Year 2023-2024) to the list of sources used.
- Replace the commendation listed with the following language, The Council commends the PA Client Assistance Program for their continuing support of customers seeking appropriate services from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Remove recommendation #3 that is regarding recovery efforts from the many impacts of COVID-19.
- Remove part 4 of recommendation #4 regarding Innovation & Expansion grant opportunities to entities interested in providing specific blindness skills training to Pre-ETS and BBVS customers enrolled in VR services.
- Ms. Lynn Heitz inquired if information could be provided on recommendation #2 regarding mental health service outreach over the last 12 months. Ms. Heitz inquired if information could be provided on recommendation #4 regarding cross training between the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (BVRs) and the Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS). Ms. Heitz inquired if information could be shared on recommendation #5 part 3 regarding how often trainings are completed with providers. Ms. Heitz inquired if information could be shared on recommendation #6 Customer Satisfaction Surveys regarding the use of summer interns to increase response rates of the satisfaction surveys. Ms. Heitz inquired when the Council will be provided with specific financial reports for each BVRs and BBVS District Office. Mr. James Whitonis, OVR explained that he will review the information from today's meeting with OVR leadership to update OVR's responses. Ms. Heitz requested PaRC personnel compile the questions from today's meeting in preparation for the upcoming Full Council meeting. Mr. Whitonis explained that a special session could be held to review OVR's responses and review any updates to Description (c) Goals, Priorities, and Strategies.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol for approval of the discussed changes for the 2 Year Modification of the VR Services Portion of the 2024-2028 PA WIOA Combined State Plan. Ms. Julianna Rodrigues seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

### **Schedule next meeting**

- Members agreed to schedule the next Committee meeting for May 22, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

## **Adjourn**

***MOTION was made by Ms. Christie Cyktor to adjourn. Ms. Susan Tomasic seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.***