



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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## **OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Minutes for January 22, 2026, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

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

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

Lynn Heitz (P)  
Cindy Duch (NP)  
Susan Tomasic (P)

Julia Barol (P)  
Passle Helminski (P)  
Michelle Mitchell (NP)

Christie Cyktor (P)  
Julianna Rodrigues (P)

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

**Project Staff Present:** Chris Todd

**Guests Present:** Leslie Sampson

### **CALL TO ORDER**

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Lynn Heitz called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM after a quorum was established.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

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

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

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **Access to current OVR policies relating to the dissemination of services to customers**

- Members requested that the committee be provided with OVR policies for review. Ms. Cheryl Novak and Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, explained that they will work with the committee to share specific policy documents with the Council. Many policy

documents are available on the Commonwealth's website and others are being reviewed to ensure accessibility prior to being placed on the website.

- Ms. Leslie Sampson shared concerns about OVR services she received, communication with OVR staff, and policy requests she made regarding OVR's small business services. Members and OVR staff provided information and clarifications about the OVR policy approval processes, procedures, requirements, and information about opportunities provided to the public to submit comments on OVR policies. Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, provided contact information to directly work with Ms. Sampson to address concerns that were shared during the meeting. Ms. Sampson shared concerns regarding a request for PaRC committee past meeting minutes. Information was provided about PaRC meeting minutes located on the Council's website. A request for multiple years of archived meeting minutes from 2020 on will require additional work to retrieve and may be subject to additional costs. Members explained that during PaRC committee meetings members are required to cover the discussion items included within the posted agendas and that there is Public Comment time reserved during PaRC's committee meetings for the public to share feedback.

### **OVR policy updates**

- Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, shared that there are currently no OVR policies slated for review process with the Council or Board for the upcoming February or March meetings.

### **OVR updates on status of texting-based Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

- Members inquired about updates regarding the new texting-based survey process currently being developed. Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, shared that the text format survey questions were previously shared with the committee in October 2025 and include 6 short questions. Those questions were also forwarded to the committee just prior to the start of the meeting. The new surveys will be sent to customers via text following the release planned for Friday, January 23, 2026. Texts will be sent 15 days after the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) is signed. Customers will receive a follow-up survey on the anniversary date of the original signed IPE if the case is in open status. The text messages sent to customers will share a generated link with the customer on record.
- Members explained the importance of ensuring the surveys are provided in multiple formats for full accessibility including email and mail. Members also suggested testing the texting process with customers in case they may not have a cell phone, their phone number changes and emphasized the importance of following universal design for communications. Members requested inviting OVR staff to the next committee meeting to share additional updates and a demo on this new process.

### **Public Comment**

- Ms. Leslie Sampson provided the following Public Comment, “I cannot challenge secret, outdated, or unauthenticated policies for me to have a meaningful ability to challenge agency determinations. I have emailed the OVR policy team and my VR counselors and I have been given 1 authenticated policy dated 2016.” Ms. Sampson also shared additional concerns about policies, documents, and services.
- Ms. Cheryl Novak, OVR, shared that the 2016 policy mentioned is the current policy in place. Additional information regarding OVR policy processes was shared.

### **Schedule next meeting**

- Members agreed to meet again on February 18, 2026, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

### **Adjourn**

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