



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (717) 737-0158 Fax: (888) 524-9282

Email: parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org Website: parehabilitationcouncil.org

OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Minutes for February 18, 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 (P)

Christie Cyktor (NP)
Julianna Rodrigues (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: James Whitonis, Chris Harbert

Project Staff Present: Chris Todd

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. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Providing current OVR policies in place for the provision of services to customers

- Members inquired about their request to be provided with OVR policies as they are considered public documents. Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, explained that OVR has continued to work to ensure policy documents are made accessible and shared the following link to current policies that are available on the Commonwealth's website. <https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dli/resources/compliance-laws-and-regulations/ovr-policies>

- Mr. Harbert will inquire with leadership regarding the request to share additional policy documents with the committee and agreed to provide timely follow-up.

Provision of low vision services

- Members inquired whether there have been any changes to OVR's Low Vision Policy after being made aware of concerns regarding the process for customers of the Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) scheduling and being provided reimbursement for expenses related to assessments and evaluations. Members also shared a concern about the timeliness of a customer being provided with an Individual Plan of Employment (IPE) by the York BBVS District Office. Members requested an update from the Full Council meeting discussion regarding questions and follow up on the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) policies. Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, will inform leadership regarding these concerns and follow up with the committee.

Texting-based Customer Satisfaction Surveys demonstration

- Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR, provided an update regarding the texting-based survey being developed by OVR and CWDS. The notification of the Customer Satisfaction Survey would be sent via text message and may include links and additional options for the customer to opt in. A demonstration of the system is not yet available, and they will look into providing the committee with this presentation at an upcoming meeting or when appropriate to share with the Council.

Training for counselors regarding Customer Satisfaction Surveys

- Members explained the importance of customers being informed by their VR counselors about receiving Customer Satisfaction Surveys and ensuring training is provided to counselors in this process. Mr. Harbert agreed to pass along member feedback regarding counselor training and the survey process.
- Mr. Jim Whitonis, OVR, provided an update regarding the State Plan as the performance indicators were received yesterday with an overall rate of 106.4 percent showing that OVR has met or exceeded all goals. Additional updates were provided regarding the Public Comment period, and the next steps and timeline for the Combined State Plan in collaboration with Workforce Development and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

Schedule next meeting

- Members requested staff poll for the next meeting to be held in March 2026.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.