Summary of the Rule

Department: **Department of Career Education**
Division: **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division**

New Rule: Department of Career Education, Rehabilitation Services Division FY 2015 State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Program

Effective Date: October 1, 2014

Summary:

This is the federally required Federal Fiscal Year 2015 State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Supported Employment Services Program in the state of Arkansas required in order to receive federal funding. The State Plan is required by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education.

The federal regulation and/or statute citation:
Section 101(a)(1)(A), of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended – 29 U.S.C. § 701 et. seq. And Workforce Investment Act of 1998 - 20 U.S.C. § 9201 et. seq.34 CFR 364.

Arkansas Department of Career Education
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division

Fiscal Year 2015 State Plan
For the Vocational Rehabilitation Services and
Supported Employment Services Programs

DRAFT

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program Arkansas Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2015 (Submitted FY 2014)

Preprint - Section 1: State Certifications

1.1. The **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act [2].

1.2. As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the **Arkansas Rehabilitation Services** [3] agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan [4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations [5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.

1.3. As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan [6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations [7], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan.
Yes

1.4. The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement.
Yes

1.5. The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement.
Yes

1.6. All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law.
Yes

1.7. The (enter title of state officer below)
Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
... has the authority under state law to receive, hold and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.
Yes

1.8. The (enter title of state officer below)...
Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services
... has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.
Yes

1.9. The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.
Yes

State Plan Certified By
As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed? **Yes**

Name of Signatory **Jonathan Bibb**

Title of Signatory **Interim Commissioner, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services**

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) **June 27, 2014**

Assurances Certified By
N/A

At the request of RSA, the designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s), in addition to those contained within Section 2 through 8 below, in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY 2014.

No
Comments:
Signed?
Name of Signatory
Title of Signatory
Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy)

*The signatory of the assurance with the authority to execute and submit the State Plan will maintain a signed copy of the assurance(s) with the signed State Plan.

Section 1 Footnotes
[1] Public Law 93 112, as amended by Public Laws 93 516, 95 602, 98 221, 99 506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.
[2] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.
[3] All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.
[4] No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.
[5] Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85 and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.
[6] No funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.
[7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Preprint - Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))

(a) Conduct of public meetings.
The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.

(b) Notice requirements.
The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council.

(c) Special consultation requirements.
The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)

(a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The state submits only those policies, procedures or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.

(c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:

1. comprehensive system of personnel development;
2. assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
3. innovation and expansion activities; and
4. other updates of information required under Title I, Part B, or Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act that are requested by the commissioner.

(d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Rehabilitation Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

(a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B, of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

(b) The Supported Employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(a) Designated state agency.

1. There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.

2. The designated state agency is a state agency that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. (Option B was not selected/Option A was selected).

3. In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

1. If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section, the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division or unit that:

   A. is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
   B. has a full-time director;
   C. has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
   D. is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.

2. The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is:
   <u>Arkansas Rehabilitation Services</u>

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

(a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission. (Option A was not selected/Option B was selected.)

(b) The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17 and the designated state unit.

1. jointly with the State Rehabilitation Council develops, agrees to and reviews annually state goals and priorities and jointly submits to the commissioner annual reports of progress in accordance with the provisions of Section 101(a)(15) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.29 and subsection 4.11 of this

State Plan;

2. regularly consults with the State Rehabilitation Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of state policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;

3. includes in the State Plan and in any revision to the State Plan a summary of input provided by the State Rehabilitation Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the council described in Section 105©(5) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction described in Section 105©(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4), and other reports prepared by the council and the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations, including explanations for rejecting any input or recommendation; and

4. transmits to the council:

   A. all plans, reports and other information required under 34 CFR 361 to be submitted to the commissioner;
   B. all policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel in carrying out this State Plan and its supplement; and
   C. copies of due process hearing decisions issued under 34 CFR 361.57, which are transmitted in such a manner as to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential.

(c) If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

(a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;

(b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(d) the director of the Client Assistance Program; and

(e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.

4.4 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state or, if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. **No**

If "Yes", the designated state agency:

(a) ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and

(b) develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with the State Plan.

4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. **No**

If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

(a) a description of the nature and scope of the joint program;

(b) the services to be provided under the joint program;

(c) the respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and

(d) the share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

X This agency is not requesting a waiver of statewideness.

(a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.

(b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:

1. nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization or individual;

2. services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and

3. state, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b)(3) a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:

   A. identification of the types of services to be provided;
   B. written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
   C. written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
   D. written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24)(B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system. The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide work force investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.
Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

1. cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide work force investment system;

2. coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;

3. establishment of cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,

4. efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

1. Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.

2. The State Plan description must:

   A. Provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and

   B. include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:

      i. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;

      ii. transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

      iii. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and

      iv. procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.
The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.

1. There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations. **No**

2. If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act:

   A. strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
   B. procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
   C. provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (b))

(a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state

rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

1. Qualified personnel needs.

   A. The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;

   B. The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and

   C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in five years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

2. Personnel development.

   A. A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;

   B. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and

   C. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) Personnel standards.

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

1. Standards that are consistent with any national- or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.

2. To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the state plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the time lines for taking each step.

3. The written plan required by subparagraph ©(2) describes the following:

   A. specific strategies for retraining, recruiting and hiring personnel;

   B. the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph ©(1);

   C. procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and

   D. the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) Staff development.

Policies, procedures and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

1. A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement and rehabilitation technology.

2. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) Personnel to address individual communication needs.

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.

(Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

1. Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every three years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a council). The assessment describes:

   A. The rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

      i. individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;

      ii. individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and

      iii. individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system.

   B. The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

2. For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

1. number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan;

2. number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this

State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and

3. costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) Goals and priorities.

1. Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

2. The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.

3. Order of selection.
   If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, Attachment 4.11(c)(3):

   A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;

   B. provides a justification for the order; and

   C. identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

4. Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds.
   Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(d) Strategies.

1. Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:

   A. the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;

   B. outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;

C. as applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing or improving community rehabilitation programs;

D. strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and

E. strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

2. Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:

A. address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);

B. support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the plan; and

C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

1. The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.

2. Attachment 4.11(e)(2):

A. provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;

B. identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;

C. describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;

D. assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and

E. provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

(a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:

1. development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and

2. support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).

(b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.

(c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

(a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.

(b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

Preprint - Section 5: Administration of the Provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

(a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. Yes

(b) If No:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.

2. Attachment 4.11(c)(3):

   A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;

   B. provides a justification for the order of selection; and

   C. identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

3. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

(a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.

(b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:

1. assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;

2. counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act;

3. referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;

4. job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;

5. rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices; and

6. post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.

(c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:

1. progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;

2. an immediate job placement; or

3. provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.

(d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Rehabilitation Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in

paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

(a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, and is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.

(b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals or, as appropriate, their representatives are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

(a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:

1. who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or

2. whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.

(b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for two years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative) to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.

(c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.

(d) The individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation and, through signed acknowledgement, attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

(a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.

(b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

(c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.
The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.

(b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.
Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Preprint - Section 6: Program Administration

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

6.3 Quality, scope and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.

6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B, of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 7: Financial Administration

7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

7.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

(a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.

(b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B, are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.

(c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 8: Provision of Supported Employment Services

8.1 Scope of supported employment services. (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))

(a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).

(b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.

(c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

8.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))

(a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.

(b) The individualized plan for employment:

1. specifies the supported employment services to be provided;

2. describes the expected extended services needed; and

3. identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

(c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

At tachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated State Unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

Training was provided to the State Rehabilitation Council by the TACE on the roles and responsibilities of the SRC during the September 2013 quarterly meeting. The SRC met each quarter and reviewed the agency's service planning and goals. The Business Relations Program Manager provided an update to the SRC about the BR program. No input or recommendation from the SRC was rejected by ARS. The following initiatives were implemented in collaboration with the SRC analysis and guidance.

- ACTI rehabilitation center renovations
- ARS Alternative Finance Program
- ARS Budget
- ARS Business Leadership Network development plan
- ARS Expos
- Business Relations Representative job placement activities
- Comprehensive System of Personnel Development and CRC training
- VR State Plan

Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

Identify the types of services to be provided by the program for which the waiver of statewideness is requested.

The waiver request should also include:

- a written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the designated state unit the non-federal share of funds;
- a written assurance that designated state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect;
- a written assurance that all state plan requirements will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

Not applicable to ARS.

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

ARS collaborates and coordinates services with federal, state and local agencies that contribute to the vocational rehabilitation and independent living of Arkansans with disabilities. ARS cooperates with agencies in carrying out activities including planning and coordinating services to people with disabilities in order to build capacity in communities, improve the quality and quantity of services, and avoid duplication of services. Collaborating agencies include:

- Arkansas Department of General Education, Special Education – Transition
- Arkansas Governor's Employment First Taskforce
- Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission
- AgrAbility Project
- Centers for Independent Living
- Community Rehabilitation Programs
- Developmental Disability Providers
- DHS - Division of Aging and Adult Services
- DHS - Working Disabled Medicaid Program
- DHS - Division of Behavioral Health Services
- DHS - Division of Developmental Disabilities
- Supported Employment Vendors
- Social Security Administration Ticket to Work
- Spinal Cord Commission

ARS maintains an active presence on numerous councils and committees, including:

- Arkansas Interagency Transition Partnership
- Arkansas Liver Transplant Support Group
- Arkansas Workforce Investment Board
- Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council
- Governor's Taskforce on Integrated Services and Supported Housing
- Interagency Steering Committee on Integrated Employment
- Mental Health Planning and Advisory Council
- SoundStARt
- The Arkansas Independent Living Council
- The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury Task Force
- Vision Quest: Infusing Integrated Employment into Medicaid Waiver
- Youth Leadership Forum

ARS has no cooperative agreements with programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture, or State use contracting programs.

Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education Officials

- Describe the designated state unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.

- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to:

    - consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
    - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
    - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
    - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

ARS maintains interagency agreements with the AR Department of Education-Special Education (ADE-SPED) and provides transition services to students in public schools. ARS maintains an interagency agreement with the AR Department of Higher Education (ADHE) with the objective of seamless provision of vocational rehabilitation services and access to higher education. The parties agree to participate in technical assistance and in-service training to assist educational agencies in planning. ARS, ADE-Special Education and ADHE agree to coordinate services to ensure timely and appropriate supports and services are provided to eligible individuals. ARS Transition policy requires ARS counselors to engage school personnel to generate referrals of students to ARS and to develop an IPE for each student determined eligible. ADE is financially responsible for secondary education and ARS is responsible for taking applications, determining eligibility and providing VR services to those determined eligible for transition services. ARS participates in the state level AR Interagency Transition Partnership (AITP). AITP is a task-force made up of representatives of state agencies, including ARS, DHS-Division of Services for the Blind, AR Department of Higher Education, Special Education-Transition, AR Workforce Investment Board, DHS-Division of Behavioral Health Services and parent advocates. Cooperative agreements on Transition have been developed with 108 of the 303 high schools in Arkansas. ARS completed an updated interagency agreement on Transition with ADE, ACE and ADHE. ARS also implemented post-secondary (IHE) agreements with all public colleges and universities within the state of Arkansas.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

ARS has cooperative agreements with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) throughout the state. ARS and representatives from CRPs developed and implemented standard procedures for the referral process and outcome indicators resulting in a fee for service schedule for individuals served by CRPs.

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and
- extended services.

Evidence of Collaboration regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

ARS maintains written cooperative agreements with all private non-profit agencies in the state that provide supported employment (SE) services and extended services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are ARS consumers. All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS agree in writing to provide extended services for the consumer as long as he/she remains employed. ARS completed an updated and enhanced service provision SE agreement with Developmental Disabilities Services designed to streamline SE services and produce more effective outcomes for consumers.

Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

1. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

   - the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
   - the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
   - projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Introduction

A comprehensive and well-managed personnel development program is critical to Arkansas Rehabilitation Services' efforts to expand and enhance customer services. The program is essential in order for individuals with disabilities to receive quality rehabilitation services from qualified professional personnel. This is accomplished through a strong commitment from ARS to provide and make available training programs to all staff, especially those providing direct services to ARS consumers. ARS maintains training records for all staff. The records are updated on an annual basis and include training request records and completed training documentation. The training documentation for each employee specifies the training source, course name, number of credit hours, and attendance date. Professional qualifications for ARS counselors are monitored to ensure that certification is current and to track educational progress for those achieving certification. The table below lists the projected total number of personnel, by category needed by agency to provide vocation rehabilitation services in the state in five (5) years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of individuals expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
1	VR Counselors	90	6	10
2	District Managers	10	2	2
3	ACTI Counselors	5	0	2
4	Interpreters	3	1	2
5	Support Staff	72	4	10

2. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

    - a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
    - the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
    - the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

As part of the CSPD plan, ARS maintains and annually updates a list of higher education institutions in Arkansas that prepare rehabilitation professionals. ARS monitors students enrolled in vocational rehabilitation and related programs at each of the institutions by category, the number of students graduating the previous year, and certification or licensure. ARS works with the institutions to provide internship and practicum opportunities for students. Universities are notified when job openings become available within the agency.

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	University of Arkansas Fayetteville (UAF) MRC	32	1	26	16
2	University of Arkansas Little Rock (UALR) MRC	51	0	0	25
3	Arkansas State University (ASU) MRC	13	2	1	5
4	UAF, UALR & ASU Combined Part-Time	90	0	4	1
5	Full-Time & Part-Time Student totals combined.	186	3	31	47

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the Coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

ARS has implemented a plan to address the needs for qualified personnel. The plan places emphasis on rehabilitation counselors. The agency worked with the Arkansas Legislature, the state Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) to address the requirements of

CSPD for ARS staff. The Arkansas Legislature authorized special language to ARS for a waiver of the Continuing Professional Education policy that prohibits state agencies from providing college courses to employees. The special language allows ARS to provide college level coursework in degree programs designed to result in an MRC for eligible employees selected by the agency. The special language assists the agency in assuring that qualified professional personnel are in place to provide quality rehabilitation services to disabled Arkansans.

During the 2009 Arkansas Legislative Session, ARS received permission to institute a graduated pay incentive to counselors who progress toward an MRC/CRC. The pay increase aids ARS in recruitment efforts to obtain the best candidates for present and future needs. Additionally ARS continues to utilize the Student Loan Forgiveness incentive program, which has resulted in enhanced counselor recruitment. Under this program newly hired VR counselors can be provided up to $2,000 per year repayment to the student loan creditor. Counselors who participate in the Student Loan Forgiveness Program agree to continue working for the agency for two years in return for each year of repayment.

The ARS Staff Development section reviews the current training levels of all personnel. Required standards, evaluation of training needs, and timeline goals are established. Staff Development develops and monitors agency policy and procedure for training and retaining qualified personnel to meet standards. All ARS staff receives an annual personnel performance evaluation from their immediate supervisor. The evaluation is reviewed and approved by their respective senior manager. The evaluation considers training each employee needs to complete to fulfill his/her job duties in providing services to our consumers.

The Human Resources section tracks critical positions within the agency that need to be filled. Individuals from minority backgrounds and those with disabilities are actively recruited and hired. Deputy Chief of Field Services tracks VR counselors' progress in meeting CSPD standards on an annual basis. The Deputy Chief of Field Services makes sure that established timelines are met within the agency's CSPD plan.

ARS works closely with the universities to provide internship and practicum opportunities for students. The universities are notified when job openings become available within the agency. Students are recruited on an ongoing basis from the university and college programs within the state and encouraged to seek employment with ARS upon graduation. ARS recruitment efforts have been very productive. ARS maintains staff liaisons with the university programs including the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville (UAF), the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR), and Arkansas State University (ASU). This gives the agency first-hand information regarding graduates from the MRC programs in the state.

The agency actively recruits minorities and students with disabilities from the universities. ARS also has a liaison with the undergraduate programs at Arkansas Tech University and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, designated as a historical black university. Students, including minorities, are encouraged to join professional rehabilitation organizations such as the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) and the National Association of Multicultural Rehabilitation Concerns (NAMRC). The rehabilitation professional organizations provide scholarship opportunities to individuals, including minorities, which major in the field of rehabilitation.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and

2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

Policies and procedures are reviewed in all areas of personnel standards to ensure that all personnel employed by ARS including professionals and paraprofessionals receive appropriate and adequate training. Because there is no standard established by the State of Arkansas, ARS bases its personnel standards for VR counselors on the degree needed to meet the national CRC requirements through CRCC. ARS requires a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field, as defined by the CRCC eligibility criteria, and to be CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. The Deputy Chief of Field Services reviews the current training levels of all personnel. Required standards, evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. The Deputy Chief of Field Services is responsible for ensuring that all VR counselors and support staff receive training on the DSU's policies and procedures and consequently meet the required standards set out therein.

Time Period by Which Existing State Unit Will Meet the Standards

ARS has experienced high turnover rates due to retirement and other attrition of administrative staff, VR counselors and senior management personnel. ARS set an effective date of October 1, 2010 that all rehabilitation counselor positions should meet the standard of having a Master's degree and are either CRC certified, or eligible to sit for CRC certification. Those who do not meet the standard have a prescribed time period to achieve the designation. Rehabilitation counselors who do not meet the standard are cross-graded in position. The

counselors who do not meet CSPD requirements and as a result are cross-graded must be working towards meeting the standard. Counselors working towards meeting standard will continue to perform counseling functions.

Counselors who do not meet CSPD requirements and are not working towards meeting the standard will perform limited case management functions. Counselors who are not working towards meeting standards will not be authorized to perform the following functions that must be initiated and completed by the District Manager or their designee CRC level counselor: a) A determination that the applicant requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment, i.e., eligibility determination and Certification of Eligibility and/or Certificate of Ineligibility. b) Development and approval of all components of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) including annual review. c) Amendments to IPE. d) Determination of a satisfactory outcome that the employment outcome is satisfactory and the individual is performing well in the employment, i.e., Closure Amendment.

During the 2009 Biennial Arkansas Legislative Session a new pay plan was adopted by the State for vocational rehabilitation counselors. Effective July 1, 2009, all ARS vocational rehabilitation counselors are reclassified as either grade level C117 Rehabilitation Counselor or C119 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. The C119 Certified Rehabilitation Counselor classification requires CRC certification. According to state Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requirements, ARS now advertises for a C117 position with the preferred qualification being a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and CRC certification. ARS was able to establish an internal salary grid with the approval of OPM. This grid allows the agency to hire VR counselors in the counselor C117 series under different salary ranges based on qualification and certification. The grid also allows for cost of living rates for counselors in the C119 classification. State hiring policy currently authorized by OPM allows ARS to consider graduates with Bachelor's degrees in rehabilitation for C117 positions when there is no suitable applicant with a Master's degree. A condition of employment is that the person will seek and obtain a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling within four years of employment and will meet CRC certification or become eligible to sit for CRC certification within one year of receipt of the Master's degree.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

Staff Development monitors the current training levels of all personnel. Required standards, evaluation of training needs and timelines are established. Opportunities for training are provided to all staff via the Annual ARA Training Conference, Special Topics Training, and Administrative Assistants Training Conference. Training is also available through the State Interagency Training Calendar, CRC training, CEU training for purposes of certification or licensure in the professions, webinars, and training provided internally by the agency in case management and compliance with policy and procedure. Internal policy and procedure are developed and monitored for the agency in terms of hiring, training, or retraining personnel to meet standards set within the agency. The universities are utilized to provide training opportunities. ARS ensures all personnel receive

appropriate and adequate continuing education. The agency provides for employees to attend classes, seminars, and conferences, and disseminates information through newsletters, in-service training, workshops, and training conferences. The field program conducts district meetings in their respective districts where the latest techniques for providing services to our consumers are discussed. An annual spring ARA Training Conference includes training on VR issues, case management, policy, procedure, assistive technology, and best practices. Continuing Education Credits and CRC Certification Credits are provided at the training conference. The Deputy Chief of Field Services provides best practice training throughout the state. The Deputy Chief of Field Services also provides a seminar for CRC candidates and best practice training in periodic Special Topics Training.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated state unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

ARS provides access and when possible continues to employ personnel who communicate in the native languages of applicants and consumers with limited English speaking ability. ARS also provides special communication modes such as interpreters, captioned videos, specialized telecommunications services, and materials for individuals who are deaf and deaf-blind, as well as other specialized media systems for individuals with disabilities. Staff with language skills are hired and special equipment is provided. Interpreters are provided for the deaf or hearing impaired. Sign language skills are included as a minimum qualification for positions providing services to persons who are deaf or hearing impaired. Arkansas continues to experience a large influx of Spanish speaking citizens and these citizens request our services. ARS promotes hiring of staff with Spanish language skills and provides access to native language interpreters. The agency provides assistance to our employees in order to help them accommodate consumer needs. ARS requested and the Arkansas General Assembly granted permission to the agency to compensate staff who demonstrate relevant foreign language skills at enhanced levels when using their skill set for the benefit of VR consumers.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

ARS provides training opportunities for staff in transition. Staff participates in the Interagency Transition Partnership that includes State Department of Education, Special Education-Transition. ARS staff participates in regional transition coordination meetings. ARS co-sponsors a statewide annual Transition Summit. The annual Transition Summit has been very helpful in bringing all the stakeholders together that work with the high schools in transitioning disabled students from school to the world of work. ARS has restructured the field program and added counselor positions in order to effectively utilize personnel who are working with our partners in the region and area schools. ARS also sponsors transition staff participation in national training conferences.

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.
- Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

The most recent Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) for Arkansas was completed in May 2013. ARS contracted with Dan Hopkins & Associates, Inc. who worked collaboratively with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), key stakeholders and ARS to complete a CSNA of rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities in the State. A mixed-methods approach was used to collect data and information including focus groups with stakeholders, service providers and consumers; structured interviews with ARS leadership and managers; rehabilitation counselor and consumer surveys; District Manager surveys; and a focus group with ACTI staff and administrators. Secondary data sources include the American Community Survey (ACS), current population surveys, and employment data from the Department of Labor and RSA-911 data. Additionally, various agency materials and study results were reviewed.

Implications and Recommendations for Planning

The following recommendations are derived from the current Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment competed May 2013.

1. Public Relations, Marketing, Information, Outreach and Referrals

   Consumer Survey data and 911 data are consistent in identifying referral sources - up to 75% are from educational institutions and self-referral. Focus Group participants, family members, and most stakeholders report having limited knowledge or understanding about the nature and scope of ARS services. Thus, there remains a critical need to educate the community and work with programs and agencies to educate and facilitate the access and referral of appropriate individuals with disabilities to ARS. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicates that both ARS Field Services and ACTI would benefit from enhanced public relations and marketing that would result in an increase in employment outcomes.

   The Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicates the unserved and underserved include individuals with disabilities from the Hispanic community and minorities due to higher incidence of disability. The results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicate the needs for services to the unserved and underserved include additional and enhanced job placement services; assistance with education, training and tuition. The needs for improved service delivery from ARS include improved information, outreach and marketing, and additional staff and training concerning diverse cultures and language.

2. Job Development, Placement and Employment

   An analysis of data from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicates needs concerning Job-Development, Placement, and Employment. The 911 data reveals that of the consumers that received services in FY 2012 (4,027), 65.06% (2,620) achieved an employment outcome. Of the consumers surveyed, 30% reported being employed and of those, two-thirds were employed full-time and one-third employed part time. Consumers responded that the service not provided or that was insufficient was "employment, finding a job". The Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicated that the ARS Business Relations Representative initiative be enhanced and facilitated through joint training and by clarification of roles, responsibilities and preferred processes for jointly working with consumers.

3. Transition Services/Program

   ARS employs two approaches to Transition services – the traditional model utilized by the VR Counselors throughout the State and an enriched and specialized model. The specialized model began as a pilot program and currently operates in six school districts in Crittenden, Jefferson, Pulaski, and Washington counties. The specialized model locates a Transition Counselor in each high school and is designed to provide an in-depth, "hands-on" approach. The Comprehensive Needs Assessment reveals some issues and concerns that are being raised regarding both the specialized model and the traditional transition program. One of the obvious limitations of the specialized model is that it only works with a small number of schools and that outcomes vary from school to school; in addition, they are only as productive as the individual ARS staff person is able to make them. Another critical issue affecting both programs is the varying responses encountered in the different school districts. Some school districts and individual schools within a district have reflected reluctance to utilizing the transition or VR Counselors. The level of acceptance by VR Counselors and managers is dependent upon the effectiveness of the Transition Counselor and the number of referrals to ARS Counselors. The DSU has placed a greater emphasis on the importance of transition services both in the field and at ACTI.

4. Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)

   Counselors and District Managers statewide express the need for CRPs to expand and improve services. Agency leadership and Counselors stated that the CRPs are not providing services that are relevant to the current rehabilitation needs. In particular, CRPs continue to provide workshop services while more career development, job readiness, job development and placement are needed. There are significant geographical areas in which CRPs or specialized services available for people with disabilities are not available. While ARS has assigned a Rehabilitation Counselor to serve as a liaison to the CRPs in their geographical area, it is recommended that the District Manager assume a more active role with the CRPs for purposes of developing a more positive working relationship, further assessing the need to improve and/or expand services, and for determining if additional CRPs or community based programs need to be expanded. The Arkansas Career and Training Institute (ACTI) meets the definition of a publicly owned CRP and is utilized statewide by people with disabilities who are consumers of ARS vocational rehabilitation services. ACTI is a comprehensive rehabilitation center owned and operated by ARS since 1960. The 2013 Comprehensive Needs Assessment devoted a separate section to ACTI covered in item 7 below.

5. Workforce Investment System

   The Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicates that the working relationship between ARS and the state's Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) varies at different levels with the two agencies and by ARS district. Some districts report a positive and productive working relationship while others state they "are

working on it." All districts have a Counselor assigned to each of the WIB's One Stop Centers. Many report that there is not a place for the Counselor to conduct confidential interviews for purposes of taking referrals and gathering intake information. Conversely, ARS senior leadership evidences a close and symbiotic working relationship with the state's WIB and its parent agency the Arkansas Department of Workforce Service. ARS leadership should work with WIB leadership to ensure that the communication and facilitation of working models be fostered at the District Manager and Counselor levels. When consideration is given to the potential value of an expanded working relationship between the two systems, one can project a greater role of the WIS in the areas of referral to ARS, increased availability of training opportunities for individuals with disabilities, the enhancement of job placement, and the improvement in the quality of employment outcomes.

6. Training and Continuing Education

The Assessment indicates a need for training and continuing education for personnel in most if not all ARS agency positions. The large number of relatively newly employed Counselors, Business Representatives, ACTI personnel, support personnel, and newly appointed District Managers is a significant factor. Given the new approach to job development and placement with the addition of Business Representatives to work in this area indicates a need for training regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Counselor and Business Representative in this new strategy especially in the areas of cooperation and collaboration working with joint caseloads. The ACTI Focus Group discussions identified the need for training of the more recently employed personnel. Data and information obtained from the surveys from Counselors, District Managers, and the ACTI Focus Group indicate an urgent need for training, orientation and other strategies to respond to the need for information and guidance regarding the working relationships between the Institute and Field Program. Results from the District Managers Survey identify the need of some managers for training and guidance regarding policy and procedures; management skills; and, supervision and personnel evaluation. Another area of training for this group includes approaches to community and resource development as this represents a significant need in developing and maintaining adequate services and programs to serve agency consumers. The two areas of training needs that were consistently identified by the Rehabilitation Counselors were training in the areas of the IT System and Assistive Technology.

7. Arkansas Career Training Institute

The current FY 2013 Comprehensive Needs Assessment (Assessment) addressed the requirement of the State Plan to identify the need to develop, establish and improve community rehabilitation programs within the state, and specifically addressed the ARS Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI). ACTI is a comprehensive rehabilitation center owned and operated by ARS since 1960. The buildings and grounds of the ACTI campus were deeded to the State of Arkansas and ARS through the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) program to be used for educational purposes. The ACTI campus has 29 buildings with approximately 415,000 of usable square footage on 20.89 acres. The Center serves between 500-600 ARS consumers a year.

The Assessment recommends that ARS and ACTI administrators and leadership review the current and future role and function of ACTI in the provision of services designed to assist in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. It is suggested that special consideration be given to: 1.) the emerging trends in disability populations; 2.) the unserved and underserved disability groups; 3.) the lack of service resources available throughout the state, especially in rural areas; 4.) the absence of local services and programs; 5.) the large number of geographical areas without CRPs; 6.) the limited services and trained personnel in CRPs; 7.) the emerging ethnic minority populations; and 8.) the expansion and addition of

services and programs designed to assist in the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Another recommendation is that a task force representative of a cross section of ARS personnel be convened to analyze current and future needs and to provide input regarding the role and function of ACTI and the nature and scope of services provided. Further recommendations are that ARS develop short-term and long-range maintenance plans for ACTI. That ACTI consider retaining the services of an architectural consultant to improve the efficiency and ability to expedite the process of addressing infrastructural concerns. And finally, the FY 2013 Assessment recommends that ARS continue to work with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to address the identified infrastructure issues and needs to ensure the safety of students and staff at ACTI and to acquire the federal property and facilities available for the expansion and improvement of services to individuals with disabilities served at ACTI.

In response to correspondence from ARS a letter dated July 3, 2012 was received from RSA that provided technical assistance regarding the allowability of certain costs under the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program for renovations and upgrades to the ARS Arkansas Career Technical Institute (ACTI) facility and to the Jonathan Cheatham Army Reserve Center (armory) in Hot Springs, Arkansas. ACTI is a state-owned and operated community rehabilitation program (CRP), as defined at 34 CFR 361.5(b)(9). All consumers served on the ACTI campus, whether residential or day students are eligible VR consumers and transition students. ARS proposed to spend approximately $3.5 million in upgrades to the ACTI water system infrastructure and approximately $1.5 million in renovations and upgrades to the armory, about $800,000 of which would be used to bring the building into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

ARS was informed that the upgrades to the water system infrastructure would constitute a service to groups under the VR program, as permitted by section 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), and would constitute an establishment, development, or improvement of a facility for a CRP, as defined at 34 CFR 361.5(b)(18) and are therefore allowable. As a service to groups, the federal share of these expenditures would be 78.7 percent and the non-federal share would be 21.3 percent (34 CFR 361.60). Regarding the armory, ARS was informed that the renovations and upgrades to the armory, would constitute a service to groups under the VR program, as permitted by section 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), and would constitute an establishment, development, or improvement of a facility for a CRP, as defined at 34 CFR 361.5(b)(18). As a service to groups, the federal share of the non-ADA expenditures would be 78.7 percent and the non-federal share would be 21.3 percent (34 CFR 361.60). The ADA expenditures - installation of the elevator and the entryway renovation - would constitute the removal of architectural barriers in a State VR office or State-operated rehabilitation facility. As such, these renovations would meet the definition of an administrative cost under the VR program pursuant to 34 CFR 361.5(b)(2)(vii). Therefore, these renovations would be an allowable administrative cost under the VR program at 78.7 percent of the total cost in Federal VR funds for these upgrades.

RSA further advised that in order to complete the water and armory projects, ARS must first satisfy specific pre-planning requirements:

a. ARS must have written policies that set forth the nature and scope of services that will be provided to groups of individuals with disabilities, and the criteria that will be used to determine the provision of those services (34 CFR 361.49(b)(1)); and
b. Establishment activities must have been identified as a need in ARS' triennial needs assessment and ARS must have included in its State Plan a discussion of the strategies it would use to meet that need

(section 101(a)(15)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act 34 CFR 361.29).

The FY 2013 State Plan and the June 2012 Update to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment that addressed the ACTI projects were submitted July 2012 and were approved effective 10/01/2012. ARS Establishment Policy was submitted to RSA 8/15/2012 and promulgation was completed December 21, 2012. These activities completed all pre-planning activities.

On October 11, 2012 a suspended concrete wall roof fascia panel weighing approximately 800 pounds fell 20 feet from Building 55 at the ARS Arkansas Career Technical Institute (ACTI) facility in Hot Springs. Subsequent architectural and engineering reports and inspections from the Arkansas Building Authority revealed that similar suspended concrete wall panels attached to the roofs of Buildings 53, 54 and 55 were to be at significant risk of failing. The instability of these suspended panels is reported to pose a significant hazard to ACTI's students, ARS' staff and visitors. Subsequently the buildings were evacuated and staff and student activities temporarily relocated. The estimated cost of the repairs to the concrete fascia for the three buildings is $788,000.

In response to request for technical assistance, ARS received a letter dated February 13, 2013 in which RSA determined that the proposed costs are allowable under the VR program as administrative costs. Hence, the applicable federal share for the proposed panel removal and build-back process for Buildings 53, 54 and 55 will be 78.7 percent.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services completed the concrete fascia supports for buildings 53, 54, and 55. As recommended in the state needs assessment, Arkansas Rehabilitation Services undertook efforts to repair the water system and fire safety needs at the ACTI campus in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Fire safety repairs include installing fire sprinklers in the Russell Building and Ross Hall, replacement of the stand pipe system to ensure crucial water pressure, and fire hydrant replacement. Renovation of the Jonathan Cheatham USARC facility to ensure accessibility and expansion of training classes to meet national accreditation requirements of the Council on Occupational Education (COE) are currently underway. Both projects are estimated to be completed by the 2nd quarter of FY 2015. Future repairs are anticipated in order to ensure the campus is a safe learning and working environment.

Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

- Identify the number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services.
- Identify the number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under:
    - Part B of Title I;
    - Part B of Title VI;
    - each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- Identify the cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services is not under an Order of Selection for FY 2015. In Arkansas, out of a total of 1,753,433 non-institutionalized population aged 18 to 64, there are 255,498 individuals with disabilities. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey.

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
Title I, Part B	Title I	20,900,000	14,500	1,441
Title VI, Part B	Title VI	264,000	180	1,466
Totals		21,640,000	14,680	$1,441

Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
    - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
    - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
    - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

ARS and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) have developed and agreed upon goals and priorities. The goals were reviewed and revised by ARS and the SRC. The goals are based on the Performance Standards and Indicators and the most recent CSNA completed May 2013. Other available information was utilized including RSA recommendations from the most recent 107 on-site review. The priorities include the goal of meeting or exceeding the standards and indicators.

The goals and priorities for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services for FY 2015 are as follows:

Goal 1: Meet or exceed benchmarks for performance on the state standards and indicators.

Goal 2: ARS will reserve and use a portion of the funds under Sec. 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the state plan and for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.

Goal 3: Increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) services to consumers by providing technical assistance to CRPs and other vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

Goal 4: Improve public relations, marketing, information, outreach and referral as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. Public relations and marketing activities will be initiated to increase awareness of VR services and increase employment outcomes.

Goal 5: Expand and improve job development, placement and employment as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment which will increase employment outcomes and improve performance on the Standards and Indicators.

Goal 6: Expand and improve the transition services program as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and the RSA 107 Monitoring Review.

Goal 7: Develop and improve Community Rehabilitation Programs including establishment activities at the ARS Arkansas Career and Training Institute (ACTI) as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The establishment activities will improve services at ACTI and result in an increase in employment outcomes for ARS.

Goal 8: Enhance collaboration and partnerships with the Workforce Investment System as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Goal 9: Improve training and continuing education as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Goal 10: Develop and improve agency Information Technology (IT) to enhance services to individuals with disabilities.

Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.
- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

This agency is not operating under an Order of Selection.

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

Expanding and enriching the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers through technical assistance to vendors and to increase the number of referrals for SE services is the DSU's targeted result via the distribution of Title VI Part B funds. The strategy employs technical assistance and key incentives to SE providers, including CRPs that are designed to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis on proven and innovative supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes. The strategy involves an increased focus on SE outcomes that result in a competitive wage in an integrated employment setting that culminates in a career outcome in contrast to the traditional sheltered employment that sometimes results in short term employment. ARS has developed interagency agreements with the state agencies that serve individuals with the most significant disabilities including Developmental Disabilities Services, Special Education, Behavioral Health and the Division of Services for the Blind. The agreement places an emphasis on competitive employment as a desirable outcome for individuals with the most significant disabilities including those with developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses. ARS is developing additional certification criteria for SE service providers. The criteria include updated requirements for certification and training for job coaches. ARS increased fee schedules and negotiated contracts for services with providers in an attempt to increase service providers, and incentives to service providers, to increase employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.

ARS negotiated a cooperative agreement with ACCESS Special Needs School and national Project Search. ACCESS provides staff for the Arkansas Project Search. The Project was designed to serve 12 students through Supported Employment in intensive training with internships located at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The success rate for employment outcomes in other Project Search locations is as high as 70%. The first cohort of students completed the Project Search program on May 30, 2014. At completion, ten of the 11 students were employed. This program will be continued in FY 2015.

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)).

Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

Strategy

- ARS will integrate the use of CSAVR's Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) to connect VR clients with business partners. The senior leaders are currently recruiting businesses to list employment opportunities in the TAP.

- ARS will develop performance-based contracts with supportive employment providers to increase the percentage of supportive employment closures.

- ARS will implement the marketing plan to increase awareness of ARS VR services to both private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators.

- ARS will continue to collaborate with other state agencies and organizations to address disability related issues as they arise.

- ARS will work with other interested parties and organizations to educate employers and businesses regarding disability issues in order to create greater employment opportunities.

- ARS will acquire and make necessary improvements to the Army Reserve Building adjacent to ACTI in order to improve VR services offered at ACTI and to increase employment outcomes.

- The improvements to the water system and former Reserve Building at ACTI will create a safer and more functional learning and living environment. The upgrades to the ACTI campus will increase accessibility and availability of VR services, improve the level of accreditation and licensing merited by ACTI's VR programming and result in a larger number of successful employment outcomes for ARS' VR consumers.

Identify how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process; and describe how assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.

Strategy

- Field Services will utilize the Assistive Technology@Work (AT@Work) program through all field offices to assess and utilize assistive technology equipment for consumers during FY 2015 on a statewide basis.

- ARS will continue to collaborate and provide referrals to the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), the state assistive technology grant, to increase awareness and utility of assistive technology on a statewide basis.

Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities; and what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

Strategy

- ARS is implementing the marketing plan to increase awareness of ARS VR services to both private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The marketing plan provides outreach activities to individuals from minority backgrounds, individuals with the most significant disabilities, and others who are unserved or underserved. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators.

- The agency has implemented the ARS Expo program. The Expos are marketing and outreach activities that inform Arkansas citizens about the availability of ARS services. The Expos provide outreach to individuals from minority backgrounds, individuals with the most significant disabilities, and others who are unserved or underserved. The Expos take place in communities across the state and will continue from last year to cover the entire state. The Expos include representatives from Field Services, the ACTI Rehabilitation Center, Special Programs, and every service component of ARS. Employers are included to participate in mini-job fair activities. Media informs the community about Expo activities and the availability of food and refreshments. Activities are extended beyond the regular work-day hours in order to serve individuals after work hours.

- ARS will provide training to improve outreach activities to unserved and underserved minority populations in order to improve performance on standards and indicators, particularly Standard 2.1 Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate.

If applicable, identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Strategy

- The 2013 Comprehensive Needs Assessment Update indicates that upgrades and improvements are necessary at the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI), a publicly owned CRP and an integral part of the ARS service delivery system. ARS will implement replacement of the ACTI water system and relocation of the Automotive and Cosmetology vocational training areas to the former Army Reserve Building at 200 Reserve St., Hot Springs, Arkansas. The former Reserve Building will be acquired through the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) process at no cost, but improvements and upgrades will be necessary. The upgrades and improvements to ACTI water system and the Armory Building will be completed as services to groups of individuals with disabilities to establish, develop or improve a CRP as outlined in the July 3, 2012 letter from RSA. This is with the exception of installation of an elevator and entryway renovations to the former Army Reserve Building which are removal of

architectural barriers under ADA and meet the definition of an administrative cost under the VR program as outlined in the July 3, 2012 letter from RSA. ARS will also install a fire sprinkler system in building 1 and Ross Hall for the purpose of complying with state fire codes and property insurance requirements. This project will continue through FY 2015.

- ARS will work with a design professional to develop a long-term critical maintenance plan for the ACTI campus. This was identified as a need in the 2013 Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Describe strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.

Strategy

- ARS will provide training and performance goals to the DSU's VR Counselors and Business Relations Representatives to improve outreach activities to unserved and underserved minority populations in order to improve performance on standards and indicators, particularly Standard 2.1 Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate.

- ARS will increase the number of Business Relations Representatives placement specialists employed within the state from 14 to 16 as part of a broad agency commitment to increasing employment/career outcomes for FY 2015.

- ARS will make a concentrated effort through recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors, including bi-lingual VR counselors to fill vacancies to meet or exceed past performance in employment outcomes from FY 2014.

- ARS will increase performance in Supported Employment with emphasis on serving an increased number of individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities.

- In response to the RSA 107 Monitoring, ARS is in the process of improving and further developing comprehensive monitoring for CRP's including ACTI, ARS' public CRP. The monitoring instrument will establish performance indicators including increases in employment outcomes. The monitoring will evaluate if Field Services needs are met for service provision to ARS VR clients, and result in improvement in the vocational training offered in terms of training for high-wage, high-demand jobs resulting in increased employment outcomes.

Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Strategy

- ARS will integrate the use of CSAVR's Talent Acquisition Portal(TAP) to connect VR clients with business partners. The senior leaders are currently recruiting businesses to list employment opportunities in the TAP.

- ARS will collaborate with the Workforce Center staff to increase the ability of ARS staff to conduct intake interviews and take applications in a confidential manner while located at a Workforce Center site.

- ARS District Managers will conduct follow-up contacts with Workforce Managers to increase and improve working relationships and collaborative efforts.

- ARS will assist other components of the workforce system to educate employers and businesses regarding disability issues in order to create greater employment opportunities.

Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:

- achieve goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
- support innovation and expansion activities; and
- overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

Strategies to Achieve Goals and Priorities for FY 2015

Goal 1: To meet or exceed the benchmarks for state performance standards and indicators.

Strategy

- ARS will make a concentrated effort - through increased referrals, enhanced job development and placement services, and recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors to fill vacancies - to meet or exceed past performance in employment outcomes in FY 2015.

- ARS will increase performance in Supported Employment with emphasis on serving an increased number of individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. ARS will develop performance-based contracts with supportive employment providers to increase the percentage of supportive employment closures.

- ARS will provide training to improve outreach activities to unserved and underserved minority populations in order to improve performance on standards and indicators, particularly Standard 2.1 Ratio of Minority to Non-Minority Service Rate.

Goal 2: ARS will use a portion of the funds in compliance with Section 101(a)(18) for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities.

Strategy

- ARS will use a portion of the funds under Section 101(a)(18) for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.

- ARS will continue Expos across the state to provide marketing of ARS services and outreach to local communities targeting individuals with minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved.

Goal 3: Increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

Strategy

- ARS will continue to collaborate with the Developmental Disabilities Services and Behavioral Health Services Agencies to explore methods to use Medicaid Waiver and Medicaid restructuring to expand and improve SE services.

- ARS will continue to provide technical assistance and access to certification for SE providers and standards for job coaches to expand and improve SE services.

Goal 4: Improve public relations, marketing, information, outreach, and referrals.

Strategy

- ARS will continue the marketing plan to increase awareness of ARS VR services to both private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators.

- ARS will develop outreach strategies designed to improve access to VR services for the state's Hispanic residents living with a disability. Materials and information will be provided in a variety of formats for field personnel to distribute at the local community level. The materials will provide special attention to strategies designed to reach and serve a growing diverse population in the state.

- ARS Expos will provide marketing of ARS services and outreach to local communities targeting individuals with minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved.

- ARS will develop educational and informational materials designed to inform potential referral sources about the referral process and the scope of ARS services as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.

Goal 5: Improve and expand job development, placement and employment.

Strategy

- ARS will increase the number of Business Relations Representatives placement specialists employed within the state from 14 to 16 as part of a broad agency commitment to providing comprehensive career placement services to the state's VR consumers.

- A statewide advisory group will be established and composed of individuals from business and industry, counselors, job placement specialists, and other appropriate professionals to explore participating in the National Employment Team.

- The local business advisory group at ACTI will be integrated into the statewide ARS business advisory group with the goal of expanding job placement and employment outcomes.

Goal 6: Expand and improve transition services program.

Strategy

- ARS leadership will work with the State Department of Education to strengthen relationships between schools and rehabilitation district managers and counselors.

- ARS leadership will work with school districts throughout the state to facilitate and enhance the working relationship between the local high schools and local rehabilitation District Managers and counselors.

- ARS leadership will promote that all special education teachers be contacted by an ARS counselor prior to or during the junior years of students with an IEP.

- ARS leadership will promote that all students with IEP be provided eligibility determination for VR services before they graduate high school.

- The ARS Arkansas Transition Project (ATP) and the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) will continue to work to expand opportunities for young people with disabilities to participate in the five-week jointly developed pilot program – Transition Employment Program (TEP) in which students receive a week-long comprehensive assessment/evaluation, receive OSHA certification training and job readiness and soft-skill development, and three internship rotations at ACTI.

- The ARS Transition Project in partnership with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), and ACCESS Group, Inc. will work to increase the resources needed to increase the number of young adults served in the UAMS Project SEARCH site. Additionally, ARS will work to increase the number of Project SEARCH sites to other regions of the state.

- New Pharmacy Tech Program in the fall of 2014. Currently, have all prerequisites and will utilize staff pharmacist, medical personnel, and Nursing instructors to teach the course using a team approach. The program takes approximately 12 months to complete. This program offers the opportunity for students to obtain a career and certification as a pharmacy technician. The projected growth for Arkansas is 13% (Career One Stop, 2014). The program will have the capacity to train ten pharmacy techs per year.

- Expansion of OSHA ten-hour training as a weeklong stand-alone program. During a recent ARS District managers meeting the group committed to sending at least five clients per regional office to participate in the program. This will increase the total clients served at ACTI by 100.

- Incorporation of the Transitional Employment program (TEP) into summer programming at ACTI. The pilot program was initiated in July 2014 incorporating 20 high school students (Juniors) from across the state. This program includes a comprehensive vocational assessment, OSHA training/certification, participation in at least three-week long internships, and six weeks of participation in the residential and recreation at the Center.

- Creation of forklift operator license course. This is done through collaboration of the Career Readiness Program and the Construction Technology program. The forklift operator license course will last three to four weeks based on the competency of the student. The current employment projection for material

movers in Arkansas is estimated at 23,860 with a growth rate of 5% project for the near future. The median income for these occupations is $10.41 per hour (Career One Stop, 2014).

- Creation of security/beginning law enforcement training academy. The program will consist of four weeks of on-the-job training and an eight-hour certification course. This program is designed to certify participants as security officers and to serve as a foundational course for law enforcement. ARS has received interest from the Arkansas Department of Corrections for placement of graduates as correctional officer cadets. For security guards in Arkansas there are 6,260 positions. There is a projected growth of the occupation by 8% and the median income is $9.27 per hour (Career One Stop, 2014). In addition, the projected growth for Correctional Officer positions is 10% with a median income of $14.75 per hour (Career One Stop, 2014).

Goal 7: Develop and improve Community Rehabilitation Programs.

Strategy

- ARS will continue assignment of a rehabilitation counselor as a liaison to each CRP in each District.
- ARS District Managers will assume a more active role with CRPs for purposes of developing a more positive working relationship as recommended by the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
- ARS will identify the specific services needed but not currently provided by CRPs in their area including services for emerging populations and low-functioning consumers as recommended by the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.
- ARS will complete an instrument used to monitor CRPs and the ARS Arkansas Career Training Institute to ensure that Agency performance standards are met in compliance with the FY 2011 RSA On-Site Monitoring.
- ARS and ACTI administrators and leadership will review the current and future role and function of ACTI in the provision of services designed to assist in meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- A task force representative of a cross section of ARS personnel will convene to analyze current and future needs and to provide input regarding the role and function of ACTI and the nature and scope of services provided.
- ARS will develop short-term and long-range maintenance plans for ACTI.
- ACTI will retain the services of an architectural consultant to improve the efficiency and ability to expedite the process of addressing infrastructural concerns.
- The FY 2013 Comprehensive Needs Assessment recommends that ARS continues to work with the RSA to address the identified infrastructure issues and needs to ensure the safety of students and staff and to acquire the federal property and facilities available for the expansion and improvement of services and increase the number of individuals with disabilities served at ACTI.
- ARS will implement replacement of the ACTI water system; acquisition and renovations of the former Army Reserve Building at 200 Reserve St., Hot Springs, Arkansas; and complete removal and build-back

process for the concrete wall roof panel on Buildings 53, 54 and 55 at the ARS Arkansas Career Technical Institute (ACTI) facility.

- ARS will conduct an annual assessment in conjunction with the triennial needs assessment to determine the optimum adequacy of its programs and infrastructure as a state operated CRP. This includes necessary and critical upgrades to infrastructure and accessibility.

Goal 8: Enhance collaboration and partnerships with the Workforce Investment System.

Strategy

- ARS will collaborate with the Workforce Center staff to increase the ability of ARS staff to conduct intake interviews and take applications in a confidential manner while located at a Workforce Center site.

- ARS District Managers will conduct follow-up contacts with Workforce Managers to increase and improve working relationships and collaborative efforts.

- ACTI has received approval to provide testing for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services CRC candidates who are individuals with disabilities. The individuals must be VR clients. The CRC is the National Career Readiness Certificate developed by ACT. CRC is a national industry-recognized, portable, evidence-based credential that certifies essential skills needed for workplace success.

Goal 9: Enhance training and continuing education.

Strategy

- Significant training and continuing education is recommended by the Comprehensive Needs Assessment for most if not all agency personnel in a broad range of areas. ARS will review the needs identified in the Training Needs Assessment conducted by ARS Staff Development and Training.

- ARS will convene a task force as recommended in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment representing a cross section of Agency personnel to analyze the identified needs and to assist in the design of the Training and Education Plan. ARS will consider personnel from the Regional TACE program.

- Staff Development and Training will use the information from the task force proposed above to develop its in-service training proposal for subsequent years.

- ARS will develop and implement a Training and Continuing Education Plan designed to meet these needs.

Goal 10: To develop and improve agency Information Technology (IT) to enhance services to individuals with disabilities.

Strategy

- Standardization of equipment and software towards mobile and/or web based options.

- Standardization of IT policy.

- Continuous Training for staff in IT.

- Continue to pursue hiring IT staff to meet agency needs.

- ARS will integrate its core service management system with special programs and ACIT instructional programs client service tracking mechanisms for the purpose of enhanced and comprehensive wrap around services for the state's VR clients.

Strategy

4.11 (d) Outreach

Strategy

The agency has implemented the ARS Expo program. The Expos are marketing and outreach programs that inform Arkansas citizens about the availability of ARS services. The Expos provide outreach activities to individuals from minority backgrounds, individuals with the most significant disabilities, and others who are unserved or underserved. The Expos take place in communities across the state and continue from last year to cover the entire state. The Expos include representatives from Field Services, the ACTI Rehabilitation Center, Special Programs, and all services components of ARS. Employers are present for job fair activities. Media is used to inform the community about Expo activities. Activities extended beyond the regular work-day hours in order to serve individuals after work hours.

- ARS will implement the marketing plan to increase awareness of ARS VR services to both private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The marketing plan will utilize an approach of direct mail, public service announcements, video and printed materials including a format having continuity of style and color for the various components of the agency. Activities in the marketing plan include outreach to unserved and underserved populations to increase employment outcomes for those populations. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators

Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) Goals

1. Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the FY 2013 Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

   - Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
   - Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The goals and strategies from 4.11(c)(1) for FY 2013 are:

Strategies to Achieve Goals and Priorities for FY 2013

Goal 1: To meet or exceed the benchmarks for state performance standards and indicators.

Strategy

- ARS will make a concentrated effort - through increased referrals, enhanced job development and placement services, and recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors to fill vacancies - to meet or exceed past performance in employment outcomes in FY 2013.

- ARS will increase performance in Supported Employment with emphasis on serving an increased number of individuals with intellectual and cognitive disabilities.

- In July of 2012, ARS awarded a contract to a marketing firm to increase awareness of ARS VR services to private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes as needed to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators.

ARS Performance Standards and Indicators for FY 2013

Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

Performance Indicator 1.1

The data indicates that the number of individuals in Arkansas who achieved an employment outcome increased from 2,660 in FY 2012 to 2,917 in FY 2013. This meets the federal benchmark of equaling or exceeding performance in the previous fiscal year.

Performance Indicator 1.2

The data indicates that 66.1% of the individuals in Arkansas who exited the VR program after receiving services achieved an employment outcome. This meets the federal benchmark of 55.8%.

Performance Indicator 1.3

The data indicates that the percentage of individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, which exited the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage is 99.4% in Arkansas, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 72.6%.

Performance Indicator 1.4

The data indicates that of all individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-employment, or BEP employment, with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage that are individuals with significant disabilities in Arkansas is 96.5 % which exceeds the federal benchmark of 62.4%.

Performance Indicator 1.5

The data indicates the result for Performance Indicator 1.5 in Arkansas is the ratio of 0.62, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.52.

Performance Indicator 1.6

The data indicates the mathematical difference between the percentage reporting their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage reporting their own income as the largest single source of economic support at application is 54.3 in Arkansas which exceeds the federal benchmark of 53.0.

Standard 2: Equal Access to Services

Performance Indicator 2.1

The data indicates the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds, as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities is 0.84 in Arkansas, which exceeds the federal benchmark of 0.80.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 1

ARS exceeded the minimum performance required on all performance standards and indicators during FY 2013. Performance on standard 1.1 employment outcomes went from 2,660 to 2,917, a 9.7% increase. Performance on standard 2.1 Minority Background Service Rate which was not met in 2012, the performance went from 0.78 to 0.84 which met the minimum standard.

Goal 2: Increase availability of assistive technology (AT) for consumers statewide.

Strategy

- Field Services will utilize the Assistive Technology@Work (AT@Work) program through all field offices to assess and utilize assistive technology equipment for consumers during FY 2013 on a statewide basis.
- ARS will continue to collaborate and provide referrals to the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), the state assistive technology grant, to increase awareness and utility of assistive technology on a statewide basis.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 2

ICAN purchased two remote/laptop controlled robotic tools that enabled persons with disabilities the opportunity to participate in classroom instruction and workplace meetings when confined to the home. These devices are for prescribed periods of time and are also intended to encourage school systems, universities and employers throughout the state to consider adding them to their inventory to promote accessibility for persons living with a disability.

Goal 3: ARS will use a portion of the funds in compliance with Section 101(a)(18) for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities.

Strategy

- ARS will develop and implement ARS Expos across the state to provide marketing of ARS services and outreach to local communities targeting individuals with minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved.
- ARS will use a portion of the funds under Section 101(a)(18) for the support of the SRC and/or the SILC.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 3

ARS conducted two large expos in class A cities (over 50,000 in population) highlighting the division's VR and related services. The events were done in collaboration with local school districts and the local field offices. Transition-aged students, existing VR clients, and persons living with a disability who desired VR assistance attended both events. 550 people registered for the Conway event and 500 registered at the Hot Springs event. Local media helped promote the events.

Goal 4: Increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to vendors and increasing the number of referrals for SE services.

Strategy

- ARS will provide technical assistance and develop incentives to Supported Employment (SE) providers or potential providers, including CRPs, to increase the availability of SE services to consumers statewide.
- ARS will explore revision of interagency agreements with Behavioral Health Services.
- ARS will complete policy on certification requirements for SE providers.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 4

ARS has consistently undertaken steps to provide technical assistance and incentives to SE providers throughout the state. ARS completed a comprehensive agreement with Developmental Disability Services, Behavioral Health Services, and SE Providers. SE referrals and client assistance has progressed as follows:

Supported Employment Closures	
Fiscal Year	Total SE
10/01/10 - 09/30/11	95
10/01/11 - 09/30/12	88
10/01/12 - 09/30/13	101
10/01/13 - Present	81
Total	365

Goal 5: Improve public relations, marketing, information, outreach, and referrals.

Strategy

- ARS will develop outreach strategies designed to improve access to VR services for the state's Hispanic residents living with a disability.
- ARS will develop educational and informational materials designed to inform potential referral sources about the referral process and the scope of ARS services.
- Materials and information will be provided in a variety of formats for field personnel to distribute at the local community level.
- The materials will provide special attention to strategies designed to reach and serve a growing diverse population in the state.
- In July of 2012, ARS awarded a contract to a marketing firm to increase awareness of ARS VR services to private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators. The marketing program will be developed and implemented in FY 2013 continuing into the future program years.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 5

In July of 2012, ARS awarded a contract to a marketing firm to increase awareness of ARS VR services to private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on the Standards and Indicators. The marketing program will be developed and implemented in FY 2013 continuing into the future program years.

ARS is developing a multi-pronged program for serving the state's Hispanic community. Counselor training sessions have been implemented wherein counselors and professional assessment staff learn the cultural values of the state's Hispanic community and ways to break down cultural and language barriers to accessing VR services. Additionally, transition counselors are working with the state's Hispanic transition clients encouraging them to consider VR counseling as a career. ARS is developing a statewide strategy with the state's graduate VR programs in higher education to recruit more Hispanic/Spanish speaking students that would subsequently be recruited by ARS.

ARS has fully developed the marketing and branding of VR services delivered by the agency. Agency expos continue to grow in attendance and co-sponsor collaboration (see goal 2) and the agency now has a robust website that offers interactive video vignettes enabling the public to learn about every program and service offered by the agency.

Goal 6: Improve and expand job development, placement and employment.

Strategy

- ARS will enhance and facilitate a business services component in an effort to increase quality employment outcomes.
- ARS will increase the number of placement specialists employed within the state.

- A statewide advisory group will be established composed of individuals from business and industry, counselors, job placement specialists, and other appropriate professionals to explore implementation of a Business Leadership Network in Arkansas.
- The local business advisory group at ACTI will collaborate with the statewide ARS business advisory group with the goal of expanding job placement and employment outcomes.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 6

ARS hired additional placement specialists, which now provide professional placement throughout the entire state. Additional placement specialists were added at ACTI and in underserved areas of the state like the Mississippi Delta area.

ARS integrated the ACTI and statewide business advisory boards in 2014. This has led to more placements attributed to ACTI and employment and paid apprenticeships in the local Hot Springs business community.

Goal 7: Improve and expand transition services program.

Strategy

- ARS leadership will work with the State Department of Education to insure that rehabilitation counselors have ready access to all students with disabilities.
- ARS leadership will work with the school districts throughout the state to facilitate and enhance the working relationship between the school districts and local rehabilitation District Managers and counselors.
- ARS will promote that all students reported to have a disability and an IEP will be contacted by a transition or rehabilitation counselor prior to or during their junior year of school.
- ARS will promote that all students with an IEP will be provided eligibility determination for VR services before they graduate high school.
- ARS will present opportunities for both further training and higher education as options to students and their families during transition planning for students. Additionally, students and their families will be given information and explanation of employment services and options, including information that describes and defines supported employment as one of those options. The information will be made available through ARS Field Offices and ACTI.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 7

ARS transition team and the Arkansas Department of Education's transition consultants partnered to restructure and expand the state transition team – the Arkansas Interagency Transition Team (AITP). The state team jointly sponsored the 1st Annual Agency Connections in June 2012, which was attended by Special Education Supervisors and teachers from 30 Arkansas schools. The ARS Transition Project team and the ADE Transition Consultants worked in partnership to expand opportunities for students, families and teachers to access information about transition services; including the jointly facilitating the coordination of transition fairs, parent nights, presentations, etc. across the state. In addition, the AITP team developed a web-based iTunes U site specific to Arkansas transition services and resources available to students, teachers and parents (the site contains various ARS programs, including an ACTI video and other stakeholder resources and information). The AITP team sponsored the bi-annual state Transition Summit in October 2012.

ARS has pursued and entered into signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with 161 Arkansas high schools. ARS has an assigned a VR or Transition Counselor to 100% of Arkansas' high schools.

ARS has increased the number of students/teachers contacted during the junior year of students with a disability and an IEP – this increase is a direct result of securing the signed MOUs with the 161 high schools. Through this process ARS has insured that teachers are informed about the name and contact information of the District Manager that serves their school and the Counselor assigned to serve their schools (as ARS experiences turnover, the school LEAs are informed of the changes).

ARS increased the number of students with an IEP provided eligibility determination for VR services before graduation, through continued education and training of counselors.

Goal 8: Improve services to better meet the needs concerning SSI/SSDI beneficiaries with disabilities.

Strategy

- ARS will explore the development of additional SSA benefit counselors to work with ARS consumers and potential consumers regarding SSA rules and work incentives for employment.
- ARS will collaborate with the AWIN Benefits Counseling Program, the Working Medicaid Program and Employment Networks to leverage and expand services to SSI/SSDI beneficiaries.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 8

ARS has established partnerships with the AWIN Benefits Counseling Program, the Medicaid Program and the Arkansas Employment network. These partnerships have enabled the agency's ability to leverage and expand services to SSI/SSDI beneficiaries. Sources for Community and Independent Living Services provided training to ARS District Managers and counselors regarding the rules and regulations and continue to provide updates of changes in regulations to the ARS leadership. These trainings have included comprehensive sessions on Ticket to Work.

ARS has provided intense training sessions to all Project SEARCH interns and their families from Benefits Counselors and representatives of the Arkansas Employment Network. The Employment Network has provided one-on-training for interns and their families as needed.

ARS has entered into formal Intergovernmental Agreements with the Arkansas Department of Education, the University of Arkansas Fayetteville (U of A), the Department of Human Services, Department of Health, Sources for Community and Independent Living, Community Colleges, the Arkansas Employment Network, Department of Workforce Services, the Clinton Foundation, and other stakeholders to develop and implement the AR PROMISE Grant. Each of the youth participants and members of their households in the treatment group will be provided training from the AWIN Benefits Counseling Program and the Arkansas Employment Network regarding SSA rules and work incentives for employment.

Goal 9: Develop and improve Community Rehabilitation Programs.

Strategy

- ARS will implement replacement of the ACTI water system; acquisition and renovations of the former Army Reserve Building at 200 Reserve St., Hot Springs, Arkansas; and relocation of the Automotive and Cosmetology vocational training areas and the Hot Springs Field Services Office to the former Army Reserve Building as recommended in the State Comprehensive Needs Assessment approved and recommended by ARS and the State Rehabilitation Council. The 2013 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Update indicated that upgrades and improvements are necessary at the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI), a publicly owned CRP, which is an integral part of the ARS service delivery system. The former Reserve Building will be acquired through the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) process at no cost, but improvements and upgrades will be necessary. The upgrades and improvements to ACTI water system and

the Armory Building will be completed as services to groups of individuals with disabilities to establish, develop or improve a CRP as outlined in the July 3, 2012 letter from RSA. This is with the exception of installation of an elevator and entryway renovations to the former Army Reserve Building which are removal of architectural barriers and meet the definition of an administrative cost under the VR program as outlined in the July 3, 2012 letter from RSA. ACTI provides services to applicants and eligible individuals exclusively. The improvements and upgrades at ACTI are in an effort to increase employment outcomes and improve ARS performance on the Standards and Indicators.

- Before expending funds on the establishment activities above on the ACTI water system and former Army Reserve Building ARS must have a written establishment policy in place. On August 17, 2012, the Draft ARS Establishment Policy was submitted to the RSA liaison for review. After RSA review is completed, the State Rehabilitation Council will review the policy in September. The target dates for completion of the state promulgation process are: (a.) 30-day public input period – October 31, 2012; (b.) Legislative Review – November 30, 2012; and, (c.) final effective date of the policy December 15, 2012.
- ARS will implement an instrument used to monitor CRPs and the ARS Arkansas Career Training Institute to ensure that Agency performance standards are met in compliance with the FY 2011 RSA On-Site Monitoring.
- ARS will continue assignment of a rehabilitation counselor as a liaison to each CRP in each District.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 9

ARS developed a written establishment policy for ACTI and received approval to expend matched funding for the implementation of administrative requirements at ACTI including life/safety repairs and accessibility. Additionally, the Jonathan Cheatham US Army Reserve Center was successfully acquired through the BRAC process permitting ACTI to expand its training programs and enhancing the probability that graduating VR students will be placed in a competitive high wage/high demand job.

ARS has assigned a specific counselor to each CRP in every district throughout the state. The district manager is required to monitor the counselor's activity and frequency of visits by each counselor. PPD&E staff provides technical assistance and compliance monitoring of CRPs.

PPD&E staff shall be responsible for evaluating and monitoring program compliance at ACTI including client utilization of services, the appropriateness of referrals, the timeliness of services, and cost of services at ACTI, and effectiveness of services resulting in successful outcomes.

Goal 10: Enhance collaboration and partnerships with the Workforce Investment System.

Strategy

- ARS will collaborate with the Workforce Center staff to increase the ability of ARS staff to conduct intake interviews and take applications in a confidential manner while located at a Workforce Center site.
- ARS District Managers will conduct follow-up contacts with Workforce Managers to increase and improve working relationships and collaborative efforts.
- ACTI has received approval to provide testing for the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services CRC candidates who are individuals with disabilities. The individuals must be VR clients. The CRC is the National Career Readiness Certificate developed by ACT. CRC is a national industry-recognized, portable, evidence-based credential that certifies essential skills needed for workplace success.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 10

ARS field counselors have been assigned itinerary points at workforce centers across the State. ARS District Managers' have provided presentations to workforce staff regarding VR services to provide awareness of available resources for clients with disabilities. ARS Managers have met with Workforce Business and Industry and provided education on how to accommodate persons with disabilities. ARS Business Relation Representatives provided information on work incentives and tax credits to workforce businesses and industries that hire persons with disabilities. ARS Coordinator of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing provided ADA education to Workforce leadership on how to accommodate individuals who are deaf.

Goal 11: Increase and enhance services to clients.

Strategy

- ARS will continue to collaborate with other state agencies and organizations to address disability related issues as they arise.
- ARS will reclassify positions and request additional positions from the Legislature in order to increase the number of VR counselors and reduce caseloads.
- Counselor caseloads will be redistributed to achieve a more equitable number of cases per counselor and to reduce the number of cases per counselor.
- ARS will work with other interested parties and organizations to educate employers and businesses regarding disability issues in order to create greater employment opportunities.
- The improvements to the water system and former Reserve Building at ACTI will create a safer and more functional learning and living environment. The upgrades to the ACTI campus will increase accessibility and availability of VR services, improve the level of accreditation and licensing merited by ACTI's VR programming and result in a larger number of successful employment outcomes for ARS' VR consumers.

ARS Evaluation and Progress on Goal 11

The improvement to the water system and former Reserve Building at ACTI are ongoing. The project should reach 75% completion by the beginning of FY 2015.

4.11 (d) Outreach

Strategy

The agency has implemented the ARS Expo program. The Expos are marketing and outreach programs that inform Arkansas citizens about the availability of ARS services. The Expos provide outreach activities to individuals from minority backgrounds, individuals with the most significant disabilities, and others who are unserved or underserved. The Expos take place in communities across the state and continue from last year to cover the entire state. The Expos include representatives from Field Services, the ACTI Rehabilitation Center, Special Programs, and all services components of ARS. Employers are present for mini-job fair activities. Media informs the community about Expo activities and the availability of food and refreshments. Activities are extended beyond the regular work-day hours in order to serve individuals after work hours.

In July of 2012, ARS awarded a contract to a marketing firm to increase awareness of ARS VR services to private citizens, service providers and business and industry as recommended in the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment. The goal of the marketing program is to increase employment outcomes to improve performance on

the Standards and Indicators. The marketing program will be developed and implemented in FY 2013 continuing into the future program years.

ARS is developing a multi-pronged program for serving the state's Hispanic community. Counselor training sessions have been implemented wherein counselors and professional assessment staff learn the cultural values of the state's Hispanic community and ways to break down cultural and language barriers to accessing VR services. Additionally, transition counselors are working with the state's Hispanic transition clients encouraging them to consider VR counseling as a career. ARS is developing a statewide strategy with the state's graduate VR programs in higher education to recruit more Hispanic/Spanish speaking students that would subsequently be recruited by ARS.

ARS has fully developed the marketing and branding of VR services delivered by the agency. Agency expos continue to grow in attendance and co-sponsor collaboration (see goal 2) and the agency now has a robust website that offers interactive video vignettes enabling the public to learn about every program and service offered by the agency.

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

   - Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
   - Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The goals from 4.11(c)(4) for FY 2012 were to increase the availability of Supported Employment (SE) Services to consumers by providing technical assistance to vendors and to increase the number of referrals for SE services. The strategy is to provide technical assistance and develop incentives to SE providers including CRPs to increase the availability of SE services to consumers. At the same time, the agency will place greater emphasis on supported employment outcomes and traditional sheltered employment outcomes will be de-emphasized. The strategy involves an increased focus on appropriate SE outcomes as opposed to traditional sheltered employment. ARS developed interagency agreements with the state agencies that serve individuals with the most significant disabilities including Developmental Disabilities Services, Special Education, Behavioral Health and the Division of Services for the Blind. The agreement places an emphasis on competitive employment as a desirable outcome for individuals with the most significant disabilities including those with developmental disabilities and mental health diagnoses.

ARS Evaluation and Progress

ARS collaborated and developed interagency agreements with Developmental Disabilities Services, Special Education, Behavioral Health and the Division of Services for the Blind. The number of SE providers has increased from 53 to 67, a 26% increase. The fees for SE service milestones have been increased from $6,000 to $8,000 per client. Training and technical assistance on SE has been provided to ARS staff and providers in the state including the Association of Providers of Supported Employment. These efforts have resulted in an increase in SE referrals and closures. Active SE cases went from 250 in FY 2012 to 278 in FY 2013, an 11.2% increase.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for FY 2013.

ARS exceeded the minimum performance required on all performance standards and indicators during FY 2013. Performance on standard 1.1 employment outcomes went from 2,660 to 2,917, a 9.7% increase. Performance on

standard 2.1 Minority Background Service Rate which was not met in 2012 went from 0.78 to 0.84 which met the minimum standard.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in FY 2012.

Title I funds for Innovation and Expansion are reserved and used to support the SRC in the annual resource plan. Title I funds are also used, along with funds from the Division of Services for the Blind, to support the SILC annual budget. Innovation and Expansion funds supported ARS community forums, called ARS Expos, in FY 2013 in several communities. The Jonesboro Expo had attendance of over 800 and the Fort Smith event had a turnout of over 1,100. The Expos are marketing and outreach efforts to reach individuals with disabilities, parents, community leaders, schools, and businesses in the community. The Expos are a combination outreach and job fair with booth displays of ARS field services, transition services, assistive technology, Arkansas Career and Training Institute, Adult Basic Education and employers.

Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

ARS continues initiatives to expand and improve Supported Employment (SE) Services for individuals with the most significant disabilities throughout the state. An Interagency Agreement enhances collaboration among ARS, Division of Services for the Blind, Developmental Disability Services and Behavioral Health state agencies. Another Interagency Agreement is in place with SE service vendors to implement strategies to expand the SE system, including job placement services. Strategies include increasing the number of vendors offering SE and job placement statewide through enhanced incentives; utilizing a fee-for-service approach with CRPs and SE providers; revised fee schedules; and commitment from Developmental Disability Services and Behavioral Health state agencies to emphasize work as a high priority outcome as a result of the Governor's Executive Order Work First Initiative for People with Disabilities.

The number of SE providers has increased from 53 to 67, a 26% increase. The fees for SE service milestones have been increased from $6,000 to $8,000 per client. Training and technical assistance on SE has been provided to ARS staff and providers in the state including the Association of Providers of Supported Employment. These efforts have resulted in an increase in SE referrals and closures. Active SE cases went from 250 in FY 2012 to 278 in FY 2013, an 11.2% increase.

ARS provides Supported Employment (SE) Services in compliance with Sec. 7 Definitions in the Act based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment. To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site. SE services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities. SE providers are utilized statewide. All providers of SE services to consumers of ARS agree in writing to provide extended services for the client as long as the client has the current job. The timing of the transition from employment to extended services is immediate. Extended services begin immediately after the case is closed status 26 when the employment outcome is achieved.

System Information

System information
The following information is captured by the MIS.

Last updated on: 06/27/2014

Last updated by: saarkelleyl

Completed on:

Completed by:

Approved on:

Approved by:

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FILING PROPOSED RULES AND REGULATIONS WITH THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND JOINT INTERIM COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT/AGENCY Arkansas Department of Career Education

DIVISION Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

DIVISION DIRECTOR Jonathan Bibb, Interim Commissioner

CONTACT PERSON Lisa Kelley, Program Manager, Program Planning, Development & Education

ADDRESS 525 W. Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72201

PHONE NO. 501-683-3346 **FAX NO.** 501-296-1687 **E-MAIL** lisa.kelley@arkansas.gov

NAME OF PRESENTER AT COMMITTEE MEETING Robert Trevino and Lisa Kelley

PRESENTER E-MAIL lisa.kelley@arkansas.gov; robert.trevino@arkansas.gov

INSTRUCTIONS

A. **Please make copies of this form for future use.**
B. **Please answer each question completely using layman terms. You may use additional sheets, if necessary.**
C. **If you have a method of indexing your rules, please give the proposed citation after "Short Title of this Rule" below.**
D. **Submit two (2) copies of this questionnaire and financial impact statement attached to the front of two (2) copies of the proposed rule and required documents. Mail or deliver to:**

Donna K. Davis
Administrative Rules Review Section
Arkansas Legislative Council
Bureau of Legislative Research
One Capitol Mall, 5th Floor
Little Rock, AR 72201

****

1. What is the short title of this rule? Department of Career Education, Rehabilitation Services Division, Annual State Plan 2015 for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services Program

2. What is the subject of the proposed rule? The Annual State Plan to meet the requirements to receive Federal funding for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Program and Supported Employment Program

3. Is this rule required to comply with a federal statute, rule, or regulation? Yes ☒ No ☐

   If yes, please provide the federal rule, regulation, and/or statute citation.
   Section 101(a)(1)(A), of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended – 29 U.S.C. § 701 et. seq. And Workforce Investment Act of 1998 - 20 U.S.C. § 9201 et. seq. 34 CFR 364.

4. Was this rule filed under the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act? Yes ☐ No ☒

   If yes, what is the effective date of the emergency rule? _____

   When does the emergency rule expire? _____

   Will this emergency rule be promulgated under the permanent provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act? Yes ☐ No ☐

5. Is this a new rule? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, please provide a brief summary explaining the regulation.

This is the State Plan for 2015 required by the federal government in order to provide the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Programs for the state of Arkansas.

Does this repeal an existing rule? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, a copy of the repealed rule is to be included with your completed questionnaire. If it is being replaced with a new rule, please provide a summary of the rule giving an explanation of what the rule does. _____

Is this an amendment to an existing rule? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please attach a mark-up showing the changes in the existing rule and a summary of the substantive changes. **Note: The summary should explain what the amendment does, and the mark-up copy should be clearly labeled "mark-up."**

6. Cite the state law that grants the authority for this proposed rule? If codified, please give the Arkansas Code citation. Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-30-201, Rehabilitation Act of Arkansas

7. What is the purpose of this proposed rule? Why is it necessary? This is the federally required State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Supported Employment Services Programs. Vocational rehabilitation services assist people with significant disabilities to become employed and live independently.

8. Please provide the address where this rule is publicly accessible in electronic form via the Internet as required by Arkansas Code § 25-19108(b). http://ace.arkansas.gov/arRehabServices/informationForms

9. Will a public hearing be held on this proposed rule? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, please complete the following:

Date: July 22, 2014

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Place: Little Rock – ARS Central Office, 525 W. Capitol Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72201, 501-296-1600; and Fayetteville – ARS District Office, 4058 North College Street, Suite 150, Fayetteville, AR 72703, 479-582-1286

10. When does the public comment period expire for the permanent promulgation? (Must provide a date.)

July 30, 2014

11. What is the proposed effective date of this proposed rule? (Must provide a date.)

October 1, 2014

12. Do you expect this rule to be controversial? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please explain. _____

13. Please give the names of the persons, groups, or organizations that you expect to comment on these rules? Please provide their position (for or against) if known.

Disability Rights Center – Unknown; Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council – For; Arkansas State Independent Living Council – For.

FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS COMPLETELY

DEPARTMENT Arkansas Department of Career Education
DIVISION Arkansas Rehabilitation Services Division
PERSON COMPLETING THIS STATEMENT Joseph Baxter
TELEPHONE NO. 501-296-1614 **FAX NO.** 501-296-1618 **E-MAIL** joseph.baxter@arkansas.gov

To comply with Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-204(e), please complete the following Financial Impact Statement and file two copies with the questionnaire and proposed rules.

SHORT TITLE OF THIS RULE Department of Career Education Rehabilitation Services Division, Annual State Plan 2015 for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services Program

1. Does this proposed, amended, or repealed rule have a financial impact? Yes ☒ No ☐

2. Is this rule based on the best reasonably obtainable scientific, technical, economic, or other evidence and information available concerning the need for, consequences of, and alternatives to the rule? Yes ☐ No ☒

3. In consideration of the alternatives to this rule, was this rule determined by the agency to be the least costly rule considered? Yes ☒ No ☐

   If an agency is proposing a more costly rule, please state the following:

   (a) How the additional benefits of the more costly rule justify its additional costs;

   (b) The reason for adoption of the more costly rule;

   (c) Whether the more costly rule is based on the interests of public health, safety, or welfare, and if so, please explain; and;

   (d) Whether the reason is within the scope of the agency's statutory authority; and if so, please explain.

4. If the purpose of this rule is to implement a federal rule or regulation, please state the following:

   (a) What is the cost to implement the federal rule or regulation?

Current Fiscal Year	**(FY2014)**	**Next Fiscal Year**	(FY 2015)
General Revenue	$13,212, 007	General Revenue	$13,261,785
Federal Funds	$39,503,641	Federal Funds	$46,739,672
Cash Funds	$ 989,006	Cash Funds	$ 863,400
Special Revenue	0	Special Revenue	0
Other (Identify	0	Other (Identify	0
Total	$53,704,654	Total	$60,864,857

(b) What is the additional cost of the state rule?

Current Fiscal Year		**Next Fiscal Year**	
General Revenue	0	General Revenue	0
Federal Funds	0	Federal Funds	0
Cash Funds	0	Cash Funds	0
Special Revenue	0	Special Revenue	0
Other (Identify	0	Other (Identify	0
Total	0	Total	0

5. What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to any private individual, entity and business subject to the proposed, amended, or repealed rule? Identify the entity(ies) subject to the proposed rule and explain how they are affected.

Current Fiscal Year
$ 0

Next Fiscal Year
$ 0

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6. What is the total estimated cost by fiscal year to state, county, and municipal government to implement this rule? Is this the cost of the program or grant? Please explain how the government is affected.

Current Fiscal Year
$ 53,704,654

Next Fiscal Year
$ 60,864,857

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7. With respect to the agency's answers to Questions #5 and #6 above, is there a new or increased cost or obligation of at least one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) per year to a private individual, private entity, private business, state government, county government, municipal government, or to two (2) or more of those entities combined?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If YES, the agency is required by Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-204(e)(4) to file written findings at the time of filing the financial impact statement. The written findings shall be filed simultaneously with the financial impact statement and shall include, without limitation , the following:

(1) a statement of the rule's basis and purpose;

(2) the problem the agency seeks to address with the proposed rule, including a statement of whether a rule is required by statute;

(3) a description of the factual evidence that:

(a) justifies the agency's need for the proposed rule; and

(b) describes how the benefits of the rule meet the relevant statutory objectives and justify the rule's costs;

(4) a list of less costly alternatives to the proposed rule and the reasons why the alternatives do not adequately address the problem to be solved by the proposed rule;

(5) a list of alternatives to the proposed rule that were suggested as a result of public comment and the reasons why the alternatives do not adequately address the problem to be solved by the proposed rule;

(6) a statement of whether existing rules have created or contributed to the problem the agency seeks to address with the proposed rule and, if existing rules have created or contributed to the problem, an explanation of why amendment or repeal of the rule creating or contributing to the problem is not a sufficient response; and

(7) an agency plan for review of the rule no less than every ten (10) years to determine whether, based upon the evidence, there remains a need for the rule including, without limitation, whether:

(a) the rule is achieving the statutory objectives;

(b) the benefits of the rule continue to justify its costs; and

(c) the rule can be amended or repealed to reduce costs while continuing to achieve the statutory objectives.

LEGAL NOTICE

Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) a division of the Arkansas Department of Career Education is informing the public that the ARS FY 2015 State Plan for the Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment Services Programs is available for Public Comment. Interested parties are encouraged to submit comments in writing concerning the Plan. Copies of the Plan are available at the local offices of Arkansas Rehabilitation Services, and the Central Office. The Plan is also available on the ARS website at http://ace.arkansas.gov.

The public comment period begins on July 1, 2014 at 8:00 a.m. and ends on July 30, 2014 at 4:30 p.m. Meetings for Public Comment will be held July 22, 2014 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. at the ARS Central Office, 525 W. Capitol, Little Rock, AR 72201, 501-296-1600, and at the ARS District Office, 4058 North College Street, Suite 150, Fayetteville, AR 72703, 479-582-1286. Accommodations and accessible formats are available. Three days advance notice is requested, but not required, for accommodations or accessible formats. Please forward comments or requests for accommodations to Lisa Kelley, PO Box 3781, Little Rock, AR 72203 or call 501-683-3346.