

A Message from Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation

Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation is pleased to present a draft of its 2016 State Plan for your review. The State Plan outlines our priorities for 2016 to help people living with disabilities achieve and maintain employment and independence. We invite you to read the document carefully and share your thoughts about it with us by February 4, 2016. You can view the draft State Plan at:

<http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/Pages/index.aspx>.

The 2016 Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan looks much different than it has in the past. The Federal Rehabilitation Act requires states to maintain a plan for the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services. Last year the Federal Rehabilitation Act was incorporated into the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). That change brought some shifts in priorities, timelines, metrics, and state planning processes for us and other members of the statewide workforce system. These shifts are reflected in our State Plan proposal.

There are two ways you can provide feedback on the 2016 Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan:

- **Attend a public hearing:** Public hearings will be held in Medford, Salem, and LaGrande on January 19, 20, and 21, 2016. You can find meeting details at the VR website listed above.
- **Submit comments in writing:** Written comments can be sent directly to Vocational Rehabilitation by 5 p.m. on February 4, 2016.
 - E-mail your comments to VR.INFO@dhsosha.state.or.us. Please put “State Plan Feedback” in the subject line.
 - Send comments by U.S. Mail to: Department of Human Services; Vocational Rehabilitation Program, 500 Summer St. NE, E-87; Salem, OR 97301.

The WIOA also brought an expectation for a higher level of collaboration among members of state workforce systems, including Vocational Rehabilitation. WIOA now requires states to create Unified State Plans for their workforce systems. Moving forward, the Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan will become part of Oregon’s Unified State Plan. You can view Oregon’s first Unified State Plan at:

www.oregon.gov/owib/Pages/State-Plan.aspx

Our growing connectivity to other members of Oregon’s workforce system as we implement the WIOA will benefit people receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services. While our focus remains solidly on helping people with disabilities find employment that fits with their interest and abilities so they can be fully contributing members of their communities, the strengthening of partnerships signals recognition of our important role in the workforce system. This leads to better access and opportunities to leverage resources than we’ve had before.

Thanks for all you do to support people with disabilities having meaningful employment in their communities. We look forward to receiving your feedback on the 2016 Vocational Rehabilitation State Plan.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Trina M. Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Trina" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Lee".

Trina M. Lee, Director
Vocational Rehabilitation