

March 29, 1999

John Szufnarowski, Regional Commissioner
Rehabilitation Services Administration
US Department of Education
Region II
75 Park Place, Room 1208
New York, New York 10007

Dear Commissioner Szufnarowski:

Enclosed is the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired's State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program. This has been submitted as part of New Jersey's Unified State Plan under Section 501(b) of the Workforce Investment Act. It is our understanding that your office will be receiving the entire Unified Plan, with the appropriate signatures and signed off by the Commissioner of Labor Mel Gelade, at a later date.

Enclosed is the State Plan Pre-Print and the following attachments, as required:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Attachment 4.2(c) | Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations. |
| Attachment 4.9(c) | Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities. |
| Attachment 4.11(b) | Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. |
| Attachment 4.12 | Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports. |
| Attachment 4.16(b)(2) | Mediation and Impartial Due Process Hearing Procedures. |
| Attachment 6.9(c)(2) | Services Subject to Financial Needs Test. |

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1999

Attachment 7.3

Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported
Employment Services.

The Effective Date for the Unified Plan is July 1, 1999.

Also enclosed are the required Certifications Regarding Lobbying; Debarment, Suspension; and the Drug-Free Workplace Requirements for the Title I and Title VI-C Programs.

If you have any questions concerning any of the information enclosed, please contact (Mrs.) Jamie C. Hilton, Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, at (973) 648-2324.

Sincerely,

Michele Guhl, Commissioner
Department of Human Services

MKG:6

**STATE PLAN FOR THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
PROGRAM**

AND

**STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT
SERVICES PROGRAM**

STATE: New Jersey

AGENCY: Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

AGENCY TYPE: GENERAL ___ BLIND X COMBINED

SECTION 1: LEGAL BASIS AND STATE CERTIFICATIONS

- 1.1** The Department of Human Services/Commission f/t Blind & Visually Impaired (name of designated State agency or designated State unit) is authorized to submit this State plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended¹ and its supplement under title VI, part B of the Act.¹

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- 1.2 As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I, part B of the Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the **Department of Human Services** (name of the designated State agency)³ agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State plan⁴, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁵, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary. Funds made available under section 111 of the Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under title I and the administration of this State plan.
- 1.3 As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI, part B of the 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 plan⁶, the Act, and all applicable regulations⁷, 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.
- 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.
- 1.5 The State legally may carry out each provision of the State plan and its supplement.
- 1.6 All provisions of the State plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
- 1.7 The **Commissioner of the Department of Human Services** (title of State officer) has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under this State plan and its supplement.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1999

1.8 The **Commissioner of the Department of Human Services** (title of State officer) has the authority to submit this State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State plan supplement for supported employment services.

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

1.10 The effective date of this State plan and its supplement is July 1, 1999

(Signature)

Michele Guhl

(Typed Name of Signatory)

(Date)

Commissioner, Department of Human Services

(Title)

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, "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 Act may be awarded without an approved State plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the 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 Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the title I State plan in accordance with section 625(a) of the Act.

⁷ Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR part 361, and 34 CFR part 363.

SECTION 2: PUBLIC COMMENT ON STATE PLAN POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1999

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.20(a)(1) and (2), (b), and (d), and 363.11(g)(9))

- (a) The designated State agency, prior to the adoption of any 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 amendment to such 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, and actively consults with the Director of the client assistance program carried out under section 112 of the Act, and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations on the policies or procedures.
- (b) The designated State agency provides adequate notice of the meetings in accordance with State law governing public meetings, or, in the absence of such State law, in accordance with procedures developed by the State agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a Council.

2.2 State review process. (34 CFR Part 79)

If the State plan, its supplement, or amendment to the State plan is subject to the State review process, such materials are reviewed and commented on in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12372, and comments provided by the State review process are transmitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

This State plan and its supplement are subject to the State review process.

Yes___ No X

SECTION 3: SUBMISSION OF THE STATE PLAN AND ITS SUPPLEMENT

FFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1999

3.1 Submittal of the State plan, its supplement, and revisions to the plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Act)

- (a) The State submits to the Commissioner a State plan for vocational rehabilitation services that meets the requirements of section 101 of the Act and a State plan supplement for supported employment services that meets the requirements of section 625 of the Act on the same date that the State submits a State plan under section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- (b) If the State submits a State unified plan under section 501(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 without including the State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and its supplement for supported employment services in the unified plan, the State submits to the Commissioner the State plan for vocational rehabilitation services and its supplement for supported employment services on the same date that the State submits its unified plan under section 501(b) of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.
- (c) 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 of the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- (d) The State submits to the Commissioner at such time and in such manner as the Secretary 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) requirements under title I, part B or title VI, part B of the Act.
- (e) The State plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of such modifications as the State determines to be necessary or as the Commissioner may require based on a change in State policy, a change in Federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Act by a Federal court or the highest court of the State, or a finding by the Commissioner of State

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noncompliance with the requirements of the Act, until the State submits and receives approval of a new State plan or plan supplement.

3.2 Supported employment plan. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

The State has an acceptable plan for carrying out part B of title VI of the Act, including the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under part B of title I of the Act to pay for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

SECTION 4: ADMINISTRATION OF THE STATE PLAN

4.1 Designated State agency and designated State unit. (Sections 101(a)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.13)

(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:

_____ primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities; or

 X not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities.

(3) In American Samoa, the designated State agency is the Governor.

(b) Designated State unit.

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- (1) If the designated State agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities, the State agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division, or other organizational unit that:
- (A) is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities, and is responsible for the designated State agency's vocational rehabilitation program, including those responsibilities specified in subparagraph (5) of this paragraph of 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;
 - (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; and
 - (E) at a minimum, has the following responsibilities that cannot be delegated to any other agency or individual:
 - (i) all decisions affecting eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the nature and scope of available services, and the provision of services;
 - (ii) a determination that an individual has ended participation in the vocational rehabilitation program and achieved an employment outcome after receiving vocational rehabilitation services;
 - (iii) policy formulation and implementation; and
 - (iv) allocation and expenditure of vocational rehabilitation funds.
- (2) The name of the designated State unit is **The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

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

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The State plan must contain one of the following two assurances.

- (a) ___ The designated State agency is an independent commission that:
- (1) is responsible under State law for operating, or overseeing the operation of, the vocational rehabilitation program in the State;
 - (2) is consumer-controlled by persons who:
 - (A) are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - (B) represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated State unit under the direction of the commission is the State agency for individuals who are blind;
 - (3) includes family members, advocates, or other representatives, of individuals with mental impairments; and
 - (4) undertakes the functions set forth in section 105(c)(4) of the Act;

or

- (b) X The State has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in section 105 of the Act and the designated State unit:
- (1) jointly with the Council develops, agrees to, and reviews annually State goals and priorities, and jointly submits annual reports of progress with the Council, consistent with the provisions of section 101(a)(15) of the Act and section 4.12 of this State plan;
 - (2) regularly consults with the Council regarding the development, implementation, and revision of State policies and procedures of general applicability pertaining to the provision of vocational rehabilitation services;

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(3) includes in the State plan and in any revision to the State plan, a summary of input provided by the Council, including recommendations from the annual report of the Council, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other reports prepared by the Council, and the response of the designated State unit to such 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 title I of the Act to be submitted to the Secretary;

(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

(C) copies of due process hearing decisions issued under title I of the Act, 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 subsection of the State plan, 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 Act; 34 CFR 361.21(a))

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

(a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services, or in appropriate cases, 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;

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- (d) the Director of the client assistance program; and
- (e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council.

4.4 Non-federal share. (Section 101(a)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60(b))

The non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out this State plan is provided through the financial participation by the State, or if the State elects, by the State and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.15)

- (a) The State plan provides for local administration and each local agency is under the supervision of the designated State unit and is the sole local agency responsible for the administration of the program within the political subdivision that it serves.

Yes ___ No X

- (b) *IF YES, Attachment 4.5* identifies each local agency and describes the methods each local agency uses to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with this State plan.

4.6 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Sections 101(a)(2)(A) and (4)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.25 and .26)

The State plan is in effect in all political subdivisions of the State, except in the case when:

- (a) The State unit is providing 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 and the:
 - (1) non-Federal 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; and

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- (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.
- (3) If the State is providing services that meet the provisions of subparagraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this subsection, **Attachment 4.6(a)(3)** requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.26(b); or
- (b) Earmarked funds are used toward the non-Federal share and such funds are earmarked for particular geographic areas within the State contingent on the State notifying the Commissioner that it cannot provide the full non-Federal share without the use of such earmarked funds.

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

- (a) The designated State agency is carrying out a joint program involving shared funding and administrative responsibility with another State agency or a local public agency to provide services to individuals with disabilities.

Yes ___ No X

- (b) *IF YES*, **Attachment 4.7(b)** describes the:

- (1) nature and scope of the joint program;
- (2) services to be provided;
- (3) respective roles of each participating agency in the provision of services and their administration; and
- (4) share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

- (c) If the joint program provides services in one or more political subdivisions of the State, the State requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.26 and subparagraph 4.6(a)(3) of this State plan subsection.

4.8 Third-party cooperative arrangements involving funds from other public agencies (Section 12 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.28)

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- (a) The designated State unit has entered into a third-party cooperative arrangement for providing or administering vocational rehabilitation services with another State agency or a local public agency that is furnishing part or all of the non-Federal share.

Yes ___ No X

- (b) *IF YES:*

- (1) The services provided by the cooperating agency are not the customary or typical services provided by that agency but are new services that have a vocational rehabilitation focus or are existing services that have been modified, adapted, expanded, or reconfigured to have a vocational rehabilitation focus.
- (2) The services provided by the cooperating agency are only available to applicants for, or recipients of, services from the designated State unit.
- (3) Program expenditures and staff providing services under the cooperative arrangement are under the administrative supervision of the designated State unit.
- (4) All State plan requirements, including the State's order of selection, if an order is in effect, apply to all services provided under the cooperative program.

- (c) If the third-party cooperative program provides services in one or more political subdivisions of the State, the State requests a waiver of statewideness in accordance with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.26 and subparagraph 4.6(a)(3) of this State plan.

4.9 Cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23 and .24)

- (a) **Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide workforce investment systems.**

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The designated State agency has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide workforce investment system of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 101(a)(11)(A) of the Act.

(b) Replication of cooperative agreements.

The designated State agency replicates the cooperative agreement identified in paragraph (a) of this subsection of the State plan at the local level between individual offices of the designated State unit and local entities carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system.

(c) Interagency cooperation with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.9(c) describes the:

- (1)** interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of the Federal, State, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and State use contracting programs, to the extent that such agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system;
- (2)** coordination, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 4.9(d) of this subsection, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
- (3)** manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers, consistent with the requirements of paragraph 5.6(b) of the State plan; and,
- (4)** efforts of the designated State agency 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, consistent with the requirements of subsection 7.5 of the supplement to this State plan.

(d) Coordination with education officials.

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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 this State plan are described in **Attachment 4.9(c)(2)** which also includes information on a formal interagency agreement with the State educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:

- (1) 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;
 - (2) 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;
 - (3) the roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining State lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
 - (4) procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.
- (e) **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 Act, and the independent living centers described in part C of title VII of the Act within the State have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(f) **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 Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near Federal and State reservations.

Yes ___ No X

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(2) ***IF YES***, the designated State agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement with each grant recipient in the State that receives funds under part C of title I of the Act. The agreement(s) describes strategies for collaboration and coordination in providing vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities, including:

(A) strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that 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 who 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.

(g) **Reciprocal referral services with a separate agency for individuals who are blind.**

In those States in which there is a separate designated State unit for individuals who are blind and also a designated State unit for all other individuals with disabilities, the two State units:

(1) have established reciprocal referral services;

(2) use each other's services and facilities to the extent feasible;

(3) jointly plan activities to improve services in the State for individuals with multiple impairments, including visual impairments; and

(4) otherwise cooperate to provide more effective services, including, if appropriate, entering into a written cooperative agreement.

4.10 Methods of administration. (Sections 101(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (c))

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(a) **General.**

The State agency employs methods of administration found by the Commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of this State plan.

(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 title I of the Act, 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 Act.

(c) **Written standards for providers of services.**

The designated State agency has established, maintains, makes available to the public, and implements written minimum standards for the various types of providers used by the designated State unit in providing vocational rehabilitation services under this State plan.

(d) **Facilities.**

Facilities used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State plan comply with the provisions of the Act entitled "An Act to insure that certain buildings financed with Federal funds are so designed and constructed as to be accessible to the physically handicapped", approved on August 12, 1968 (commonly known as the "Architectural Barriers Act of 1968"), with section 504 of the Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

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

- (a) The designated State agency has implemented a comprehensive system of personnel development that meets the requirements of section 101(a)(7) of the Act and 34 CFR 361.18.

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- (b) **Attachment 4.11(b)** describes the designated State agency's policies, 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 addresses the following requirements:
- (1) collection and analysis on an annual basis of data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.18(a);
 - (2) 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 qualified personnel, including personnel from minority backgrounds, and personnel who are individuals with disabilities;
 - (3) establishment and maintenance of personnel standards meeting the requirements of 34 CFR 361.18(c) to ensure that personnel, including professionals and paraprofessionals, are adequately trained and prepared, including:
 - (A) 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 that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (B) to the extent that such 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 to retrain or hire personnel within the designated State unit so that such personnel meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the State;
 - (4) standards to ensure the availability of personnel within the designated State unit or other individuals who are, to the maximum extent feasible, trained to communicate in the native language or mode of communication of an applicant or eligible individual;
 - (5) staff development to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated State unit receive appropriate and adequate training; and

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- (6) coordination of its personnel development system with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.12 Annual state goals and reports of progress. (Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

(a) Assessments and estimates.

(1) Attachment 4.12(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the State has such a Council) every 3 years, and:

(A) describes 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 workforce investment system, as identified by such individuals and personnel assisting such individuals through the components.

(B) provides an assessment of the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State.

(2) For any year in which the State revises the assessments, the designated State unit submits to the Commissioner a report containing information regarding revisions to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

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The designated State agency annually submits **Attachment 4.12(b)** that includes, State estimates of the:

- (1) number of individuals in the State who are eligible for services under this State plan;
- (2) number of such individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under part B of title I of the Act and under part B of title VI of the Act, including, if the designated State agency uses an order of selection in accordance with paragraph 6.4(c) 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 (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 4.12(c)(1)** identifies the goals and priorities of the State in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs and also identifies any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the State revises the goals and priorities.
- (2) **Order of selection.**
 - (A) If the State agency is operating on an order of selection, **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A)** shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services and provides a justification for the order, the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category consistent with the provisions of paragraph 6.4(c) of this State plan.
 - (B) If, however, the agency assures in paragraph 6.4(a) of this State plan that it can provide the full range of services identified in subsection 5.1 of this State plan to all eligible individuals, **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B)** satisfies all of the provisions identified in paragraph 6.4(b) of the State plan.
- (3) **Goals and plans for distribution of title VI, part B funds.**

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Attachment 4.12(c)(3) specifies, consistent with subsection 7.4 of the State plan supplement, the State's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(4) Basis.

The goals and priorities are based on:

- (A)** the analysis of the comprehensive assessment and any revisions in the assessment consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4.12(a) of this State plan;
 - (B)** the performance of the State on the standards and indicators established under section 106 of the Act; and
 - (C)** other available information on the operation of the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs, including reports from the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has a Council, and the findings of monitoring activities carried out by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.
- (5)** In accordance with the provisions of section 101(a)(15)(C)(ii) and (iii) of the Act, the goals and priorities, including any revisions to the goals and priorities, are jointly developed, agreed to, and reviewed annually by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council.

(d) Strategies.

Attachment 4.12(d) describes the strategies, including those identified in section 101(a)(15)(D) of the Act and the innovation and expansion activities of paragraph 4.13(a) of this State plan, the designated State agency will use to:

- (1)** address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph (a) of this subsection and achieve the goals and priorities identified in paragraph (c) of this subsection;
- (2)** carryout outreach activities to identify and serve individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities consistent with the provisions of subsection 7.6 of the State plan supplement; and

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- (3) 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.**

Attachment 4.12(e) describes the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program, and includes an annual joint report of the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council, to the Commissioner on the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year. The description includes:

- (1) an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in subparagraph (c) of this subsection plan were achieved;
- (2) an identification of the strategies that contributed to achieving the goals;
- (3) to the extent to which the goals were not achieved, an explanation of the factors that impeded that achievement;
- (4) an assessment of the performance of the State on the standards and indicators established pursuant to section 106 of the Act; and
- (5) a report consistent with paragraph 4.13(c) of this State plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Act)

- (a) The designated State agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Act:
 - (1) for the 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 and goals and priorities of the State identified in paragraphs 4.12(a) and (c) of this State plan; and

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(2) to support the funding of the State Rehabilitation Council, if the State has such a Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under section 105(d)(1) of the Act, and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under section 705(e)(1) of the Act.

(b) **Attachment 4.12(d)** describes how the reserved funds identified in paragraph (a) of this subsection of this State plan will be utilized.

(c) **Attachment 4.12(e)** describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.14 State-imposed requirements. (Section 17 of the Act; 34 CFR 361.39)

The designated State unit identifies upon request those regulations and policies relating to the administration or operation of its vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs that are State-imposed, including any regulations or policy based on State interpretation of any Federal law, regulations, or guidelines.

4.15 Protection, use, and release of personal information. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.38)

The designated State agency and the designated State unit have policies and procedures that are consistent with the provisions in 34 CFR 361.38 to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, including photographs and lists of names.

4.16 Mediation and impartial due process hearing. (Section 102(c) of the Act)

(a) **Fair hearing board.**

There is a fair hearing board, established by the State prior to January 1, 1985, that is authorized under State law to review determinations or decisions made under the Act and to carry out the responsibilities of the impartial hearing officer.

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Yes __ No X

(b) Mediation and review procedures.

IF THE ANSWER TO (a) IS “NO”:

- (1) The designated State agency has established procedures consistent with the requirements of section 102(c) of the Act for mediation of and procedures for the review through an impartial due process hearing of determinations made by personnel of the designated State unit that affect the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to applicants or eligible individuals.
- (2) **Attachment 4.16(b)(2)** contains the procedures for mediation; the procedures for review through an impartial due process hearing; and, the procedures to seek an impartial review of the decision of the hearing officer, including the standards for reviewing decisions of an hearing officer, if the designated State agency has elected to implement such review procedures.

IF THE ANSWER TO (a) IS “YES”:

- (1) The designated State agency has established procedures consistent with the requirements of section 102(c) of the Act for mediation of determinations made by personnel of the designated State unit that affect the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to applicants or eligible individuals.
- (2) **Attachment 4.16(b)(2)** contains the procedures for mediation.

4.17 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the 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.

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- (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 ensures the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

SECTION 5: SCOPE OF THE STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM

5.1 Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities. (Section 103(a) of the Act)

Vocational rehabilitation services provided under this State plan are any services described in an individualized plan for employment necessary to assist an individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual, including:

- (a) an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
- (b) 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 Act and subsection 5.3 of this State plan;
- (c) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through agreements developed under section 101(a)(11) of the Act and subsection 4.9 of this State plan, if such services are not available under this State plan;
- (d) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
- (e) vocational and other training services, including the provision of personal and vocational adjustment services, books, tools, and other training materials, except that no training services provided at an institution of higher education shall be paid for with funds under this State plan unless maximum efforts have been made by the designated State unit and the individual to secure grant assistance, in whole or in part, from other sources to pay for such training;

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- (f) to the extent that financial support is not readily available from a source (such as through health insurance of the individual or through comparable services and benefits consistent with section 101(a)(8)(A) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan), other than the designated State unit, diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental impairments, including:
- (1) corrective surgery or therapeutic treatment necessary to correct or substantially modify a physical or mental condition that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment, but is of such a nature that such correction or modification may reasonably be expected to eliminate or reduce such impediment to employment within a reasonable length of time;
 - (2) necessary hospitalization in connection with surgery or treatment;
 - (3) prosthetic and orthotic devices;
 - (4) eyeglasses and visual services as prescribed by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws and who are selected by the individual;
 - (5) special services (including transplantation and dialysis), artificial kidneys, and supplies necessary for the treatment of individuals with end-stage renal disease; and
 - (6) diagnosis and treatment for mental and emotional disorders by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws;
- (g) maintenance for additional costs incurred while participating in an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs or while receiving services under an individualized plan for employment;
- (h) transportation, including adequate training in the use of public transportation vehicles and systems, that is provided in connection with the provision of any other service described in this subsection and needed by the individual to achieve an employment outcome;
- (i) on-the-job or other related personal assistance services provided while an individual is receiving other services described in this subsection;

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- (j) interpreter services provided by qualified personnel for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and reader services for individuals who are determined to be blind, after an examination by qualified personnel who meet State licensure laws;
- (k) rehabilitation teaching services, and orientation and mobility services, for individuals who are blind;
- (l) occupational licenses, tools, equipment, and initial stocks and supplies;
- (m) technical assistance and other consultation services to conduct market analyses, develop business plans, and otherwise provide resources, to the extent such resources are authorized to be provided under the statewide workforce investment system, to eligible individuals who are pursuing self-employment or tele commuting or establishing a small business operation as an employment outcome;
- (n) rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices;
- (o) transition services for students with disabilities that facilitate the achievement of the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
- (p) supported employment services;
- (q) services to the family of an individual with a disability necessary to assist the individual to achieve an employment outcome; and
- (r) specific post-employment services necessary to assist an individual with a disability to retain, regain, or advance in employment.

5.2 Written policies governing the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.50)

- (a) The State unit has written policies covering the nature and scope of each of the vocational rehabilitation services specified in section 103(a) of the Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan and the criteria under which each service is provided.

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- (b) The policies are consistent with the provisions in 34 CFR 361.50 and:
- (1) ensure that the provision of services is based on the rehabilitation needs of each individual as identified in that individual's individualized plan for employment; and
 - (2) do not establish any arbitrary limits on the nature and scope of services to be provided to the individual to achieve an employment outcome.

5.3 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Act)

Applicants and eligible individuals, or, as appropriate, the applicants' representatives or the individuals' representatives, are provided information and support services to assist the applicants and eligible individuals in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act.

5.4 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Act)

Except as otherwise provided in part C of title I of the Act, 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.

5.5 Scope of vocational rehabilitation services to groups of individuals with disabilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.49, .61 and .62)

- (a) The State plan provides for the following optional vocational rehabilitation services for the benefit of groups of individuals with disabilities.
- (1) ___ The establishment, development, or improvement of community rehabilitation programs, including, under special circumstances, the construction of a community rehabilitation facility, that are used to provide services to promote integration and competitive employment.

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If the State elects to use the authority to construct a facility for a community rehabilitation program, 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 Act for that fiscal year.
 - (B) The provisions of section 306 of the 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.
- (2) ___ Telecommunications systems, including telephone, television, satellite, radio, and similar systems, that have the potential for substantially improving service delivery methods of activities described in this section of this State plan and developing appropriate programming to meet the particular needs of individuals with disabilities.
 - (3) ___ Special services to provide nonvisual access to information for individuals who are blind, including the use of telecommunications, Braille, sound recordings, or other appropriate media; captioned television, films, or video cassettes for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; tactile materials for individuals who are deaf-blind; and other special services that provide information through tactile, vibratory, auditory, and visual media.
 - (4) ___ Technical assistance and support services to businesses that are not subject to title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and that are seeking to employ individuals with disabilities.
 - (5) ___ Small business enterprises operated by individuals with significant disabilities, the operation of which can be improved by the management services and supervision of the designated State agency, along or together with the acquisition by the designated State agency of vending facilities or other equipment and initial stocks and supplies.
 - (A) If the State unit provides small business enterprise services, only individuals with significant disabilities are selected to participate in this supervised program.

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- (B) If the State unit sets aside funds from the proceeds of the operation of the small business enterprises, it has a description of the methods used in setting aside funds and the purposes for which funds are set aside.
- (C) Under its small business enterprises, the State unit provides:
 - (i) X only the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program;
 - (ii) ___ only a program or programs other than the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program;
 - (iii) ___ both the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program and another program(s).
- (6) X Consultative and technical assistance services to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including employment.
- (7) X Other services that promise to contribute substantially to the rehabilitation of a group of individuals but that are not related directly to the individualized plan for employment of any one individual with a disability.

(b)

If the State plan provides for any of these services to groups of individuals

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has:

- (1) written policies covering the nature and scope of each of the vocational rehabilitation services it provides and the criteria under which each service is provided; and
- (2) information to ensure the proper and efficient administration of those services in the form and detail and at the time required by the Secretary, including:
 - (A) the types of services provided;
 - (B) the costs of those services; and
 - (C) to the extent feasible, estimates of the numbers of individuals benefiting from those services.

5.6 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the 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 Act, upon the determination by the designated State agency that such for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide such vocational rehabilitation services than non-profit agencies and organizations.

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(b) **Cooperative agreements with private non-profit organizations.**

The manner in which the designated State agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers is described in **Attachment 4.9(c)(3)**.

SECTION 6: ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

6.1 Record of services. (Section 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.47)

The designated State unit maintains for each applicant or eligible individual a record of services that satisfies the requirements of 34 CFR 361.47.

6.2 Referrals and applications. (Sections 101(a)(6)(A) and 102(a)(6) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.41)

(a) The designated State unit has standards for the prompt and equitable handling of referrals of individuals for vocational rehabilitation services. These standards include timelines for making good faith efforts to inform individuals of application requirements and to gather information necessary to initiate an assessment to determine eligibility and priority of services.

(b) Once an individual has submitted an application for vocational rehabilitation services, an eligibility determination is made within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 60 days, unless:

- (1) exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the designated State unit preclude making an eligibility determination within 60 days and the designated State unit and the individual agree to a specific extension of time; or
- (2) the designated State unit is exploring an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacities to perform in work situations under section 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act.

6.3 Information and referral services. (Section 101(a)(20) of the Act)

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The designated State agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining employment, and are appropriately referred to Federal and State programs, including other components of the statewide workforce investment system in the State.

6.4 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the 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 Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services.

Yes X No

- (b) ***IF YES***, Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B) contains an explanation that satisfies the requirements of 34 CFR 361.36(a)(2) or (3) and describes how, on the basis of the designated State unit's projected fiscal and personnel resources and its assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities within the State, it will:

- (1) continue to provide services to all individuals currently receiving services;
- (2) provide assessment services to all individuals expected to apply for services in the next fiscal year;
- (3) provide services to all individuals who are expected to be determined eligible in the next fiscal year; and
- (4) meet all program requirements.

- (c) ***IF NO***:

- (1) Individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
- (2) Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A) contains:

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- (A) the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - (B) a justification for the order of selection.
- (3) Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria are provided access to the services provided through the designated State unit's information and referral system implemented under section 101(a)(20) of the Act and subsection 6.3 of this State plan.

6.5 Assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services. (Sections 7(2)(A)(i) and (D), 7(20)(A), 101(a)(12) and 102(a)(1)(A), (2)(B) and (4) of the Act)

- (a) To determine whether an individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services and the individual's priority under an order of selection for services, if the State is operating under an order of selection, the designated State unit, to the maximum extent possible consistent with the requirements of this State plan, uses existing and current information, including information available from other programs and providers, particularly information provided by education officials and the Social Security Administration, and information provided by the applicant and the family of the applicant.
- (b) To the extent that existing information is unavailable or insufficient, the designated State unit provides appropriate assessment activities to obtain necessary additional information to make the determination regarding the applicant's eligibility, and, if applicable, the applicant's priority under an order of selection.
- (c) The State unit's determination of an applicant's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services is based only on the following requirements.
 - (1) A determination that the applicant has a physical or mental impairment.
 - (2) A determination that the applicant's physical or mental impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment.
 - (3) A presumption, in accordance with section 102(a)(2)(A) of the Act and paragraph (d) of this subsection of the State plan, that the applicant can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

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- (4) A determination that the applicant requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment.
- (d) The designated State unit presumes that an applicant who meets the eligibility requirements in subparagraphs (c)(1) and (c)(2) of this subsection of this State plan can benefit in terms of an employment outcome unless the designated State unit can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services due to the severity of the individual's disability. In making such a demonstration, the designated State unit first explores the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations through the use of trial work experiences consistent with the provisions of sections 7(2)(D) and 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act.
- (e) If there is appropriate evidence that establishes the applicant's eligibility for Social Security benefits under Title II or Title XVI of the Social Security Act, the designated State unit:
 - (1) presumes the applicant to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services under this State plan (provided that the individual intends to achieve an employment outcome consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual) unless the designated State unit can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that the applicant is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services due to the severity of the disability of the individual in accordance with the provisions of section 102(a)(2) of the Act and paragraph 6.5(d) of this State plan; and
 - (2) considers the applicant to be an individual with a significant disability consistent with the provisions of section 7(21)(A) of the Act.
- (f) In the application of the eligibility criteria, the following requirements are met.
 - (1) No duration of residence requirement is imposed that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State.
 - (2) No applicant or group of applicants is excluded or found ineligible solely on the basis of the type of disability.

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- (3) The eligibility requirements are applied without regard to the age, gender, race, color, creed, or national origin of the applicant.
- (4) The eligibility requirements are applied without regard to the particular service needs or anticipated cost of services required by an applicant or the income level of an applicant or applicant's family.

6.6 Procedures for ineligibility determination. (Section 102(a)(5) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.43)

If the State unit determines that an applicant is ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services or determines that an individual receiving services under an individualized plan for employment is no longer eligible for services, the State unit:

- (a) makes the determination only after providing an opportunity for full consultation with the individual or, as appropriate, with the individual's representative;
- (b) informs the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, in writing, supplemented as necessary by other appropriate modes of communication consistent with the informed choice of the individual, of the ineligibility determination, including:
 - (1) the reasons for the determination; and
 - (2) the description of the means by which the individual may express, and seek remedy for, any dissatisfaction with the determination, including the procedures for the review by an impartial hearing officer consistent with the provisions of section 102(c) of the Act and subsection 4.16 of this State plan;
- (c) provides the individual with a description of services available from the client assistance program and information on how to contact that program; and
- (d) reviews any ineligibility determination that is based on a finding that the individual is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services within 12 months and annually thereafter, if such a review is requested by the individual or, if appropriate, by the individual's representative, except when the:

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- (1) individual has refused the review;
- (2) individual is no longer present in the State;
- (3) individual's whereabouts are unknown; or
- (4) individual's medical condition is rapidly progressive or terminal.

6.7 Closure without ineligibility determination. (Sections 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.44)

The State unit does not administratively close an applicant's record of services prior to making an eligibility determination unless the:

- (a) applicant declines to participate in, or is unavailable to complete an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services; and
- (b) State unit has made a reasonable number of attempts to contact the applicant or, if appropriate, the applicant's representative to encourage the applicant's participation.

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

- (a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (d) of this subsection, 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) If comparable services or benefits exist under any other program and are available to the eligible individual at the time needed to achieve the provisions of the individual's individualized plan for employment, the State unit uses those comparable services or benefits to meet, in whole or in part, the cost of vocational rehabilitation services.
- (c) If comparable services or benefits exist under any other program, but are not available to the individual at the time needed to satisfy the provisions of the individual's individualized plan for employment, the State unit provides vocational rehabilitation services until those comparable services and benefits become available.

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- (d) 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 Act;
 - (3) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through agreements developed under section 101(a)(11) of the 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.
- (e) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this subsection also 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 such service to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.
- (f) The Governor of the State in consultation with the designated State vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that there is an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the

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requirements of section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Act between any appropriate public entity, including the State medicaid program, public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide workforce investment system, and the designated State unit so as to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in section 103(a) of the Act and subsection 5.1 of this State plan, other than the services identified in paragraph (d) of this subsection, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of such services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

6.9 Participation of individuals in cost of services based on financial need. (Section 12(c) of the Act; 34 CFR 361.54)

- (a) No financial needs test is applied and no financial participation is required as a condition for furnishing the following vocational rehabilitation services:
- (1) assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services, except those non-assessment services that are provided during an exploration of the individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations, consistent with the requirements of sections 7(2)(D) and 102(a)(2)(B) of the Act;
 - (2) assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs;
 - (3) counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice;
 - (4) referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies through cooperative agreements under section 101(a)(11) of the Act and subsection 4.9 of this State plan, if such services are not available under this State plan; and
 - (5) job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.
- (b) The State unit considers the financial need of eligible individuals, or individuals who are receiving services during an exploration of an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations consistent with subparagraph (1) of paragraph (a) of this subsection, in order to determine the extent of the individual's participation in the costs of vocational rehabilitation services.

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Yes X No

(c) **IF YES:**

- (1) The State unit has written policies on the determination of financial need that are consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.54 and these policies:
 - (A) are applied uniformly to all individuals in similar circumstances; and
 - (B) ensure that the level of the individual's participation in the cost of vocational rehabilitation services is:
 - (i) reasonable;
 - (ii) based on the individual's financial need, including the consideration of any disability-related expenses paid by the individual; and
 - (iii) not so high as to effectively deny the individual a necessary service.
- (2) **Attachment 6.9(c)(2)** specifies the services for which the designated State unit has a financial needs test.

6.10 Development of the individualized plan for employment. (Sections 7(2)(B), 101(a)(9), and 102(b)(1) and (2) of the Act)

- (a) The designated State unit conducts an assessment to determine the vocational rehabilitation needs for each eligible individual, including the need for supported employment services, or, if the State is operating under an order of selection, for each eligible individual to whom the State is able to provide services, for the purpose of identifying the provisions to be included in the individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Act.
- (b) The development of the individualized plan for employment meets the following procedural requirements.

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- (1) The individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented in a timely manner subsequent to the determination of the eligibility of the individual for services under this State plan, except if the State is operating under an order of selection, the individualized plan for employment is developed and implemented only for individuals to whom the State is able to provide services.
- (2) The designated State unit provides to the eligible individual or the individual's representative, in writing and in an appropriate mode of communication, information on the individual's options for the development of the individualized plan for employment, including:
 - (A) information on the availability of assistance, to the extent determined appropriate by the eligible individual, from a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor in developing all or part of the individualized plan for employment for the individual, and the availability of technical assistance in developing all or part of the individualized plan for employment for the individual;
 - (B) a description of the full range of components that must be included in an individualized plan for employment;
 - (C) as appropriate,
 - (i) an explanation of agency guidelines and criteria associated with financial commitments concerning an individualized plan for employment;
 - (ii) additional information the eligible individual requests or the designated State unit determines to be necessary; and
 - (iii) information on the availability of assistance in completing designated State agency forms required in developing an individualized plan for employment;
 - (D) a description of the rights and remedies available to the eligible individual, including, if appropriate, recourse to mediation and the impartial due process hearing consistent with the provisions of section 102(c) of the Act and subsection 4.16 of this State plan; and

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- (E) a description of the availability of the client assistance program and information about how to contact the program.
- (3) The individualized plan for employment is developed as a written document prepared on forms provided by the designated State unit and is developed and implemented in a manner that affords eligible individuals the opportunity to exercise informed choice in selecting an employment outcome, the specific vocational rehabilitation services to be provided under the plan, the entity that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, the settings in which the services will be provided, the employment setting, and the methods used to procure the services consistent with the provisions of section 102(d) of the Act.
- (4) The individualized plan for employment is agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, and approved and signed by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the designated State unit with a copy of the individualized plan for employment provided to the individual or, as appropriate, to the individual's representative, in writing and, if appropriate, in the native language or mode of communication of the individual or, as appropriate, of the individual's representative.
- (5) The individualized plan for employment is reviewed at least annually by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor and the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative and amended, as necessary, by the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, in collaboration with a representative of the designated State agency or a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor, as determined to be appropriate by the individual.
- (6) If there are substantive changes in the individualized plan for employment with respect to the employment outcome, the vocational rehabilitation services to be provided, or the providers of the services, such amendments to the individualized plan for employment do not take effect until agreed to and signed by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, and by a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the designated State unit.

6.11 Mandatory components of the individualized plan for employment. (Sections 101(a)(9), 102(b)(3), and 625(b)(6)(C),(E), and (F) of the Act)

- (a) Each individualized plan for employment includes, at a minimum, the following mandatory components describing the:

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- (1) specific employment outcome that is chosen by the eligible individual, consistent with the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the eligible individual, and, to the maximum extent appropriate, results in employment in an integrated setting;
- (2) specific rehabilitation services that are:
 - (A) needed to achieve the employment outcome, including, as appropriate, the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services, and personal assistance services, including training in the management of such services; and
 - (B) provided in the most integrated setting that is appropriate for the service involved and is consistent with the informed choice of the eligible individual;
- (3) timelines for the achievement of the employment outcome and for the initiation of services;
- (4) entity chosen by the eligible individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative, that will provide the vocational rehabilitation services, and the methods used to procure the services;
- (5) criteria to evaluate progress toward achievement of the employment outcome;
- (6) terms and conditions of the individualized plan for employment, including, as appropriate, information related to the:
 - (A) responsibilities of the designated State unit;
 - (B) responsibilities of the eligible individual, including those related to:
 - (i) the achievement of the employment outcome;
 - (ii) participation, if applicable, in the paying the costs of the plan; and

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- (iii) applying for and securing comparable benefits consistent with the requirements of section 101(a)(8) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan; and
 - (C) responsibilities of other entities as the result of arrangements made pursuant to comparable services or benefits requirements as identified in section 101(a)(8) of the Act and subsection 6.8 of this State plan; and
 - (7) projected need for post-employment services, as determined to be necessary.
- (b) The individualized plan for employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom an employment outcome in a supported employment setting has been determined to be appropriate also contains the identification of the:
 - (1) extended services needed by the eligible individual; and
 - (2) source of the extended services or, to the extent that the source of extended services cannot be identified at the time of the development of the individualized plan for employment, the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that extended services will become available.

6.12 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 Act)

- (a) The designated State unit:
 - (1) conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State plan who has achieved an employment outcome either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)) for 2 years after the achievement of the outcome (and annually 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; and

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- (2) 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 subparagraph (a)(1) in engaging in competitive employment.
- (b) The individual with a disability, or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation, and acknowledges through sign-off that such review and reevaluation have been conducted.

STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

SECTION 7: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

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

The designated State agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in subsection 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 Act.

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

Attachment 4.12(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Act and subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) of the title I State plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant disabilities and the need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

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

Attachment 7.3 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.

7.4 Goals and plans for distribution of title VI, part B funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

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Attachment 4.12(c)(3) identifies the State's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act.

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

Attachment 4.9(c)(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.

- 7.6 Minority outreach.** (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.12(d)(2) describes the designated State agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

- 7.7 Reports.** (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the 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 Secretary may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the 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 Act.

SECTION 8: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

- 8.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs.** (Section 625(b)(7) of the 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 Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

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

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- (a) Funds made available under title VI, part B of the 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 of the 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 Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under part B of title VI or title I of the Act.

SECTION 9: PROVISION OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

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

- (a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in section 7(36) of the Act.
- (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.

9.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with severe disabilities. (Section 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities, including the assessment of rehabilitation, career, and employment needs, conducted under section 102(b)(1)(A) of the Act and paragraph 6.10(a) of this State plan and funded under title I of the Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

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

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- (a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Act and subsections 6.10 and .11 of this State plan 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.

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ATTACHMENTS REQUIRED OF ALL AGENCIES

Attachment 4.9(c): Cooperation and Coordination with Other Agencies and Other Entities

- (1) Cooperation with Agencies That Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities
- (2) Coordination with Education Officials
- (3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers
- (4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

Attachment 4.11(b): Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Attachment 4.12 Assessments; Estimates; Goals and Priorities; Strategies; and Progress Reports

- (a): Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs
- (b): Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services
- (c)(1): State's Goals and Priorities
- (c)(3): Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds
- (d): State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities
 - (1) To Address Needs Identified in the Comprehensive Assessment and to Achieve Identified Goals and Priorities
 - (2) To Carryout Outreach Activities to Identify and Serve Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities Who are Minorities
 - (3) To 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.

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- (e): Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use Of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities

Attachment 4.16(b)(2): Mediation and Impartial Due Process Hearing Procedures

Attachment 7.3: Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

ATTACHMENTS CONTINGENT ON OPTIONS SELECTED

The following attachments identified by an "X" are also submitted as part of the State plan.

- X **Attachment 4.2(c):** Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations
- Attachment 4.5:** Local Administration
- Attachment 4.6(a)(3):** Request for Waiver of Statewideness
- Attachment 4.7(b):** Shared Funding and Administration of Joint Program
- Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(A):** Order of Selection
- X **Attachment 4.12(c)(2)(B):** Explanation to Support the Decision Not to Establish an Order of Selection
- X **Attachment 6.9(c)(2):** Services Subject to Financial Needs Test

SUMMARY OF INPUT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL; RESPONSE OF THE DESIGNATED STATE UNIT; AND EXPLANATIONS FOR REJECTION OF INPUT OR RECOMMENDATIONS.

The State Rehabilitation Council contracted with the Eagleton Institute of Rutgers University to conduct a Consumer Satisfaction Survey on clients who received services under a Plan in 1996. More than 1400 surveys were mailed and a high response rate was achieved. Although the overall level of satisfaction was high with consumers, there were some areas that consumers felt that the commission needed to improve on. These areas were:

- ?? Better dissemination of information on CBVI services
- ?? Better communication between staff and consumers
- ?? Delays in receiving services
- ?? Inconsistency of services
- ?? People want jobs.

The State Rehabilitation Council made a presentation to vocational rehabilitation staff in June of 1998 and solicited from staff recommendations to address the issues listed above. Among the suggestions adopted are the establishment of an agency newsletter, Internet site, brochures, recruitment of paraprofessional staff. Some recommendations, such as video development and 800 number establishment were rejected as being too costly. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired will continue working with the State Rehabilitation Council to continually improve the quality of services offered to consumers.

The State Rehabilitation Council has been conducting Annual Forums with the Commission since 1993 as a mechanism of gathering information to assist the Commission constantly improve the services that are offered. The lack of adequate transportation for individuals with disabilities continues to be a common theme in these forums. A forum specifically dedicated to issues of transportation was convened in the fall of 1998. Consumers, legislators, and NJ Transit officials were invited to participate to gain information on how this issue impacts upon the provision of VR services and employment. A Tri- Council Forum (including the State Rehabilitation Council of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the State Independent Living Council) is planned during State fiscal 2000 to further address this issue.

The Annual Report, recently completed and submitted to the Governor and to the Rehabilitation Services Administration, listed the 1998 Accomplishments and the Goals and Initiatives for 1999.

The 1998 Accomplishments were as follows:

- ?? Involved in the development of the State, Strategic and Resource Plans
- ?? Development of program performance recommendations based on the consumer Satisfaction Survey
- ?? Increased involvement in CVBI review of policies and program planning
- ?? Presentation of five regional public hearings in conjunction with the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration under the United State Department of Education
- ?? Continued advocacy for the re-authorization of the Rehabilitation Act
- ?? Recommendation of strategies to increase competitive employment opportunities
- ?? Collaboration with the Statewide Independent Living Council and the SRC of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation on issues of concern to people with disabilities
- ?? Establishment of a mentoring committee which successfully implemented Phase I of a mentoring program
- ?? Provided testimony on the Unified state Plan developed by the Workforce Investment System of New Jersey

?? Participated in a National Rehabilitation Council meeting at the Council for State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation Spring Conference

The Goals and Initiatives for 1999 are as follows:

- ?? Co-sponsor (with DVRS) a public hearing on the Unified State Plan to receive consumer comments and recommendations
- ?? Follow up on the suggestions and recommendations of consumers from the public meetings specific to the issue of transportation
- ?? Conduct a Consumer Satisfaction Survey on the Intake Unit at the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center
- ?? Solicit, evaluate, and analyze feedback on consumer involvement and informed choice
- ?? Establish a protocol for SRC review of information gathered through the exit interviews of consumers from the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center
- ?? Clarify the roles, responsibilities and relationships of CBVI staff and SRC members in planning and decision making processes
- ?? Develop result-oriented goals for each SRC sub-committee
- ?? Develop an informational brochure and web page
- ?? Participate in the continues evolution of CBVI technology efforts
- ?? Participate in the on-going training of One-Stop staff
- ?? Participate in RSA monitoring of state agencies
- ?? Implement Phase II of the SRC Mentoring Program

COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND OTHER ENTITIES

(1) Cooperation with Agencies that Are Not in the Statewide Workforce Investment System and with Other Entities

Because of the size of the population it serves, the complexity of the services rendered and because of the emphasis placed upon partnerships and collaboration by its funding source, the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired finds that cooperative agreements with organizations and service providers enhance our ability to deliver quality services to persons who are blind and visually impaired.

The Commission presently has Cooperative Agreements with the following agencies that are not required partners in the Statewide Workforce Investment System:

- ?? Division of Developmental Disabilities (Transitioning)
- ?? Division of Mental Health Services (Supported Employment)
- ?? Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (Transitioning)
- ?? NJ Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
- ?? The Lexington Center
- ?? Division of Youth and Family Services
- ?? Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- ?? New Jersey Transit ADA Task Force
- ?? National Federation of the Blind (Newsline and Jobline)
- ?? Department of Health (Diabetic Services)
- ?? Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- ?? Drew University
- ?? Division of Disability Services (in progress)

The above list represents more formal cooperative agreements which are with organizations not currently under contract with the Commission for the Blind. Contracted agencies include organizations such as the Community Health Law Project, Recordings for the Blind, Puerto Rican Association for Human Development, National Society to Prevent Blindness and various other entities such as the Passaic County Board of Social Services, Cumberland County, Family Services of Morris county, the Senior Service Corps, Inc., Family Services Association, and Heightened Independence. Many of these contracted services are provided to clients who are not seeking employment, or are services closely related to blindness, rather than employment. In addition, CBVI acts as the State Licensing Agency for business people in the Randolph Sheppard Program and, as such, enters into agreements with government agencies to provide food services (primarily) to building employees and the public.

On a less formal basis, the Commission maintains membership on a variety of levels and supports the activities of a variety of organizations such as Region II, RRCEP, the Commodities and Services Council, Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, National Council of State Agencies for the Blind, Association of Education and Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Network of Organizations for the Blind, New Jersey Transit Senior Citizen and Disabled Advisory Committee, and various county college, and chamber of commerce organizations.

(2) Coordination with Education Officials

Since 1910, the Commission has assisted school districts in providing education programs that address the special needs of children with visual impairment and blindness. In 1993, this partnership was formalized with local school districts through provider service agreements. These agreements identify the specific level of services that the Commission will provide for each child in the school district. As the child reaches the age of fourteen, the Commission's education counselor refers the student to a transition counselor who will begin to determine eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services and provide the student with information concerning a variety of programs designed around the specific needs of blind or visually impaired youth who require information as well as specialized techniques for research and training in career awareness/job seeking activities, etc. Throughout this transition process, contact with the school district remains constant, as the student's participation in various programs, and need and provision for specialized training and/or adaptive equipment are addressed as part of the IEP and the transition plan. Technical consultation begun in the earlier grades with the education counselor is continued by the transition counselor. In the education community, CBVI transition counselors play an organizational role in technical consultation through their active participation in career fairs, school-to-work activities, task force memberships etc.

On the state level, the Executive Director of CBVI is an invited member to the State Agency Directors Forum which includes directors of DVRS; OSEP, OSTCI, both in the DOE; the Division of Developmental Disabilities, and the Juvenile Justice Commission. These meetings enhance the coordination of policies and programs relating to students in transition.

(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Non-Profit Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

In addition to those listed above, the Commission has an agreement with the New Jersey Association of the Deaf and Blind and works closely with a variety of rehabilitation organizations in a contractual relationship. Our contracts are with the First Occupational Center of New Jersey, the Monmouth Center for Vocational Rehabilitation, St. Joseph's School for the Blind, Abilitech, and Jersey Cape Diagnostic Center. Additionally, the Commission maintains close relationships with many of the Centers for Independent Living, and Independent Living organizations such as Pathway to Independence with whom we have a contract.

(4) Evidence of Collaboration Regarding Supported Employment Services and Extended Services

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is presently working on an updated agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). DDD has traditionally assumed responsibility for the follow along services in the extended phase of supported employment.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired has contracted with three service providers for job coaching and extended services, (The First Occupational Center for Northern New Jersey, Monmouth Center for Vocational Rehabilitation for Central New Jersey, and Jersey Cape Diagnostic Training and Opportunity Center for Southern New Jersey.) In addition, the Commission utilizes Title VI, Part C funds on an individualized fee for service basis in order to provide consumers with a range of choices in the provision of supported employment services. At present, the Commission utilizes the same fee structure and approval process as that which is in place for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is committed to the establishment and maintenance of Comprehensive System of Personnel Development to ensure that highly qualified individuals provided services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired. The Commission will utilize a variety of highly qualified providers including the Region II Continuing Education Program (RRCEP), the New Jersey Department of Personnel, Human Resource Institute (HRDI), New Jersey and other state universities and colleges, as well as consultants and individuals who can provide workshops, conferences and other discipline specific training for the professional VR staff.

Components of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

In- service Training

Vocational outcomes (employment), career development, and personal empowerment are the cornerstones of the vocational rehabilitation program. Issues, such as community access, the development of personal and social relationships, social responsibility, leisure and recreation, and personal fulfillment all must be considered if the agency's vocational rehabilitation program is to continue to have a positive impact on the lives of our consumers. Staff is empowered to assist the consumers in reaching their personal goals and this is accomplished through a comprehensive, integrated sequence of goal focused training programs utilizing the Human Resource Development model.

Region II Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP). The Commission provides ongoing training opportunities through the RRCEP to VR staff to meet the present and emerging needs in the field. The Commission is an active member of the RRCEP Advisory Board and participates in the development of training to meet the needs of agency staff.

Tuition Reimbursement Program. The Commission encourages employees to participate in the tuition reimbursement program. The program provides a means for employees to pursue formal academic training to improve job skills and work performance and to further career development. Courses must be job related and are generally pursued on the employees' own time. The Commission will reimburse for up to six credits per semester, at the state college or university rate, whichever is higher.

New Jersey Department of Personnel The New Jersey Department of Personnel, through the Human Resource Development Institute (HRDI) offers courses, on an ongoing basis to agency staff to assist them achieve personal and organizational goals and needs. Employees are encouraged to attend courses pertinent to their job duties and responsibilities.

Department of Labor, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

(DVRS) The Commission has been working closely with DVRS to provide joint training to vocational rehabilitation staff of both agencies. Joint efforts will enable both agencies to provide the most effective and cost efficient training to staff through shared resources, i.e. vendors, distance learning mechanisms, such as satellite sites, compressed video teleconferencing, computers, etc.

Conference, Workshops and other Training. The Commission encourages staff to attend training, seminars, and workshops appropriate to their job duties and responsibilities within and outside the state.

Subject Matter Experts. The Commission has developed in-house subject matter experts. These are staff who can provide training to other agency staff in areas of their expertise. Areas that we have used and will continue to use subject matter experts are ADA, CPR, and Employer Relations/Grievance Process.

Distance Learning. The Commission will continue to utilize its stationary and mobile satellite equipment to provide training from across the nation to vocational rehabilitation staff. The stationary satellite is located at the Commission's Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center.

State Licensure

The Regulations to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, mandate that states develop and implement strategies for the hiring or retraining of personnel to meet standards or qualifications based on the highest requirements in the state for the counseling profession. New Jersey presently has established a standard, which is a 60 credit Masters Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation. This is the standard that our agency must work toward. In New Jersey, we have not had a CORE approved Rehabilitation Counseling program since 1985. The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services have been negotiating with the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) School of Health Related Professions to establish a Masters level program in Vocational Rehabilitation. It is anticipated that the program will commence in the summer of 1999 at two distinct sites.

The Commission presently has 14 counselors working with the Title I program with bachelor degrees and who will be required to obtain a Masters degree. Additionally, there are 11 vocational counselors who have Masters degrees in other fields. The opportunity will be offered to these individuals to obtain a Masters Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation in order to meet the state standard. Our agency anticipates that all of the vocational rehabilitation counseling staff will have obtained the standard by fiscal 2004.

The Commission views participation in this program to meet the CSPD requirement as an employee benefit, which is valuable and part of a national competency movement. Financial participation will be provided by the agency to enable an employee to complete this program.

ASSESSMENT; ESTIMATES; GOALS AND PRIORITIES; STRATEGIES; AND PROGRESS REPORTS

(a)(1)(A) Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired utilizes a variety of methods to ascertain the rehabilitation needs of individuals residing in the state in order to continue to improve the nature and scope of services that are provided to individuals seeking an employment outcome. These assessments are done in a variety of ways:

Forums and Public Meeting conducted with the Commission's State Rehabilitation Council, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and other entities.

Evaluations conducted with consumers exiting the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center.

Continuing surveys conducted by the State Rehabilitation Council.

Review of prior year(s) closure information at the end of each fiscal year. This evaluation focuses on the number of individuals employed, the wages at closure, and satisfaction with services offered.

On February 25, 1999, a Public Meeting was held prior to the submittal of the Unified State Plan on April 1, 1999 to gather information from consumers, other professionals, and interested parties. There were a variety of issues that were brought forth and these were as follows:

- ?? Technology is and will continue to be a major issue relative to the employment of individuals with disabilities. More sophisticated technology and continuous training is needed to allow individuals compete on an even level with non-disabled persons.
- ?? Passaic County is in need of a Center in the county to meet the needs of consumers. Individuals have to travel to surrounding counties to receive the services that they require. Transportation, as it is, requires individuals to spend long hours just getting to centers in adjoining counties.
- ?? Changes in Social Security guidelines are needed so that people can continue receiving health benefits when they begin working, if benefits are not available.
- ?? Transportation for all individuals with disabilities, whether in employment or training, continues to be a major impediment. Transportation needs to be available, particularly in rural areas and during off- hours so that people can go to work. There are major problems with Access Link. It is not meeting the need of people with disabilities. The WIB's are required to develop Transportation Plans, as they relate to Work First New Jersey. These

Transportation Plans make recommendations to New Jersey Transit. DVRS and CBVI need to be aware of these as they relate to consumers.

- ?? Literacy needs must be addressed, regardless of the media, for all people. The changing job market will continue to require a higher skill level.
- ?? Consumers must make some of their own changes if they are going to be successful, not just rely on others to make changes. If something is needed, don't hesitate to ask for it.

The Executive Director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services attended the Public Meeting and led an Open Discussion period following the formal presentations. As estimated 60 people participated in the Public Meeting. A direct outgrowth of this Meeting was that the State Rehabilitation Councils of both agencies and the State Independent Living Council will convene to discuss the major issue of transportation and determine what they can do as a group to effect the necessary changes.

(a)(1)(B) Community Rehabilitation Program Needs

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired operates the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center, a residential facility that provides comprehensive services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired residing in the state. The following services are offered: evaluation and adjustment to blindness services, vocational assessment, independent living services, counseling and guidance, and specific vocational training in areas identified by consumer and staff input. Presently, a comprehensive food service training program is underway at the facility. In October, 1998, the Norma F. Krajczar Technology Center was opened at the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center to provide evaluations and training to consumers in assistive technology in order to meet the growing need for technology that exists in most occupations today. The Technology Center keeps abreast of the latest developments in technology to meet the current and ever expanding needs of consumers entering training and employment situations.

Community Rehabilitation Programs throughout the state, including the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center, will need to be prepared for and utilized to assist vocational rehabilitation agencies implement the trial work situations as required in the Rehabilitation Act amendments.

The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development requires that Community Rehabilitation Programs also employ qualified rehabilitation personnel. Although, at present, the first priority is the education and training of state agency staff, sufficient opportunities must be available to assist the Community Programs meet the mandates of the Act.

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired continues to meet with ACCSES to investigate ways and methods to increase the number of blind and visually impaired consumers employed by the State Use Program.

(b) Annual Estimates of Individuals to Be Served and Costs of Services

- (1) It is estimated that 2800 individuals will be eligible for services in Program Year 2000.
- (2) Of the 2800 eligible individuals, it is estimated that all will receive services provided under Part B of Title I of the Act and/or under Part B of Title VI of the Act. The Commission for the Blind is not under an order of selection.
- (3) Service costs are estimated to be \$ 11,858,00 inclusive of amounts for Supported Employment under Title VI, part B and state match under Title I.

(c)(1) Goals and Priorities

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired has established goals and priorities for all consumers of services. The Mission statement, Philosophy, Goals and Objectives are as follows:

Mission Statement

The mission of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to promote and provide services in the areas of education, employment, independence and eye health through informed choice and partnership with persons who are blind or visually impaired, their families and the community.

Statement of Philosophy

People who are blind and visually impaired can succeed in education, in careers, in the home and in the community. The services that our agency provides directly impacts on the ability of individuals to achieve success. The consumer must be the most important part of the process. The skills of blindness are essential to independence, education and employment and must be promoted by staff to consumers, employers, educational institutions, and the general public. We encourage involvement and support by the family of the consumer. Research and development of assistive technology is encouraged and supported to ensure that persons who are blind and visually impaired can become independent and competitive in education and employment.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

General Goals and Objectives

Goal 1

The Commission will provide timely, effective, high-quality services.

Objectives

- ?? Determine eligibility for services within 30 days of referral and begin service delivery within 30 days of eligibility determination.
- ?? Analyze and streamline the Intake process.
- ?? Undertake consumer satisfaction surveys, follow-up interviews, and act on consumer recommendations.
- ?? Provide resource information as needed.
- ?? Maintain a highly trained and competent staff.

Goal 2

The Commission will increase competitive employment.

Objectives

- Network with employers to establish an informed public as to the abilities of persons who are blind and visually impaired in the work place.
- Develop access to computerized job banks.
- Upgrade formal and informal training for Commission staff to be relevant to current market trends. Work cooperatively with the Workforce System in New Jersey to ensure access to labor market information.
- Provide, in partnership with employers and in keeping with the provisions of ADA, technical and adaptive assistance at the work place.

Goal 3

The Commission will work towards excellence in the education of students who are blind and visually impaired.

Objectives

- Work toward age-appropriate concept development, early literacy experiences and grade-level achievements for students who are blind and visually impaired.
- Provide education services and adaptive equipment that will promote integration and enable students who are blind and visually impaired to function independently on an equal basis with their peers.
- Promote positive attitudes among school staff regarding the abilities of students who are blind and visually impaired and the skills of blindness.

- Keep parents informed on a regular basis of the scheduling and content of lessons and the student's progress.
- Develop partnerships for the purpose of sharing information among parents, Commission staff, classroom teachers and advocacy groups regarding trends, changes, new ideas and different approaches in the education of children who are blind and visually impaired.

Goal 4

The Commission will work to decrease the incidence of blindness or significant vision loss through eye health programs.

Objectives

- To increase public awareness of eye safety and the causes and treatment of vision loss by publicizing the Commission's prevention services and conducting education and detection programs.
- Provide blindness prevention services such as eye disease detection screenings and medical intervention.
- Target high-risk populations for prevention and eye health services.

Goal 5

The Commission will actively promote equality and full inclusion into society.

Objectives

- Work to promote abilities and dispel misconceptions about blindness and visual impairments.
- Work to promote positive attitudes through a variety of community-based activities.
- Advocate for the rights of the population served.
- Build a collaborative network of consumers, blindness organizations, other disability groups, service providers and interested individuals to facilitate consumer empowerment.
- Encourage consumers to advocate for themselves through blindness organizations, government, community, in school and on the job.

Goal 6

The Commission will work in partnership with consumers.

Objectives

- Work with the individual to choose a direction which will enable him or her to achieve desired goals.
- Develop an individual blueprint for achievement that will early define expectations and responsibilities.

- Review service plans annually as developed between case managers and consumers.
- Conduct routine compliance reviews to ensure the delivery of consumer services.
- Seek consumer input through committees, forums, public hearings, etc.

Goal 7

The Commission will encourage positive attitudes toward blindness and visual impairments by consumers and their families.

Objectives

- Develop a mentoring program.
- Implement a program of socialization and interpersonal skills appropriate to various age groups.

Goal 8

The Commission will expand service delivery to historically underserved populations.

Objectives

- Analyze targeted populations to determine appropriate service needs.
- Expand outreach activities.
- Increase services to these populations.
- Conduct annual reviews.
- Review and revise Commission literature and communications.

Goal 9

The Commission will promote the development and use of assistive technology.

Objective

- Maintain up-to-date information on assistive technology.
- Develop a training program for Commission staff.

The Sterling Group The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, in order to benchmark our activities, demonstrate continuous improvement and develop a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the next millenium, has employed the Sterling Group to evaluate all areas of our agency and make recommendations on how we can improve the quality of services that we offer.

(c)(2)(B) Explanation to support the Decision Not to Establish an Order of Selection

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is able to provide Vocational Rehabilitation Services to all eligible individuals who are blind and visually Impaired within the state who apply for services. Our agency has not delayed, through waiting lists or any other means, eligibility determinations, assessments, the development of the IPE, and the provision of services under the IPE. The Commission's budget for fiscal 1999 is approximately \$22 million dollars. Our agency anticipates that we will be able to provide the full range of vocational services to all eligible individuals in fiscal 2000. In addition to adequate resources, the Commission is able to utilize agency-based programs and personnel and contract services to assist in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

The Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center (JKRC) The Commission operates a comprehensive, residential rehabilitation center, located centrally in the state. The JKRC is able to provide Adjustment to Blindness counseling and training, diagnostic and pre-vocational evaluations. A consumer is able to receive services in the following instructional areas: vocational assessment, career counseling, communications, home and personal management, orientation and mobility, low vision services, and evaluation and training in assistive technology. The Center is able to provide training for Randolph- Sheppard operators and Job Seeking Skills training.

Adaptive Living Skill and Prevention Services The Commission, in addition to providing vocational rehabilitation services, is able to offer services to consumers that will enhance their ability to be employed. These direct services, offered on a regional basis, are eye health nursing, social casework, orientation and mobility, and rehabilitation teaching. These services can be offered before, during, and after the rehabilitation process in order to ensure ongoing support and meet consumer needs.

Contracted Services Contracted services assists the vocational rehabilitation program by providing direct services to consumers. Utilizing this method, the Commission is able to provide services in Assistive Technology, Supported Employment, Legal services, and services to the older blind.

Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, by utilizing the above in-house modalities are able to provide services to all eligible blind and visually impaired consumers residing in the state.

(3) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired remain committed to increasing the quality, scope and extent of Supported Employment Services to eligible consumers who are blind and visually impaired. There are presently sixty-five (65) providers throughout the state who provide supported employment services on a fee for service basis. In addition to utilizing the Title VI, Part B funds on the individual fee for service basis, the Commission for the Blind and Visually

Impaired contracts with three (3) providers for intensive job coaching and extended services. These three providers are the First Occupational Center (Northern New Jersey), Monmouth Center Vocational Rehabilitation (Central New Jersey), and Jersey Cape Diagnostic Training and Opportunity Center (Southern New Jersey). The total amount expended for the three contracts is \$168,000.

Change in Fee for Service Rate. Effective April 1, 1999, the baseline hourly fee for service rate was raised from \$37.00 to \$42.00 by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This represents the first increase to reflect rising costs since the fee for service mechanism was introduced in 1991.

Interagency Agreement with D.D.D. The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired plans to update its Interagency Agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (D.D.D.). With the continued emphasis of moving individuals from institutional setting to group homes, The Commission plans to work with DDD on a strategy to refer individuals who are blind and visually impaired and developmentally disabled to the Commission for the intensive phase of supported employment job coaching. Upon completion of the intensive phase, these individuals will be referred back to DDD for the long- term extended services.

(d) State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired plans to continue to dedicate funding that was set aside in the previous Strategic Plan (October 1, 1997- September 30, 2000). The activities that were focused on at that time were as follows:

- ?? Operation of and initiatives of the State Rehabilitation Council
- ?? Personnel Development to ensure that vocational services are provided by highly qualified rehabilitation personnel
- ?? Initiation of the VR loaner program through an existing state program to ensure that equipment is available for consumers when they are commencing a training or employment situation.
- ?? Expansion of the National Industries for the Blind/ Veterans Administration employment initiatives

New initiative to be undertaken in fiscal 2000 and beyond are:

- ?? Mentoring program focusing on transition students, newly blinded individuals, and new Randolph-Sheppard operators.
- ?? Continued enhancement of transition programs. This will include redefining the populations presently served in the transition programs, utilizing other community programs, such as the Job Corp, and ensuring that programs are sequential, developmental and non-duplicative.

- ?? Development of employment program with National Industries for the Blind, with the focus on non-traditional occupations (i.e. homebound employment) for individuals who are blind and visually impaired.
- ?? Expansion through community based organizations into non- traditional occupations for CBVI consumers, such as construction and automotive trades and food service.

The Commission for the Blind acknowledges the need to assure effective communication with its potential consumers. To a great extent, that communication will be enhanced through the development of a newsletter, a WEB page, standardized brochures, etc., however to the extent that potential consumers may not be able to read print, additional interventions are needed to assure that potential consumers are made aware of the agency's program offerings and to standardize our communication with our current consumers.

Since effective planning of vocational rehabilitation begins at the initial point of contact, the Commission has established a centralized intake unit, consisting of experienced counselors who will work with potential clients until eligibility is established. Monitoring of this function is ongoing, with a formalized evaluation of effort underway through our next consumer satisfaction survey which is targeted at individuals who have been processed through this centralized unit.

Historically, the Commission for the Blind has successfully penetrated the minority population in proportion to the representation of minorities in the general population. We have, however, initiated outreach in selected populations, such as the Latino population in areas outside of vocational rehabilitation with the expectation that our success in vision restoration programs would generate referrals to vocational rehabilitation as well. Additionally, CBVI has a series of contractual relationships with organizations serving older blind, many of which are in geographic areas heavily populated by minorities.

The primary barrier relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with visual disabilities in the state VR program relates to the issues of travel and print access. CBVI has designed its services to be delivered to individuals within their home environment, rather than base services in an office setting. Because the nature of the disability affects the individual's mobility, our population consistently emphasizes the need for access to transportation. This need and the anticipated response to this need is identified above. With respect to Workforce Development and service delivery through the One-Stops, an initial effort is being made to provide access by utilizing lap-top computers with the ability to dial into systems appropriate to meet constituent needs.

With respect to print access, the Commission has initiated and promotes actively, the development of technology resources through its research and development committee, the ongoing expansion of its contracts for technology services

(including training), the purchase of adaptive equipment where appropriate, and the development of low tech alternatives to job seeking etc.

On a state level, the Workforce Development system has been responsive to equitable access by supporting the provision of specifically adapted technology through the local WIB's. This need is ongoing as reader service, technology, alternative media for vocational assessments, career testing and other print material is developed for customers of the One-Stops.

(e) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Many of the initiative highlighted in the Strategic Plan for the period October 1, 1997 through September 30, 2000 are still being pursued. Activities of the State Rehabilitation Council continues to receive financial support, the food service program has commenced at the Joseph Kohn Rehabilitation Center and the agreement with the Library for the Blind and Print Handicapped for a VR loaner program is nearly completed.

The criteria that the Commission utilized to determine if the objectives were met are the number of individuals achieving an employment outcome and the results of Consumer Satisfaction Surveys. Although the number of consumers achieving an employment outcome remained the same, the number of people in competitive employment rose from 203 to 224, and the number of homemakers and individuals in sheltered employment decreased. The Consumer Satisfaction Survey indicated that more than 75% of consumers felt that they benefited from CBVI services, had their rights explained to them, were given the opportunity to make their own choices about a vocational goal, and would recommend CBVI to a friend. The Commission will continue to conduct surveys as a mechanism to improve services. Some areas, such as counselors' timeliness of response and delays in service have been noted and the Commission will continue to monitor progress in those areas.

MEDIATION AND IMPARTIAL DUE PROCESS HEARING PROCEDURES

The Rehabilitation Act mandates that mediation procedures are established and implemented that allow parties to resolve disputes through a process that shall be available whenever requested. The process must meet the following criteria:

- ?? The process is voluntary on the part of both parties.
- ?? Is not used to deny or delay the right of the individual to a hearing.
- ?? The mediation is conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques.

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired has contacted the State of New Jersey Office of the Public Defender and our agency will utilize the Office of Dispute Settlement in Trenton for purposes of mediation. The standards of practice, suggested time frames, and the cost estimates are as follows:

Standards of Practice. The Model standards of Conduct for Mediators, endorsed by The Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution, The American Arbitration Association and the American Bar Association will be utilized.

Time Frames. The mediation session will be scheduled within 20 days of the request for mediation. The 20-day time frame would include the initial conference call with the parties, and the exchange of information pertinent to the mediation session.

Cost Estimate. Mediation and consulting services would be provided at the cost of \$75.00 per hour.

Any agreement from the mediation session(s) will be set forth in writing in a written mediation agreement. The process shall be confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceeding.

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is presently rewriting Chapter 95, our agency Vocational Rehabilitation Rule, to reflect the changes brought about by The Workforce Act and the Rehabilitation Act. The mediation procedures will be included under the Due Process section of the code, after they are reviewed by the Office of Dispute Settlement, the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the State Rehabilitation Council of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Services Subject to Financial Needs Test

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired uses an economic needs test in determining a consumer's financial participation in the cost of certain vocational rehabilitation services, other than evaluation of eligibility, diagnostic evaluation, counseling and guidance, referral services, and job placement. The services for which there is an economic needs test are as follows:

?? College Tuition

??Maintenance

??Adaptive equipment

??Low vision follow-up visits

??Accessory or optical low vision aids

??Projection or electronic low vision aids

??Medical devices and equipment

??Restoration services

??Personal attendant services

??Technological aids

??Vocational training (except work adjustment training)

??Training equipment

??Transportation

??Placement equipment

QUALITY, SCOPE AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired remains committed to increasing the quality, scope and extent of Supported Employment Services to eligible consumers who are blind and visually impaired.

Although there exists a sufficient number of service providers who deliver supported employment in the state on a fee for service basis, there is reluctance on the part of many providers to work with individuals with significant disabilities who are blind and visually impaired. The commission presently contracts with three (3) providers for intensive job coaching and extended services- The First Occupational Center (Northern New Jersey), Monmouth Center Vocational Rehabilitation (Central New Jersey), and Jersey Cape Diagnostic, Training and Opportunity Center (Southern New Jersey). The Commission is prepared to expand these contract based on successful supported employment outcomes or develop new providers to meet the needs of consumers who require these types of services.

The Region II Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program (RRCEP) for Community Rehabilitation Programs and the University Affiliated Program, due to a continuing turnover in staff, offer a variety of training programs in basic and advanced job coaching to meet the continuing need of providers.

The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is presently redeveloping our agency's Interagency Agreement with the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) for Supported Employment Services. Under the new agreement, individuals are eligible and appropriate for supported employment services, and who are DDD eligible, would be provided intensive job coaching services by the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The on going extended services would be provided by the Division of Developmental Disabilities.

