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MEMORANDUM

TO: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

FROM: Leah Compagnone-Bolt, Director

DATE: August 31, 2026

SUBJECT: Provider Communication Expectations, Service Delivery Guidance and Program Updates

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is committed to strengthening partnerships with service providers and ensuring consistent, effective service delivery to support successful participant outcomes. As part of ongoing efforts to improve program operations, accountability and communication, DVR is providing the following updates and expectations related to provider communications, service delivery, documentation requirements and program procedures.

Communications

To promote successful participant outcomes, consistency, accountability and efficient communication, DVR is establishing the following communication expectations:

- DVR Counselors are the primary point of contact for all participant-specific questions, concerns, documentation needs and service coordination. All participant-related communications must be directed to the assigned DVR Counselor.
- DVR Provider Managers are responsible for technical assistance, including AWARE support, provider operational questions and process clarification. Technical assistance requests should be directed to VRProviderAdministrator@vr.fldoe.org.
- DVR Field Provider Liaisons will no longer serve as mediators between providers and field staff. Their focus will shift to site monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities, regulatory oversight and promoting statewide consistency. While DVR values its partnership with service providers, it remains our shared responsibility to ensure participants receive high-quality services, tools and resources that address barriers and support the achievement of competitive integrated employment (CIE).
- DVR Policy questions should be directed to the assigned VR Counselor. The VR Counselor will collaborate with the appropriate resources to provide guidance.
- DVR Communications-related questions should be directed to VRCommunications@vr.fldoe.org.

Leah Compagnone-Bolt
Director
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Referrals and Authorizations

Once a provider receives a referral/authorization from DVR to provide an employment service for a DVR participant, the provider's primary responsibility is to deliver the authorized service necessary to support the individual's progress toward the individual's chosen employment goal.

Successful outcomes require ongoing communication and collaboration between the provider, the DVR participant and the assigned DVR Counselor. Providers should communicate case progress, barriers, concerns, setbacks and any changes that may impact successful service delivery. DVR Counselors are committed to partnering with providers to ensure participants continue to make meaningful progress toward their employment goals.

If a provider has concerns regarding an individual's progress or believes a case requires reassessment, those concerns must be communicated promptly to the DVR Counselor to support the best interests of the participant.

Service providers must not promise or guarantee VR services to participants. All services are determined based on the individual's assessed needs and their approved employment goal. If, during service delivery, a provider identifies an additional service that may be necessary to support the participant's progress toward the employment goal, the provider should document the recommendation and supporting documentation in the client case notes. The recommendation will be reviewed by the DVR Counselor, who is responsible for determining whether the service is appropriate and whether an authorization can be issued. No additional services should be represented to the participant as approved or available by the provider.

Additionally, when a provider refers an individual to DVR, there is no guarantee that services will ultimately be authorized with the referring provider. Federal regulations require DVR counselors to adhere to the informed choice process, ensuring that each individual has the opportunity to select from qualified service providers based on their preferences, needs and informed decision-making. As a result, service authorization decisions cannot be predetermined based solely on a referral source.

Case Notes

Participant case notes provided in the Vendor Portal should reflect a clear, concise and complete history of relevant activities and communications for the DVR Counselor, providing an accurate record of the individual's progress throughout the life of the case.

Marketing Materials and Brochures

To protect an individual's right to informed choice pursuant to 34 CFR Part 361, providers will no longer be permitted to distribute brochures, flyers or solicit their businesses directly through DVR area offices. DVR participants will be afforded the right to informed choice through a fair, transparent process.

Approved marketing language will be forthcoming following approval by the Florida Department of Education's leadership. This standardized language will allow approved service providers to communicate their approved status and availability to stakeholders and customers. Soliciting DVR federal funds on business websites is strictly prohibited and all non-compliance will be enforced.

DVR Communications, along with DVR's monitoring unit, will routinely monitor provider websites to ensure compliance with Florida Department of Education and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation standards. Non-compliance will be addressed accordingly.

Employment Specialist Minimum Qualifications

The Division has received an influx of feedback regarding the additional language that was added to the employment specialist (ES) application. While the minimum requirements remained the same, we are now asking applicants to demonstrate experience in workforce development services such as job coaching, job placement, etc., to continue to improve our workforce program. Pursuant to Part 2 CFR 200.318, DVR must ensure that service providers are appropriately trained and qualified to provide the services that the DVR is responsible for reporting to the federal government.

While the Division continues to evaluate the current qualification requirements and identify opportunities to strengthen service quality, the Vendor Registration Unit will continue using the existing qualification methodology. This approach helps ensure that DVR participants have access to highly qualified providers who can effectively support them in achieving CIE.

As these important changes take effect, DVR remains committed to strengthening partnerships, improving program operations and most importantly, enhancing competitive integrated employment outcomes for the individuals we serve. These efforts are designed to ensure our collective work continues to support individuals in achieving competitive integrated employment, long-term independence and self-sufficiency.

Thank you for your continued dedication, commitment and support in making Florida a national leader in the workforce for individuals with disabilities.

Sincerely,

Leah Compagnone-Bolt
Director, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation