



Employment First

Quality Assurance/ Quality Improvement Update

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present an update on implementation of the quality assurance and quality improvement strategies identified in the [Employment First Quality Assurance/ Quality Improvement Plan](#) (QA Plan) issued July 2014.

These strategies are organized under the focal areas of Quality of **Planning**, Quality of **Providers**, Quality of **Services**, Quality of **Training**, Quality of **Data**, and Quality of **Life**. While it was not possible to implement every item, multiple strategies in each focal area are accomplished or underway.

Many strategies involve measures developed by a cross-agency working team. This report sets the baseline for these measures. Future analysis will demonstrate Oregon's performance in each area. The results for State Fiscal Year 2015 include:

- **91%** of Oregon Department of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS) individuals at Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) received a VR eligibility determination within 60 days;
- The average hours worked for ODDS individuals successfully closed through VR were **16.6** hours per week;
- The average wage for ODDS individuals successfully closed through VR was **\$9.55** per hour; and
- **65%** of Discovery recipients had an open case in VR at some point in the fiscal year.

This report also includes [Post School Outcomes](#) data from the Oregon Department of Education. These results for 2013 ODDS school leavers include:

- Of respondents that worked, **81.6%** worked in non-sheltered settings; and
- Of respondents that worked, **64.5%** made at least minimum wage.

In order to show performance over time, this report includes results from the [Employment First Data Report](#). That report has established metrics, which show strong growth in VR outcomes for ODDS individuals, including:

- An annual **increase of 7.7%** in applications to VR;
- An annual **increase of 61.6%** for individuals entering an Individualized Plan for Employment; and

- An annual **increase of 40.3%** for individuals successfully closing with competitive integrated employment.

This QA Update shows a great deal of collaborative effort by multiple state agencies to move Employment First quality assurance and quality improvement efforts forward. It also shows that outcomes are improving for many who are seeking employment services and competitive integrated jobs.

Introduction

Policy and procedure changes at the state and federal level make Employment First in Oregon a rapidly evolving landscape. These changes include new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)¹ requirements for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), and other partners. These changes also include new regulatory requirements for Home and Community Based Services administered through the Office of Developmental Disability Services (ODDS);² as well as new state policies, such as no new entries to sheltered workshops as of July 1, 2015.³ While VR, ODDS, and ODE address and implement these large changes, they continue to work together towards the goal of Employment First for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Oregon. Quality assurance and quality improvement play an important role in ensuring the success and sustainability of these efforts.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present an update on implementation of the quality assurance and quality improvement strategies identified in the Employment First Quality Assurance/ Quality Improvement Plan (QA Plan) issued in July 2014. This report is also intended to present the collaborative and independent work taking place across agencies to ensure the success of Oregon’s Employment First initiative.

The 2014 QA plan is ambitious, and it was not possible to implement some portions of the plan by the phase 1, 2 and 3 implementation dates in the original plan. VR, ODDS, and ODE prioritized certain strategies based on the changing needs of the system; therefore, not every strategy in the 2014 QA Plan has been set in motion. All the

¹ The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) makes important changes to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other federal laws. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market. WIOA places increased emphasis on serving students and youth with disabilities, with the goal of better preparing them for competitive integrated employment.

² HCBS service settings must be “integrated in and [support] full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive integrated settings.” 42 CFR 441.301(c)(4)(i).

³ In order to further Oregon’s Employment First policy, effective July 1, 2015, ODDS will no longer fund Sheltered Work or services in a Sheltered Workshop setting, for individuals who are newly eligible for services, or individuals already using services but not in a Sheltered Workshop setting. See the Governor’s Executive Order 15-01 and Oregon Administrative Rule 407-025-0020(2).

strategies are included and reported on in this document, regardless of their implementation status. Oregon is committed to and is engaged in developing a robust QA/QI system that reflects how systems and programs are performing together to meet goals and objectives, and that informs policy and strategic planning going forward. The QA Plan will change and evolve over time as implementation efforts continue.

Methodology

The Employment First QA/QI analyst worked with the cross agency working team that developed the 2014 plan, to decide which items to prioritize first in regard to developing and reporting data. This team is comprised of representatives from VR, ODDS, ODE and the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities. The group selected goals and strategies that involved VR services, the new Discovery service,⁴ transition between services at ODDS and VR, and time frames for service planning and delivery. Measures for these areas were then developed in collaboration with the Employment First and VR data analysts.

There have been major changes in the data systems at ODDS that will improve the accuracy of the data reported. In September 2014, ODDS employment services data moved to the revised eXPRS billing system, and reflects new service definitions. This will allow for more accurate tracking of specific services provided by ODDS. Furthermore, the Employment Outcomes System (EOS), which provides provider-level data, was revised to reflect the new service definitions. The revised EOS was launched in March 2015.

ODDS and VR successfully pulled data for at least one item in each area prioritized by the cross agency working team for this report. These ‘first pulls’ are setting the baseline for these measures. This means we can perform analysis in future reports, demonstrating Oregon’s performance in each area. Data for state fiscal year (SFY) 2015 in this report is subject to upward revisions in future reports, because all ODDS billing data and VR data is not yet complete for SFY 2015.

⁴ Discovery is a new short-term ODDS employment service that provides exploration of employment through work experiences, informal interviews, and other activities designed to explore the individual’s interests and strengths. More information regarding the Discovery service can be found in the Discovery FAQs:

<http://www.dhs.state.or.us/spd/tools/dd/cm/Discovery%20FAQ.pdf>

For purposes of showing performance of the system over time, this report references the annual Employment First Data Report. That report includes established metrics, showing performance over time. Discussion of these results is on page 29.

Employment First Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Focal Areas

Employment First uses the following structural framework to highlight the quality assurance and quality improvement focal areas for this initiative: Quality of **Planning**, Quality of **Providers**, Quality of **Services**, Quality of **Training**, Quality of **Data**, and Quality of **Life**. Consistent with national trends,⁵ Oregon’s system focuses on quality outcomes with the ultimate goal of improving the employment outcomes for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Using the above structural framework, this update will detail the current status of the Quality Assurance Strategies and Quality Improvement Initiatives originally published in the 2014 Quality Assurance Plan.

Quality of Planning

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Service planning documents across ODDS, VR and ODE reflect the needs and desires of individual; planning includes discussion and documentation around employment; plans across agencies reflect the same outcome and are coordinated and complementary. Success is more than just planning for and delivering the needed services. Quality of Planning is ultimately demonstrated by the outcomes individuals achieve.

Key questions that will guide our work:

- Do plans, and does the planning process, meaningfully address employment services and reflect the expectation of integrated employment?
- Is planning and the documentation generated as consistent as possible across agencies to minimize the time the individual has to spend “starting over” or duplicating information or activities?

⁵ See “A Review of Current Trends in Quality Assurance of Services Provided to Persons with Developmental Disabilities,” by Gary L. Siegel, Ph.D, Institute of Applied Research, St. Louis, Missouri, July 2000.

- What additional documentation would be helpful to ensure seamless transition between programs?
- What monitoring system(s) will we rely on for oversight of planning documents?
- Do we provide our services in as timely a manner as possible across all service segments?

A. Quality Assurance Activities

Goal 1: Continue to monitor and evaluate employment service planning across all agencies to assure informed choice and compliance with integrated employment service expectations

1. Goal 1, Strategy 1: Timeliness of Service Planning

Strategy: Continue to monitor and evaluate timeliness of service planning across all programs (ODDS, VR, ODE).

Update: The cross agency working team brainstormed key time frames to monitor. Questions guiding this discussion were: What are the key timeframes to monitor relating to employment service planning across the involved programs? How long are employment outcomes maintained? The time frames the team decided to focus on first were:

VR:

- Application to eligibility;
- Eligibility to plan;
- Application to employment outcome.

ODDS:

- Length of time in employment path community and employment path facility;
- Length of time employed after transfer to ODDS employment supports.

Next, the Employment First QA Analyst assessed the availability of data for the July 2015 QA update with the Employment First and VR data analysts. For this report, data was available for the VR time frames. For the ODDS time frames, data methodology will be developed and reported on in future reports.

Why are these identified time frames important measures to focus on for VR? Failing to provide services in a timely manner can be a barrier to ODDS clients accessing VR services, and can ultimately affect the quality of the individual outcomes achieved and the individual’s satisfaction with those services. For instance, the 2013 Oregon VR and State Rehabilitation Council Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment survey showed that both clients and VR staff believed that timeliness of service is a high priority in improving employment outcomes.⁶

Application to Eligibility

Why is time from application to eligibility important to measure? Congress’s establishment of the 60-day timeframe for VR application to eligibility was based on its intention that “eligible individuals should receive Vocational Rehabilitation services expeditiously.”⁷ There are two presumptions that support this intention and help ODDS individuals gain access to services quickly. One is a presumption of eligibility for Social Security recipients and beneficiaries.⁸ The other is a presumption that eligible individuals can benefit from an employment outcome.⁹ These presumptions underscore the intention that VR complete eligibility determinations quickly.

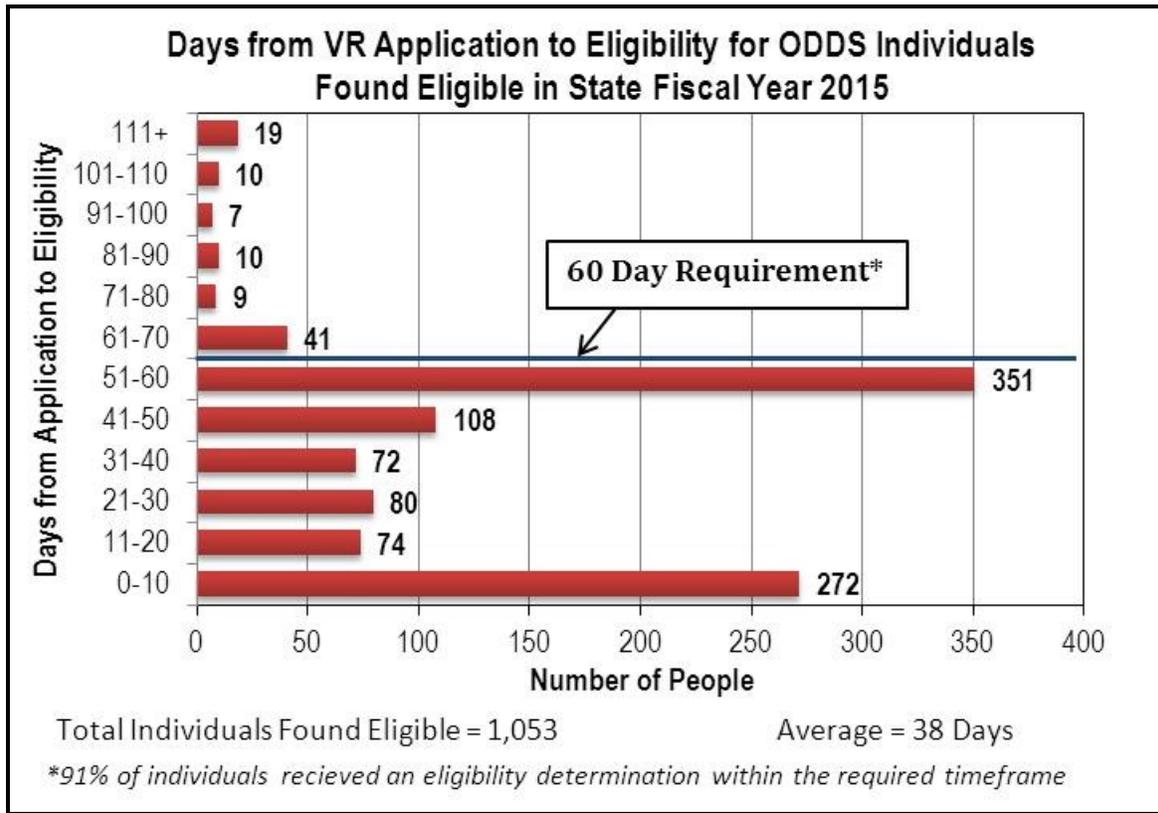
⁶ One important source of feedback on VR customer satisfaction: the 2013 Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation and State Rehabilitation Council Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (the “VR Survey”), available at <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/SRC/Documents/2013%20Comprehensive%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf>

⁷ RSA Policy Guidance Document on Vocational Rehabilitation, "Eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation Services Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended" (RSA IM-93-17) (May 11, 1993). Many of the changes outlined in this Informational Memorandum were designed to “streamline the eligibility determination process and to enhance the access of individuals to vocational rehabilitation services,” both themes that continue today with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

⁸ 34 CFR 361.42(a)(3); see also OAR 582-050-0020 (6).

⁹ 34 CFR 361.42(a)(2); see also OAR 582-050-0020 (5).

2. VR Application to Eligibility (Graph 1)



Graph 1

The data in **Graph 1** above will help to determine whether federal requirements for timeliness of service delivery (VR application to eligibility) are being met. This data will also help show how quickly ODDS individuals access VR services.

Results:¹⁰ Federal regulations require VR to complete the eligibility determination within 60 days of application. Exceptions are made for exceptional and unforeseen circumstances, extended evaluations, and trial work periods.¹¹ Of the 1,053 ODDS individuals that closed in SFY 2015, 957 (**91%**) were given an eligibility determination within the required time frame. This percentage does not include individuals who were granted extensions under the above exceptions. The total average days from application to eligibility were 38.

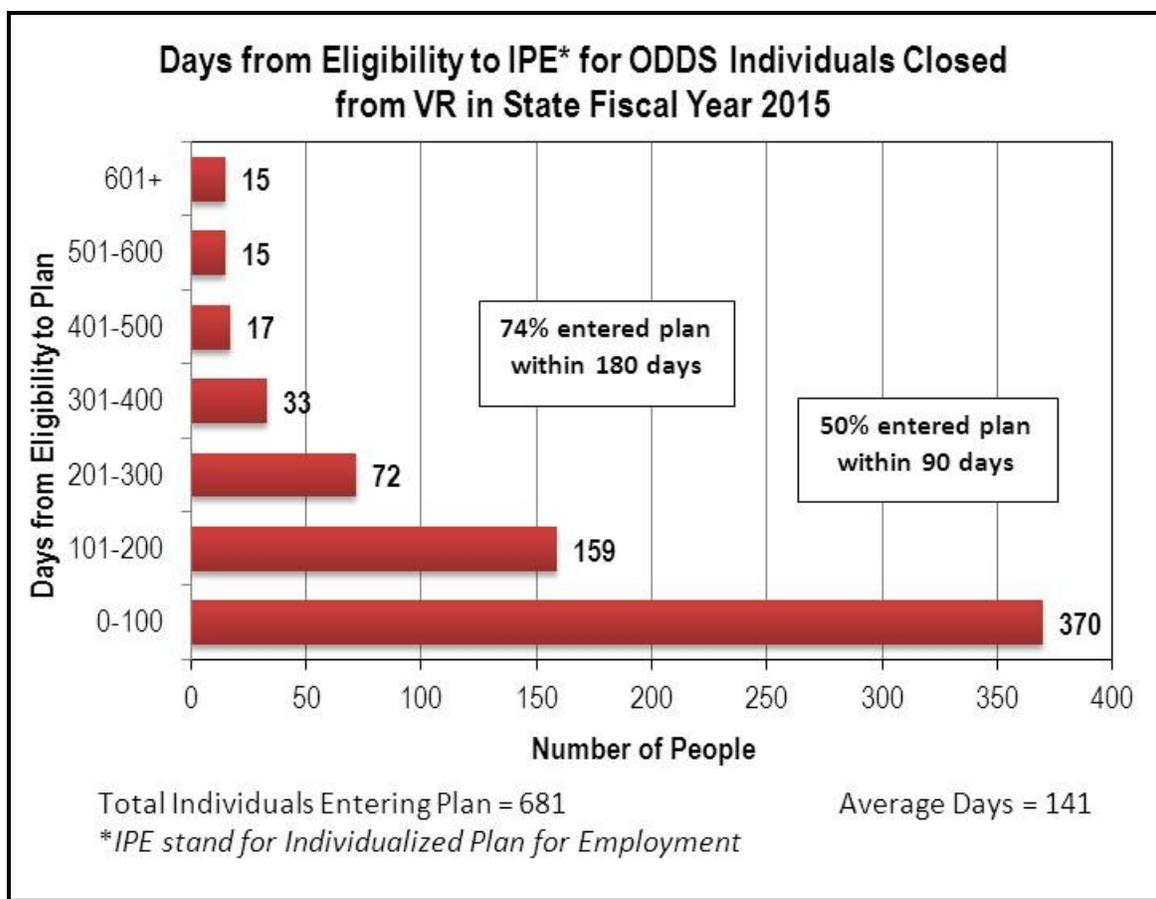
¹⁰ All VR data published in this report represents ODDS clients at VR, not the general VR population.

¹¹ 34 CFR 361.41 (b)(1).

Eligibility to Plan

Why is the VR eligibility-to-plan timeframe another important measure to focus on for VR? WIOA provides that “[t]he individualized plan for employment must be developed *as soon as possible*, but not later than 90 days after the date of determination of eligibility . . . ”¹² This measure will help to monitor whether legal requirements for service delivery are met. It will also help programs to evaluate whether changes are needed to existing systems in order to ensure ODDS clients are able to access VR services in a timely manner.

3. VR Eligibility to Plan (Graph 2)



Graph 2

¹² “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act” (PL 113-128, July 22, 2014), Section 413(b)(4)(B) (emphasis added).

Results: New proposed WIOA regulations require VR to complete the individualized plan for employment within 90 days of eligibility.¹³ This requirement went into effect on January 1, 2015 for any applications submitted after that date (not all eligible cases awaiting plan after that date). Therefore, data pulled by plan date would not accurately show results under each requirement. We report instead on the general results of the entire state fiscal year.

Of the 1,097 ODDS individuals that closed in VR in state fiscal year 2015, 681 entered a VR Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) at some point before closure. Of these individuals, 341 (**50%**) entered plan within 90 days of their eligibility determination, and 507 (**74%**) entered plan within 180 days of eligibility. The average was 140 days. **Graph 2** shows the eligibility to plan results in 100 day increments. Reasons individuals fell after the prior 180 day requirement included mutual agreement by the client and counselor, unforeseen circumstances, and lack of agreement over the proposed IPE, among other allowable reasons. These can be seen in Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 582-050-0000.

Application to Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation at VR means a successful closure: a successful employment outcome that is maintained for at least 90 days (for “an appropriate period of time, but not less than 90 days, necessary to ensure the stability of the employment outcome...” 34 CFR 361.56.) For the rest of this report, rehabilitation will be called ‘employment outcome’.

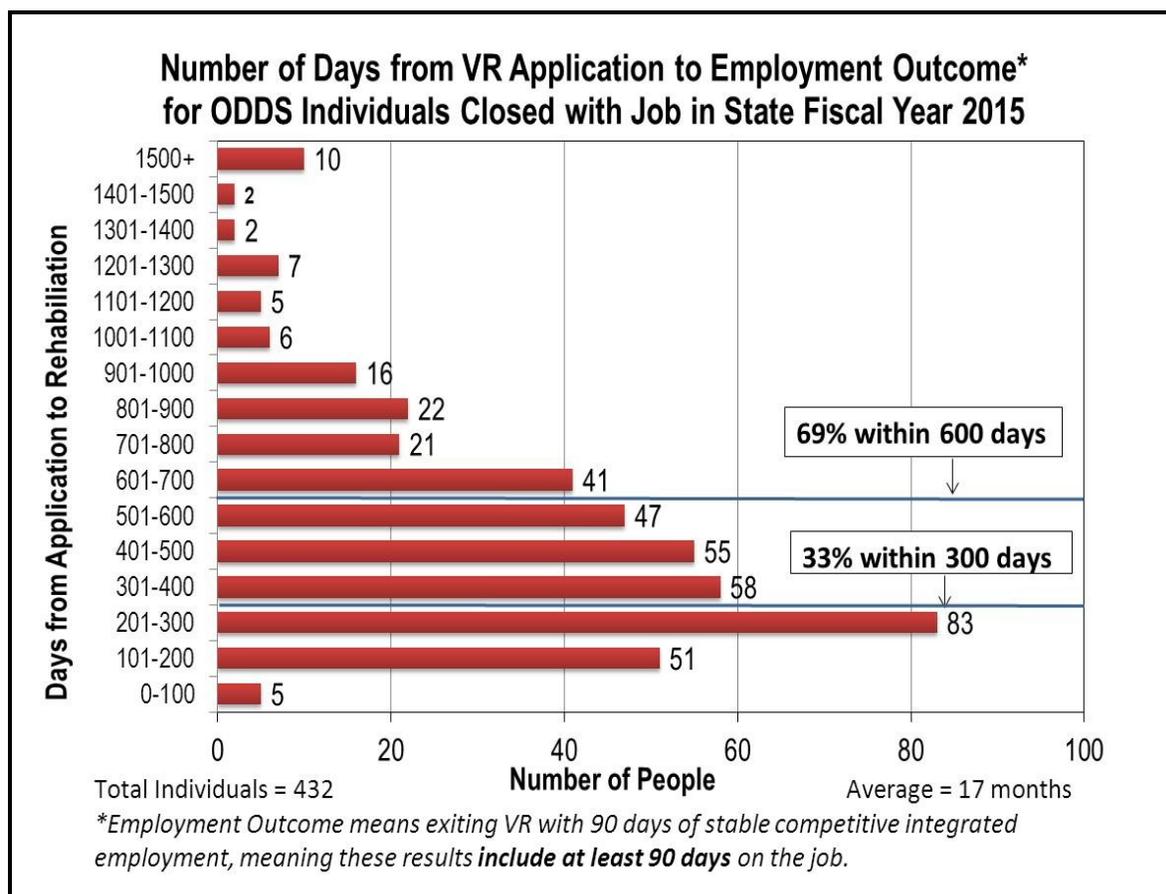
Why is the timeframe from application to employment outcome important to focus on for VR? Timely services and obtaining a job promptly after applying for VR services can be important for a successful career. According to a study by the Institute for Community Inclusion, getting a job quickly “boosts self-confidence and prevents applicants from losing work skills as a consequence of inactivity. Moreover, employers may prefer candidates whose work history shows limited gaps in employment.”¹⁴ The

¹³ Proposed 34 CFR 361.45(e), found on page 21062 of the proposed rule titled “State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program; State Supported Employment Services Program; Limitations on Use of Subminimum Wage”, posted 4/16/2015 on the Federal Register (www.federalregister.gov).

¹⁴ Migliore, A. & Smith, F.A., 2007. “Timeframe from Application to Closure in Integrated Employment for Vocational Rehabilitation Customers with Developmental Disabilities” (Data Note 14). University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion.

data in **Graph 3** below will help track the overall time frame for successful outcomes for ODDS individuals, which can be compared to outcomes for all non-ODDS individuals.

4. VR Application to Employment Outcome (Graph 3)



Graph 3

Results: Of 432 ODDS individuals closed with an employment outcome in state fiscal year 2015, 139 (**33%**) reached that outcome within 300 days, and 299 (**69%**) within 600 days. For number of days from application to employment outcome, the average for ODDS individuals was 514 days (17 months). As a comparison, the average for non-ODDS individuals closed with an employment outcome in state fiscal year 2015 was 516 days, showing almost no difference in this measure for ODDS individuals.

The activities that occur during this time period include eligibility determination, development and implementation of the IPE,¹⁵ achieving the employment outcome, and maintaining the outcome for at least 90 days. This means the results include at least 90 days on the job. Services that occur before closure may include job development and placement, job coaching, supported employment, a school or training program, transition services, and other possibilities based on the needs and goals of the individual.¹⁶

It is also important to note that “the time elapsed between application and closure is not necessarily a measure of individual success in employment outcomes. Applicants who are students may delay looking for employment until after completing secondary or postsecondary education. Moreover, some applicants may receive services beyond the 90th day of employment, extending the date of case closure in comparison to job entry.”¹⁷

5. Goal 1, Strategy 2: Enhance Employment-Related Aspects of ODDS QA Field Reviews

Strategy: Work with ODDS QA Staff to enhance the monitoring of the employment-related aspects of the current ODDS QA Field Reviews.

Update: This item was accomplished with implementation of the new employment tab of the Developmental Disabilities Quality Assurance Field Review tool.¹⁸ This tab asks five new questions related to the employment goal and Career Development Plan (CDP) of the individual file being reviewed. The questions are designed to determine if conversations are occurring regarding employment, if CDP’s are being completed with goals related to obtaining, maintaining, and/or advancing in individual integrated employment, and if the services necessary to meet those goals are being provided. The ODDS QA field team started using this tool in January 2015, with this cycle’s reviews continuing through September 2015.

¹⁵ These plans must include the specific desired employment outcome and the services needed to achieve this outcome (34 CFR 361.46(a)).

¹⁶ 34 CFR 361.48.

¹⁷ Migliore, *supra* note 14.

¹⁸ ODDS QA reviews every brokerage and CDDP on a two year cycle using the field review tool, with approximately 400 files reviewed per year.

6. Goal 1, Strategy 3: VR Program Effectiveness

Strategy: Work with VR QA Staff to develop data to support continued analysis and evaluation of effectiveness of program activities.

Update: The cross agency working team brainstormed VR process steps and outcomes to monitor. Questions guiding this discussion were: Once ODDS individuals reach VR, are they making it to plan, and then to an employment outcome? Are they retaining the job? How do these outcomes vary across providers/ job developers? The items the team decided to initially focus on were:

- Job development performance/ vendor level outcomes: number of placements, and wages and hours of those placements;
- Wages;
- Hours worked per week;
- Of state fiscal year 2015 closures, number that went to plan and number that closed VR with stable employment (successful closure requires at least 90 days on the job).

Why are these important measures? They are all measures that focus on the outcomes achieved for individuals against recognized quality standards and measures, such as those used by the National Core Indicators survey. The National Core Indicators (NCI) are used across states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families.¹⁹

The vendor-level data in **Appendix A** will help to better monitor individual vendor performance. It also shows vendors their performance so they can work to achieve better outcomes. This information is also important for consumers to have in order to make fully-informed choices when selecting VR vendors.

The data reported below (wages) and shown in Graph 4 (hours) are measures that are sometimes indicators of the quality of the job placement for an individual. These are important to monitor for trends as well as to indicate if program strategies are working.

¹⁹ There are 11 work indicators measured by the Adult Consumer Survey, which include hours worked, earnings, and length of employment retention. See <http://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>

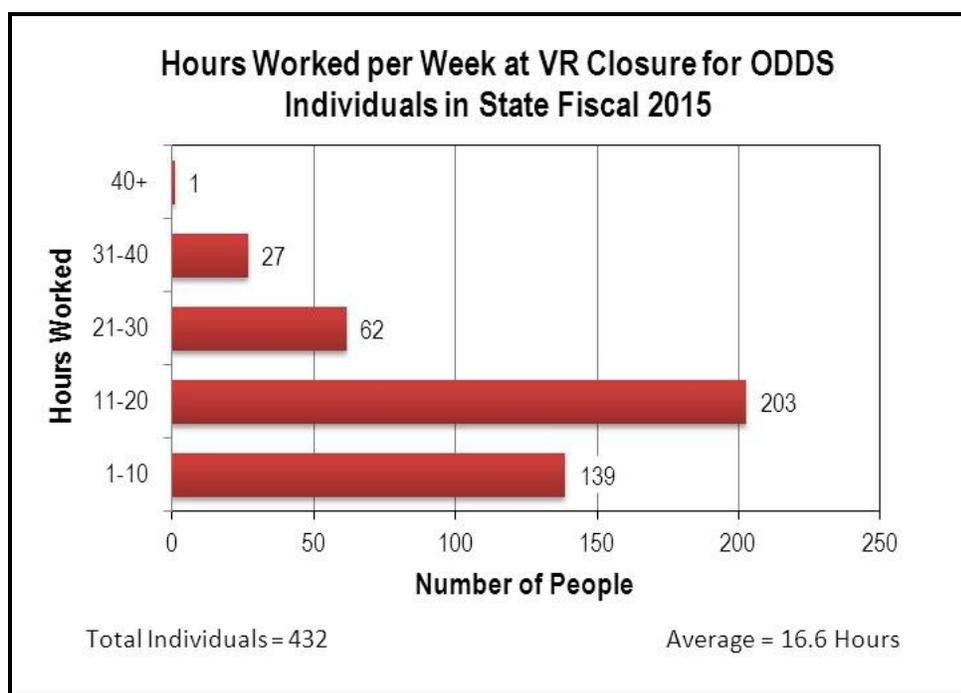
Results:

Provider level outcomes: The table in **Appendix A** on pages 44-48 shows outcomes by vendor for ODDS individuals closed in state fiscal year 2015. The reported outcomes are number of total closures, number and percent of successful closures, and average hours and wages of those jobs.

Wages: VR successfully closed 432 ODDS individuals in state fiscal year 2015. The wages for these individuals at VR closure ranged from \$9.10 to \$18.40 per hour, with an average of \$9.55 per hour. There were 293 individuals (**68%**) that made between \$9.10 and \$9.25,²⁰ and 139 people (**32%**) made above \$9.25.

Hours Worked: The average hours worked at VR job placements for all ODDS individuals in state fiscal year 2015 were 16.6 hours per week. There were 293 individuals (**68%**) that worked over 10 hours per week, and 90 (**21%**) that worked over 20 hours per week.

7. Hours Worked Per Week at VR Closure (Graph 4)



Graph 4

²⁰ The minimum wage in Oregon rose during state fiscal year 2015, from \$9.10 to \$9.25 an hour. Therefore, it's not possible to report state fiscal year 2015 wages as at or above 'minimum wage'. Actual wages are reported instead.

Plan and closure: Of the 1,097 ODDS individuals that closed in VR in state fiscal year 2015, 681 (62%) entered an IPE at some point before they closed. There were 432 (39%) closed successfully with an employment outcome.

8. Goal 1, Strategy 4: ODE Data Related to Employment Service Planning

Strategy: Monitor and evaluate data available from ODE related to effectiveness of employment service planning.

Update: ODE collects data on employment outcomes and goals for students. The Post School Outcomes Survey (PSO) is a phone survey given to students one year after their graduation, and the Exit Survey is given upon graduation. Both ask questions related to a student's employment and plans for employment. An ODE/DHS data sharing agreement is being updated to include additional data points from the PSO survey, as well as data points from the Exit Survey. DHS and ODE are currently finalizing the updated data sharing agreement, and future reports will reflect this new data. The PSO data points already included in the agreement are reported on below.²¹

Why are the measures depicted in **Graphs 5-8** important measures? These are often viewed as quality indicators in defining successful employment outcomes for transition-age youth and young adults experiencing intellectual and developmental disabilities.²² According to a 2013 report from the Institute for Community Inclusion, "Experiencing paid employment both during and immediately after high school is a critical step on the path toward economic self-sufficiency in adulthood."²³

²¹ PSO results were already calculated and available; therefore, they are included in this report along with the areas prioritized by the cross agency working team for data development.

²² See, e.g., Sulewski, J.S., Zalewska, A., and Butterworth, J. (2012). "Indicators for Improving Educational, Employment, and Economic Outcomes for Youth and Young Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities: A National Report on Existing Data Sources." University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion, available at http://www.communityinclusion.org/pdf/addreport_F.pdf

²³ Migliore, A., & Winsor, J. (2013). "State Trends in the Vocational Rehabilitation Engagement of Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities". University of Massachusetts Boston, Institute for Community Inclusion, available at https://www.communityinclusion.org/article.php?article_id=357

Knowing how many students worked within the first 12 months after leaving school (**Graph 5**) combined with information on where they are working (**Table 1**) will help agencies to monitor program strategies that are focused on increasing integrated employment for transition-age youth.

Similarly, **Graph 6**, depicting job retention, also provides information about the success of job placements and provides data that can be monitored for trends and tracking progress or regression.

The data reported below (Hours—**Graph 7** and Wages—**Graph 8**) are important to monitor for trends as indicators of the quality of the job placement for an individual.

Post School Outcomes Data

This PSO data reflects students who left school between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 that did not return for special education services in 2013-14 in any state school district. These students are called ‘school leavers’. School districts conducted PSO interviews between June 1 and September 13, 2014. The numbers report what the student did in the first 12 months after leaving school. That means these interviews do not include Summer 2014 activity, only what was done by June 2014. Of the 2,255 PSO interviews conducted in 2014, 361 were matched as individuals in the ODDS system.²⁴ All percentages and data reported below are on these ODDS individuals. All definitions/ descriptors are those used by ODE and the PSO.

²⁴ Due to differences in ODE and ODDS classification of individuals, it is not possible to determine the statistical significance of this sample at this time.

Results: The Post School Outcomes Survey counts any of the following as work: In a company, business or service with people with and without disabilities, in the military, in supported employment, self-employed, family business, sheltered employment, and employed while in jail or prison. In this case, 18.4 percent of ODDS respondents that worked since leaving school reported that they were working in sheltered employment (7.8 percent of total ODDS respondents).

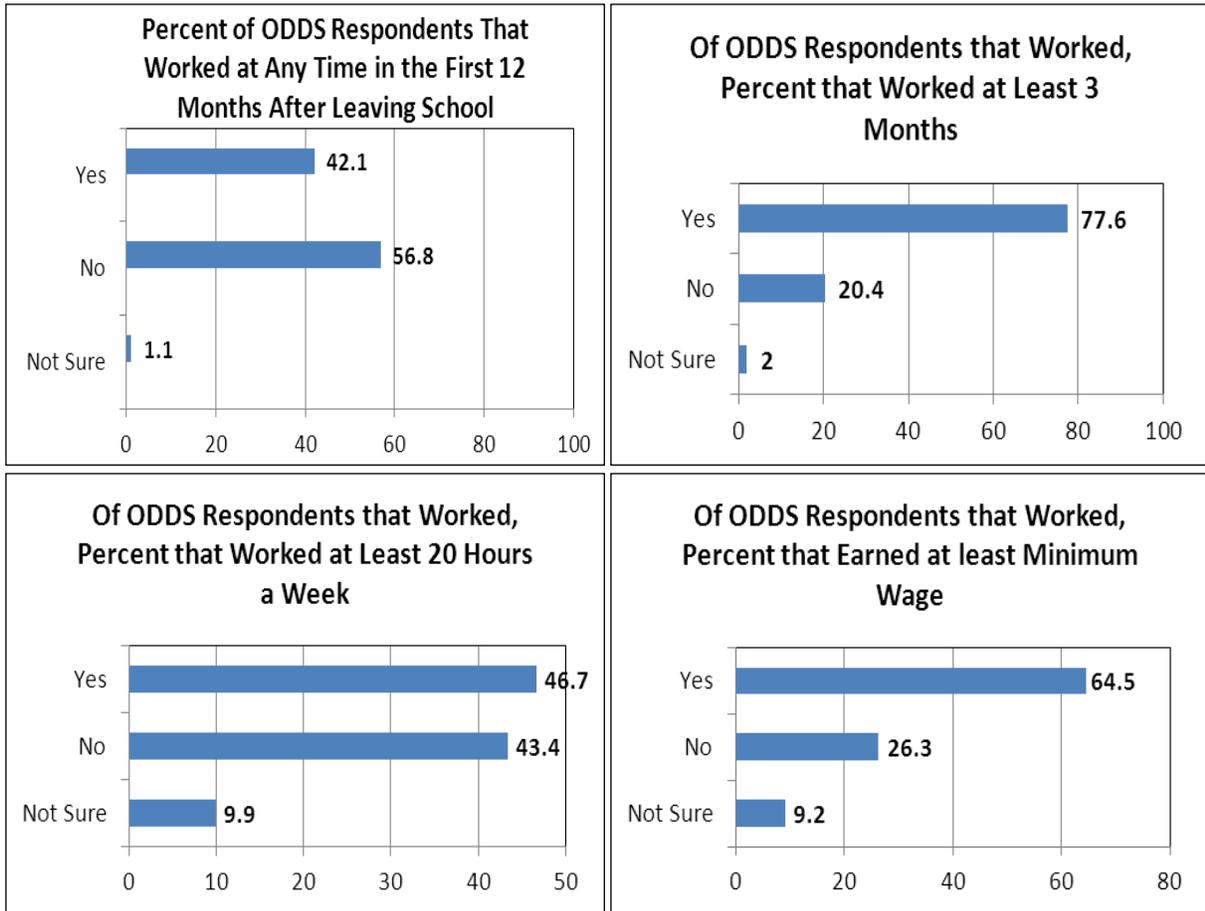
1. ODE Job Location (Table 1)

Job Location	Percent of ODDS Respondents that Worked at Each Location
Company, business, or service with people with and without disabilities	60.5%
Self-employed	2.0%
In Supported Employment (paid work with services and wage support to the employer)	11.8%
Family's business	3.3%
In sheltered employment (where most workers have disabilities)	18.4%
Other	2.0%
Don't Know/ No answer	2.0%

Table 1

Of the ODDS respondents that worked, **77.6%** worked at least 3 months, and **46.7%** worked at least 20 hours a week. This includes work at any of the job locations listed in Table 1 above, and did not need to be three consecutive months. **64.5%** of those that worked earned at least minimum wage (**27.1%** of total respondents).

2. ODE Graphs (Graph 5-8)



Graphs 5-8

We will compare these results for school leavers in the ODDS system to next year's results, in order to see if employment outcomes are changing for ODDS individuals one year after leaving school. Because the PSO is meant to capture outcomes up through 12 months after leaving school, the results for a particular class of leavers will be in this report two years after their graduation year (for example, 2014 school leavers are contacted between June and September of 2015, with data available for a July report in 2016.) Therefore, the 2014 and 2015 PSO outcomes may include those that exited school and entered sheltered workshops before the July 1, 2015 deadline barring

new entries to workshops.²⁵ Major changes may not be apparent until the 2016 PSO outcomes survey (results available in 2018). That group of leavers will not have the option to enter sheltered workshops, and the PSO will be attempted for 100 percent of leavers at that time (see Quality of Data section, Quality Improvement Initiative 1 on page 40.)

Goal 2: Develop and implement TARGETED MONITORING strategies to help evaluate the quality of employment service planning across all agencies

3. Goal 2, Strategies 1 and 2: Checklist/Procedures for Qualitative ODDS File Review

Strategies: Work with ODDS QA Staff to develop checklist and procedures for in depth qualitative file review by ODDS and EF field staff, and 2. Pursue coursework or additional training on qualitative research techniques for QA Staff who will be conducting qualitative field reviews.

Update: Employment First developed a qualitative file review checklist with the input of a national subject matter expert. ODDS employment staff will finalize this checklist and use it to perform qualitative file reviews in the new biennium.²⁶

4. Goal 2, Strategy 3: Monitor and Evaluate Effectiveness of New Career Development Plan

Strategy: Develop plan for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of ODDS's new Career Development Plan (CDP) form and planning process.

Update: The CDP is now part of the new One ISP (meaning one uniform format for an Individual Support Plan), implemented January - June 2015.²⁷ Every new or renewed ISP is required to have a CDP, unless the individual makes an informed decision not to

²⁵ After July 1, 2015, sheltered workshops in Oregon can no longer accept new clients. See Oregon Administrative Rule 407-025-0020(2); See also ODDS Policy Transmittals 15-006, 15-007, and 15-022 found here: <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/pt2015.htm>

²⁶ The new biennium begins July 1, 2015.

²⁷ Oregon has adopted a new ISP that will be used, at a minimum, for all individuals with I/DD who are receiving case management and either a K Plan or a Waiver service. This replaces 11 different ISPs that were previously used based on the setting an individual lived.

pursue employment. In those situations the individual submits a Decision Not to Explore Employment (DNE). A DNE explicitly states that an individual does not wish to seek employment, and the reason for this decision. The One ISP and CDP are currently paper documents only, not electronic documents. ODDS employment staff will monitor the CDP in future qualitative file reviews.

5. Goal 2, Strategy 4: Analyze Effectiveness of Specially-Trained VR Counselors

Strategy: Work with VR to analyze effectiveness of VR strategy to assign ODDS consumers to specially-trained VR Counselors (DD Specialists).

Update: The same measures created by the cross agency team to measure VR outcomes and time frames will be calculated using only individuals assigned to the VR I/DD specialists. These results will then be compared to the general results. This specific data was not available for this report, but will be included in future QA reports.

6. Goal 2, Strategy 5: Monitor ODDS Time-Limited Services

Strategy: Develop and implement strategy for monitoring ODDS time-limited services and reviewing time in status.

Update: Due to the changes in ODDS data systems,²⁸ we will now be able to track the amount of time an individual receives employment path community or facility services. We can only track this data as of the time of the data system transition (September 2014), making the data not illustrative at this time of how long individuals are spending in these services. However, we will report this data in future reports.

B. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. ODE Summary of Performance (content)

Strategy: Work with ODE to evaluate feasibility of enhancing the requirements for the Summary of Performance to be a more robust “school leaving” document (consider modeling after National Transition Documentation Summit).

²⁸ These changes are described on page 6 of this report under ‘Methodology’.

Update: A Summary of Performance is a summary of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting their postsecondary goals.²⁹ ODE is currently developing a plan to enhance the Summary of Performance so that it is a more useful document to individuals in their post-school endeavors, including employment. ODE’s efforts include enhancing the document so that it supports the seamless transition from school age to adult services, such as VR and ODDS.

2. ODE Summary of Performance (utilization)

Strategy: Work with ODE to evaluate feasibility of requiring that a Summary of Performance be provided to all individuals in the Target Population under Executive Order No. 15-01 (ODDS individuals aged 16-24).

Update: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) does not require a Summary of Performance for students who are leaving school before age 21 due to graduation with a modified diploma or another diploma or certificate. However, ODE strongly recommends that school districts provide a Summary of Performance for these students. In the interest of ensuring this happens, ODE is currently developing a plan to require in rule that the Summary of Performance be completed for 100 percent of special education students.

Quality of Providers

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Providers embrace the belief that individuals with I/DD can work in integrated settings; there is consistency in qualifications and credentialing by position across programs, and core competencies are in place. There is support for transformation of providers who wish to transition from facility-based services to community-based services. Benchmark performance standards for providers (i.e., outcomes relating to wages, hours, length of time in job) are established and used to evaluate performance and quality of outcomes achieved for individuals.

²⁹ OAR 581-015-2105(5).

Key questions that will guide our work:

- What competencies will we require of individuals or organizations providing employment services?
- What performance-based measurements can we put in place to measure provider productivity and quality?
- What strategies are we going to use to monitor providers?
- How can we facilitate the sharing of best practices among providers?

C. Quality Assurance Activities

GOAL 1: Monitor implementation of core competencies for employment service providers

1. Goal 1, Strategy 1: Core Competency-Based Qualifications for ODDS Providers

Strategy: Work with ODDS and Office of Licensing and Regulatory Oversight (OLRO) to support implementation of core competency-based qualifications for ODDS independent and agency employment service providers.

Update: ODDS has started implementation of this item: all new employment professionals entering the supported employment workforce in Oregon on or after January 1, 2015 must complete core competency training within 90 days of providing the employment service. Employment professionals include all employees of provider organizations, personal support workers, and independent contractors who provide any employment service. Furthermore, effective January 1, 2015, all employment professionals regardless of hire date must demonstrate the core competencies within one year of employment, and annually thereafter. The core competencies are demonstrated by successfully completing a department approved credentialing program, training courses incorporating the core competencies, and/or an annual department approved continuing education training.

These core competency requirements are required in rule (OAR 411-345-0030).³⁰ Therefore, ODDS and OLRO are developing a plan to include the core competency requirements in the licensing and certification reviews performed by OLRO.³¹

ODDS providers also self-report compliance with these requirements biannually through the Employment Outcome Survey.

GOAL 2: Develop and implement TARGETED MONITORING strategies to help evaluate the quality of employment services providers and delivery of employment services

2. Goal 2, Strategy 1: Certification and Field Review Process

Strategy: Work with OLRO Staff to revise licensing and certification regulatory requirements and field review process, as needed, to reflect integrated employment expectations.

Update: Currently, there is not a licensure requirement for ODDS employment providers in Oregon. There are certification requirements, governed by the requirements set for providers in the Oregon Administrative Rules. These requirements include qualifications of staff. Changes to these staff qualification requirements include the core competency requirement discussed in the previous item, as well as new credentialing requirements. Effective July 1, 2016, agency service providers and independent contractors must have a minimum of one employee who has department approved credentialing. These credentials may include the Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators' (ACRE) Basic or Professional Certificates, a current Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) Certification, or a Department-approved substantial equivalent.

The OLRO field review process will include checking for these credentialing standards, because OLRO reviews any requirement set in rule.

ODDS providers also self-report compliance with these requirements biannually through the Employment Outcome Survey.

³⁰ See <http://www.dhs.state.or.us/policy/spd/transmit/ar/2015/ar15004.pdf>

³¹ OLRO reviews providers for all requirements set in rule. These reviews currently occur every 5 years.

3. Goal 2, Strategy 2: Enhanced Monitoring Strategies for Providers

Strategy: Work with OLRO Staff to develop and implement enhanced monitoring strategies specific to providers of employment services (random quality checks, on-site inspections).

Update: OLRO is currently conducting field reviews of employment providers. Updates to this process include any new requirements set in rule, such as the core competency and credentialing requirements described in the preceding two items. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

GOAL 3: Develop and implement PERFORMANCE-BASED TOOLS to evaluate employment service providers, incorporating customer feedback where possible

4. Goal 3, Strategy 1: VR Vendor Report Card

Strategy: Support implementation of VR Job Development Vendor Report Card (including feedback from job developer customer satisfaction survey, if possible).

Update: VR currently monitors vendor performance (see Appendix A) but does not use a report card format. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

5. Goal 3, Strategy 2: Performance-Based Standards for ODDS Employment Service Providers

Strategy: Develop common benchmark performance-based standards for ODDS employment service providers and monitor performance against those standards.

Update: This item was not prioritized by the cross agency working team for this report. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

6. Goal 3, Strategy 3: Performance of School Leavers by School District

Strategy: Monitor performance of school leavers by district through Post-School Outcomes (PSO) data on school report cards.

Update: The PSO data on school report cards is not only ODDS individuals; it represents all special education students. ODE and DHS are updating the ODE/DHS data sharing agreement to include additional data points from the Post-School Outcomes (PSO) survey, data points from the Exit Survey, and school district identification of ODDS individuals (See Goal 1, Strategy #4 under Planning). DHS and ODE are currently finalizing the updated data sharing agreement. The PSO data points already included in the agreement are presented in this report. See graphs 5-8 on page 20.

D. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. Provider Quality Assurance Programs; State Template for Data

Strategies: 1. Work within DHS (ODDS, VR and OLRO) to evaluate existing requirements for provider quality assurance programs to determine whether changes are needed to standards, monitoring, reporting, and other requirements to support implementation of the Employment First Initiative, and 2. Support development of a state template to collect quality assurance program data from providers.

Update: Due to the prioritization of the other ODDS and cross agency items in this plan, a plan to enhance provider-level QA systems has not been developed at this time. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

2. Mentoring Program for New Employment Specialists

Strategies: Evaluate feasibility and desirability of supporting development of a mentoring program that matches experienced and successful employment specialists with newly certified employment specialists, and 4. If a mentoring program is implemented, consider waiver amendments to classify mentoring employment

specialists as experts, which could enable them to receive additional pay as a mentor-classified Employment Specialist.

Update: Due to the prioritization of the other ODDS and cross agency items in this plan, this item was not prioritized by the cross agency working team for this report. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

Quality of Services

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Program outcomes are achieved; more individuals are working in integrated jobs in their communities. Focus is on delivery of employment services in the most integrated setting possible, not enrollment and involvement in an employment program. Funding paid to providers of services is tied to service quality and outcomes.

Key questions that will guide our work:

- How will we evaluate whether we are providing the right services?
- How will we evaluate the quality of services provided?
- How do we assess whether we are incentivizing the provision of integrated employment services?
- Are we providing services in as timely a manner as possible?

E. Quality Assurance Activities

GOAL 1: Continue to monitor and evaluate outcomes across all agencies and in all service settings to assure compliance with integrated employment service expectations

1. Goal 1, Strategy 1: Established Program Outcomes and Targets

Strategy: Monitor established program outcomes and targets to look for trends to inform Employment First quality assurance and quality improvement efforts

(Requirements and metrics in Executive Order 15-01, Metrics in Integrated Employment Plan, Metrics established for EF Strategic priorities).

Update: The Employment First Report, published annually in July,³² reports on the Executive Order and Integrated Employment Plan metrics. These metrics are monitored by the statewide Executive Order Stakeholder Policy Group. The July 2015 report shows positive increase in the number of applicants to VR, individuals entering IPE at VR, and successful closures with competitive integrated employment from VR. The report states:

“According to VR data for ODDS service recipients, growth in several key areas continued in SFY 2015.

In SFY 2015 there were:

- 1,307 applicants to VR, an annual increase of 7.7 percent;
- 1,023 individuals³³ entered an Individualized Plan for Employment known as an IPE, an annual increase of 61.6 percent; and
- 428 successful closures with Competitive Integrated Employment, an annual increase of 40.3 percent.

The growth in ODDS service recipients exiting VR with Competitive Integrated Employment has also increased the ratio of people exiting VR with a job. In SFY 2012, 31 percent of ODDS service recipients with VR case closures exited with Competitive Integrated Employment. This number has increased steadily over the last three years to 40 percent in SFY 2015.”

These results show that Oregon Employment First efforts are positively impacting employment outcomes, with marked improvement in individuals entering IPE and successfully closing from VR with competitive integrated employment.

³² The Employment First Report is available at <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/employment-first/DataReports/Data%20Report%20Executive%20Order%20July%202015.pdf>

³³ This number is total IPE’s entered by ODDS individuals in SFY 2015. This number differs from IPE data on pages 12 and 17 of this report because it calculates all individuals that entered an IPE in SFY 2015, as opposed to all individuals that had an IPE prior to closing their VR file in SFY 2015.

2. Goal 1, Strategy 2: Monitor and Evaluate Timeliness of Service Delivery

Strategy: Monitor and evaluate timeliness of service delivery across all agencies (ODDS, VR, ODE).

Update: See Goal 1, Strategy 1 on page 8.

3. Goal 1, Strategy 3: Additional Outcome Measures for Service Quality

Strategy: Determine feasibility and availability of data for establishing additional outcome measures for service quality to inform Employment First quality assurance and quality improvement efforts.

Update: The cross agency working team has discussed and brainstormed possible additional outcome measures. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

4. Goal 1, Strategy 4: QA Measures Related to HCBS Settings Rules

Strategy: Develop additional quality assurance measures upon issuance of sub-regulatory guidance by CMS to ensure compliance with HCBS community-based settings rules in non-residential service settings such as where employment services are provided.

Update: The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) require every state to have an approved Transition Plan to bring settings in which it provides Home and Community Based Services (Medicaid HCBS) into compliance with new federal regulations.³⁴

HCBS service settings must be “integrated in and support[] full access of individuals receiving Medicaid HCBS to the greater community, including opportunities to seek employment and work in competitive integrated settings.”³⁵ CMS issued guidance

³⁴ Information regarding Oregon’s statewide HCBS Transition Plan can be found at:

www.oregon.gov/dhs/seniors-disabilities/HCBS/Pages/Index.aspx

³⁵ 42 CFR 441.301(c)(4)(i).

regarding application of the rules to non-residential settings in December 2014. As outlined under this guidance, pre-vocational service settings must, at minimum, encourage interaction with the general public.³⁶

As part of Oregon's HCBS Transition Plan, ODDS non-residential providers completed assessments during the spring of 2015. These assessments will be evaluated along with Individual Experience Assessments (to be completed between August and September of 2015) as one tool to identify settings that do not meet the new HCBS setting requirements.

CMS reported on July 9, 2015 that it has started reviews of state wide transition plans. The Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss additional QA measures upon CMS approval of Oregon's statewide HCBS Transition Plan.

GOAL 2: Develop and implement TARGETED MONITORING strategies to help evaluate the quality of employment services being provided to individuals with I/DD

5. Goal 2, Strategies 1 and 2: Checklist/Procedures for Qualitative ODDS File Review

Strategies: 1. Work with ODDS QA Staff to develop checklist and procedures for in-depth (qualitative) file review by ODDS and EF field staff, and 2. Pursue coursework or additional training on qualitative research techniques for QA Staff who will be conducting qualitative field reviews.

Update: Employment First developed a qualitative file review checklist with the input of a national subject matter expert. ODDS employment staff will finalize this checklist and use it to perform qualitative file reviews in the new biennium.

6. Goal 2, Strategy 3: Effectiveness of New Discovery/Career Exploration Service

Strategy: Develop plan for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of new Discovery/Career Exploration service in improving employment outcomes.

³⁶ Sub-regulatory guidance can be found at: <http://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid-chip-program-information/by-topics/long-term-services-and-supports/home-and-community-based-services/downloads/q-and-a-hcb-settings.pdf>

Update: Discovery is a new short-term ODDS employment service that provides exploration of employment through work experiences, informal interviews, and other activities designed to explore the individual's interests and strengths.

The cross agency working team brainstormed ways to monitor Discovery. Questions guiding this discussion were: Do service coordinators and personal agents understand the service and when it's appropriate to authorize? Once authorized, is there provider capacity to provide the service? Do providers understand how to provide quality service and create a quality Discovery profile? Are Discovery recipients being referred to VR? Is the Discovery profile useful to VR? Does Discovery result in improved employment outcomes for individuals?

The resulting measures with data available for this report were:

- Number billing for Discovery service, and number of those in VR;
- Discovery service end date, VR application date by individual

Why are these important measures? These measures will help show how ODDS clients are accessing the new Discovery service and how quickly they are connecting with VR. In addition, this measure will help show how people are moving between the VR and ODDS systems, which could inform policy and practice changes. The data reported below is a starting point for further quantitative and qualitative analysis of the Discovery service as resources become available during the 2015-17 biennium.

Results: In state fiscal year 2015, 236 individuals completed discovery. Of those individuals, 153 had an open case in VR at some point in state fiscal year 2015. The majority of individuals (**69%**) applied for VR **before or during** their discovery service, not after. Of those that completed their VR application first, 66 (**62%**) completed the discovery service within 300 days, and 40 (**38%**) after 300 days. This can be attributed to individuals with open and ongoing VR cases choosing to use the new Discovery service.

Of individuals that used both services, 47 (**31%**) completed their discovery service before applying to VR, and 38 (**81%**) of those individuals applied to VR within 100 days.

7. Goal 2, Strategy 4: Transition Between Programs

Strategy: Improve monitoring and evaluation as individuals move between systems to ensure people maintain employment and needed supports (e.g., monitor outcomes after VR closes an individual as rehabilitated and the individual transitions to ODDS long-term employment supports and services).

Update: The cross agency working team prioritized this item, and decided the transition from ODDS to VR was equally as important. These initial measures were brainstormed:

ODDS to VR Transition: What ODDS employment services did individuals use during three month period prior to VR application? Due to the change in ODDS data systems in September 2014, this measure is not available for this report.

VR to ODDS Transition: Start date of ODDS job coaching, and VR closure date. This will show if ODDS supports start before VR supports end, allowing for a smooth transition between these two sources of employment support. It will also show lengths of time it is taking for individuals to transfer to long term supports once they start employment through VR.

Why are these measures important? The points at which individuals transition between programs are where they can sometimes “fall through the cracks” and have been identified as potential barriers to work.³⁷ Current VR policy provides guidance to help ensure smooth transitions between initial and ongoing long-term support.³⁸ This guidance includes the expectation that the transition to ongoing long-term support provided by ODDS waiver funding take place at or very near the point of job stability. It also discusses the federal guidance that VR case closure not happen until 60 days after transfer to other than VR long term support. The data reported will allow

³⁷ Among the themes identified by internal focus groups conducted as part of the 2013 VR Survey were the need for long-term supports for individuals with significant disabilities, as well as the barriers to work posed by the lack of long-term supports. See <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/SRC/Documents/2013%20Comprehensive%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf>

³⁸ See Information Memorandum Transmittal No.VR-IM-15-01, available at <http://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/PolicyRuleDocs/Supported%20Employment%20Job%20Stabilization.pdf>

programs to evaluate performance on these measures and determine whether improvements are needed.

Results: In state fiscal year 2015, 180 ODDS individuals utilized ODDS job coaching after VR job placement.³⁹ Of these individuals, 102 (**57%**) began their ODDS job coaching before their VR closure date, and 19 (**10%**) within one week of their VR closure. This shows that the majority of individuals that utilize both services are transferring to ODDS job coaching during or immediately after their VR services. Of individuals using both services, 59 (**33%**) started ODDS job coaching more than one week after their VR closure date. This may be the result of attempting natural supports first, and then utilizing long-term job coaching if it is needed later. The Employment First data analyst will perform additional analysis for future reporting.

GOAL 3: Measure success of students in each school district in achieving integrated employment outcomes.

8. Goal 3, Strategy 1: School District Level Results

Strategy: Analyze Post-School Outcomes data to identify districts meeting and not meeting state engagement targets for competitive employment.

Update: ODE currently tracks district level performance internally, which guides training and technical assistance efforts. Additionally, ODE and DHS are updating their data sharing agreement to include additional data points from the Post-School Outcomes (PSO) survey, data points from the Exit Survey, and school district of ODDS clients. This will allow for analysis of ODDS client measures at the school district level.

9. Goal 3, Strategy 2: Qualitative Analysis of Post-School Outcomes Data

Strategy: Perform qualitative analysis of Post-School Outcomes data to review responses to prompt “If you could tell your school one thing, what would you tell them

³⁹ To ensure that the ODDS supported employment was correlated to the correct VR job placement, all supported employment that began before the VR employment date were removed from this analysis.

to help better prepare transition students for life after high school?” (Prompt: What was most helpful or could have been done better?)

Update: ODE tracks and analyzes the answers to this question. Due to the identifying information found in these answers, it was not possible to add this item to the ODE/DHS data sharing agreement. It will therefore not be reported on in future Employment First QA reports; however, ODE will continue to track and analyze responses.

F. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. Initiative 1: Complaints Involving Employment Services

Strategy: Develop and implement process or system that improves our ability to track and more uniformly monitor and report on complaints involving employment services that are filed and resolved at the local/field level across all programs (ODE/VR/ODDS).

Update: Employment First currently tracks complaints at the state level and reports on them in the Employment First Report per Executive Order 15-01 (this report is available at Iworkwesucceed.org, under Data Reports). In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

Quality of Training

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Training utilizes emerging, best or evidence-based practices, is available in a variety of formats, and there is ample availability to providers, stakeholders and community partners. Individuals who receive training improve their ability to help people achieve integrated employment outcomes.

Key questions that will guide our work:

- How do we ensure that people are trained and competent to provide employment services?
- How do we determine whether we are providing enough training in the areas where it is needed?
- How do we measure the effectiveness of the training being conducted?
- How can we facilitate the sharing of best practices among Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Service Coordinators, Personal Agents, and Providers?

G. Quality Assurance Activities

GOAL 1: Monitor progress in providing foundational Employment First training to staff and other individuals involved in providing employment services (to help build culture and expectation for integrated employment)

1. Goal 1, Strategies 1, 2 and 3: Foundational Employment First Training

Strategies: 1. Compile and analyze attendance data on trainings being offered to staff and individuals involved in employment service planning for individuals with I/DD (“EF 101”—vision, values, history) to determine reach and coverage of messaging, and 2. Review post-training survey data to determine impact. 3. Ensure trainings are conducted in such a way as to provide data for tracking reach (i.e., number of attendees).

Update: Over the last year, VR, ODDS, and ODE all provided trainings that covered the basics of Employment First and helped to build the culture and expectation for integrated employment:

ODE Educator Institutes cover the basics of Employment First, as well as information on ODDS and VR. There were 11 institutes statewide and 118 school districts trained between July 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015.

VR, ODDS, and DHS Employment First trained on VR/DD collaborative practices, which include the basics of Employment First. There were nine trainings statewide, with 382 participants trained (44% VR, 56% CDDP/brokerage/ employment providers).

ODDS provided training to providers, service coordinators, and personal agents on the new ISP, which included training on the CDP (Career Development Plan) and Employment First basics. Between Jan.1, 2015 and April 1, 2015 there were 52 trainings statewide, with 2,675 total participants trained.

GOAL 2: Evaluate effectiveness of core competency training being provided for employment specialists.

2. Goal 2, Strategies 1, 2 and 3: Effectiveness of Training; Demonstration of Competency

Strategies: 1. Monitor outcomes achieved by individuals who attended training compared to those who did not. 2. Monitor whether individuals attending training were able to demonstrate competency post-training in order to attain an Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) or other certification. 3. In longer term, evaluate feasibility of implementing portfolio method to demonstrate competency as a performance tool for employment specialists cross agencies.

Update: 1. Currently, ODDS outcomes data is not connected to specific employment specialists or their core competency training. However, ODDS now requires every employment professional to demonstrate the core competencies. WiSe (Washington Initiative for Supported Employment) is developing core competency testing that employment professionals must complete within one year of hire. These tests will go live by the end of this year, and results will be monitored by the Training and Technical Assistance cross agency working team.

2. APSE does not release the number of people that do not pass the Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) exam. As of April 2015, DHS contracts with WiSe (Washington Initiative for Supported Employment) to be one of the hosts of the CESP exam. Therefore, DHS has access to passage and failure rate data for those particular exams. In the coming months, the Training and Technical Assistance cross agency working team will develop a plan for analysis of this data.

The following training and CESP numbers are not correlated, but are reported to show performance in each area:

Training numbers: DHS contracts with WiSe to provide multiple types of trainings. One is the Oregon Employment Learning Network (OELN) training, a training series

that helps employment specialists meet Oregon’s published core competencies. This training uses the Core Supported Employment Training (CSET) curriculum, which is designed to meet APSE certification. There were 10 two-day OELN trainings between Oct. 1, 2014 and June 30, 2015, with a total of 303 attendees.⁴⁰

Passage of CESP: From Sept. 2014 through June 2015, the number of Certified Employment Support Professional (CESP) certified employment specialists in Oregon rose from 47 to 82. This gives Oregon the third highest number of CESP’s in the country.

H. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. Communities of Practice

Strategy: Communities of Practice—evaluate feasibility and desirability of implementing facilitated, multi-level Employment First Communities of Practice for collaboration and dissemination of information (listserv+).

Update: This item is not currently an independent effort of any program, and was not prioritized by the cross agency working team for this report. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

2. Funding for Training

Strategy: Investigate feasibility and advisability of including funding for training in the rate paid to direct service personnel; utilization would be reported in a voluntary compliance audit at fiscal year’s end.

Update: This item is not an independent effort of any program, and was not prioritized by the cross agency working team for this report. In the coming months the Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps.

⁴⁰ Total number of actual attendees, not registrants. Total sum of attendees includes duplicated counts if individuals attended more than one seminar.

Quality of Data

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Data collection, sharing and analysis allows QA Staff to monitor and evaluate activities, informs key policy and strategy decisions and quality improvement efforts, and helps monitor progress in implementing the Executive Order.

Key questions that will guide our work:

- How do we track and measure our progress in implementing the Executive Order? What outcomes; what metrics?
- Are we using available data to inform policy and program changes as needed and to continuously improve provision of employment services to individuals with I/DD across agencies?
- Bottom line: Are we increasing the number of individuals with I/DD getting integrated jobs?

I. Quality Assurance Activities

GOAL 1: Create integrated, cross-agency data collection and reporting system to improve reporting on employment outcomes

1. Goal 1, Strategy 1: Data Sharing Agreements with Agency Partners

Strategy: Enter into data sharing agreements with key agency partners to improve reporting on outcomes.

Update: DHS has data sharing agreements in place with ODE and Oregon Employment Department (OED), allowing the Employment First data analyst to draw from multiple sources when analyzing the outcomes for ODDS clients. ODDS and VR have data sharing arrangements that do not require a formal agreement, because both programs are within the Department of Human Services.

2. Goal 1, Strategy 2: Data Quality

Strategy: Revise data sharing agreements as needed to continuously improve the quality of the available data.

Update: ODE and DHS are updating their data sharing agreement to include additional data from the Post-School Outcomes (PSO) survey, data from the Exit Survey, and district level data. The agreement also adds more individuals that can view and work with the data. DHS and ODE are currently finalizing these updated elements, and future reports will reflect this new data.

GOAL 2: Collaborate with ODDS to improve reporting and available data on ODDS employment service planning, utilization and outcomes through implementation of Plan of Care system in eXPRS.

3. Goal 2, Strategies 1 and 2: Data Collection and Reporting from ODDS Systems

Strategies: 1. Migrate data collection and reporting from EOS to Plan of Care (POC) when POC comes online, and 2. Work with ODDS to analyze needed changes to EOS system after POC comes online.

Update: Billing under Plan of Care (POC) began September 2014. All day and employment services are now collected through POC and the revised eXPRS billing system. These systems reflect new service definitions, allowing for more accurate tracking of specific ODDS services. The Employment Outcomes Survey (EOS), which collects provider-level data, was revised to reflect the new service definitions and to supplement these new systems. The new EOS launched March 2015.

J. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. Post-School Outcomes Survey (sample size)

Strategy: Collaborate with ODE, VR and ODDS to do further analysis on recommendation to increase the Post-School Outcomes Survey to be a 100 percent sample of school leavers each year. Develop plan for implementation of recommendation.

Update: This item has been accomplished. Beginning in 2016, ODE will direct school districts to contact all school-leavers for the PSO survey. This will increase the number of respondents and improve the accuracy of the data.

Quality of Life

If we are successful in achieving quality in this area, what does that success look like?

Our efforts are making a difference in people's lives. Individuals who have integrated, community employment report high satisfaction with life; health and happiness; engagement in their community; income, increased opportunities and the potential for development of wealth. Demand for employment services by self-advocates and families increases. Individuals are moving from isolation to inclusion in the life of the community through employment.

Key questions that will guide our work:

- How do we recognize, value and communicate that the benefits of employment impact the whole life of a person?

K. Quality Assurance Activities

GOAL: Ensure that our efforts to improve delivery of employment services to individuals with I/DD are making a positive difference in their quality of life.

1. Goal 1, Strategy 1: Quality of Life Indicators from National Core Indicators Survey

Strategy: Analyze outcomes using key quality of life indicators from ODDS's National Core Indicators (NCI) Survey Data for individuals reporting integrated employment versus sheltered employment or not employed.

Update: Oregon did not participate in the 2014-15 NCI survey. ODDS plans to resume the survey, which will help inform QA efforts. Quality of life indicators may also be examined by ODDS Employment staff. They would gather this information via

interviews with individuals using ODDS employment services.

L. Quality Improvement Initiatives

1. NCI Survey Data

Strategy: Work closely with ODDS to look for ways to continuously improve the relevance and utility of the NCI data.

Update: The Employment First QA Analyst and agency staff will discuss this item and determine next steps when ODDS resumes the NCI survey.

Conclusion

Despite many changes both internal and external to the Employment First initiative, there has been a great deal of collaborative effort to move the quality assurance and quality improvement efforts forward. Progress has been made in implementation of the 2014 QA Plan, with items in each focal area accomplished or well under way. These important efforts will continue in the next biennium as Oregon continues to develop a robust QA/QI system that informs future policy and strategic planning.

Additionally, metrics in the annual Employment First report show that Oregon outcomes are improving for ODDS individuals seeking employment services and competitive integrated jobs. This year there was an annual increase in the number of ODDS applicants to VR, and large annual increases in individuals entering IPE at VR, and successfully closing from VR with competitive integrated employment. These numbers are promising, and Oregon agencies will continue to work collaboratively to achieve positive outcomes for I/DD individuals seeking competitive, integrated employment.

Questions or any feedback on this plan can be directed to the Employment First Team at employment.first@state.or.us.

Appendix A

Outcomes by VR Vendor for ODDS Individuals Closed in State Fiscal Year 2015					
Vendor	Total Closures (Successful and Non-Successful)	Number of Successful Closures*	Success Rate	Average Weekly Hours**	Average Hourly Wage
2nd SHIFT LLC	1	1	100%	20.00	\$9.25
ABILITIES AT WORK	7	3	43%	20.00	\$9.15
ABILITREE	13	9	69%	10.78	\$9.35
ACKLEY COUNSELING AND EMPLOYMENT SVCS	4	0			
ADULT LEARNING SYSTEMS OF OREGON	7	4	57%	19.00	\$9.33
ALBERT J LOGAN	3	0			
ALBERTINA KERR CENTERS	1	1	100%	20.00	\$9.50
ALTERNATIVE WORK CONCEPTS INC	4	2	50%	14.50	\$9.10
ANDREW J PARKER	3	2	67%	11.00	\$9.58
BENDER REHABILITATION AND CONSULTING LLC	1	1	100%	25.00	\$11.50
BETHESDA LUTHERAN COMMUNITIES	25	10	40%	12.70	\$9.26
BLUESUN INC	1	1	100%	12.00	\$9.75
BOBBI J PRICE	2	0			
BUSINESS UNLIMITED	1	1	100%	6.00	\$9.10
CAREER SOURCE OF OREGON	1	0			
CAREERLINK NW LLC	3	2	67%	20.00	\$9.10
CASCADE CAREER SERVICES INC	2	1	50%	10.00	\$9.10
CASCADIA BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE INC	1	0			
CENTER FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INC	1	1	100%	8.00	\$9.10
CHARLES JOEL TAYLOR	4	4	100%	17.50	\$9.93

CINDY A CHAFFEE	1	0			
CLACKAMAS COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH DIVISION	1	0			
CLEARVIEW MEDIATION AND DISABILITY	1	0			
COASTAL CAREERS	3	1	33%	15.00	\$9.10
COLLABORATIVE EMPLOYMENT INNOVATIONS LLC	12	9	75%	18.22	\$9.61
COLUMBIA CARE SERVICES INC	2	1	50%	8.00	\$9.25
COLUMBIA COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH	3	3	100%	22.00	\$9.47
COMMUNITY ACCESS SERVICES	6	5	83%	12.40	\$9.37
COMMUNITY VISION INC	2	2	100%	27.00	\$10.08
CREATING COMMUNITY IMPACT LLC	11	8	73%	10.00	\$9.75
DARRYL GREGORY	1	1	100%	15.00	\$9.50
DEBBIE FOX	1	0			
DENNIS BARBADILLO MA	1	0			
DIRKSE COUNSELING & CONSULTING INC	40	27	68%	17.11	\$9.48
DONNA LOWRY	3	3	100%	7.33	\$9.33
EASTERN OR CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING	1	0			
EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES	1	1	100%	40.00	\$9.25
EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS	5	0			
EXCEED ENTERPRISES INC	11	7	64%	15.43	\$9.65
FERNANDEZ SOCIAL SERVICES	1	0			
FOCUS ON ABILITY INC	4	2	50%	14.00	\$9.10
FULL CIRCLE OUTREACH CENTER INC	5	2	40%	17.00	\$9.55
GENESIS HUMAN RESOURCES	10	6	60%	12.33	\$9.48
GEORGIANNA TODD	1	0			

GOOD-2-GO OREGON	15	7	47%	8.43	\$9.64
GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF LANE COUNTY	6	2	33%	12.50	\$9.10
HANDICAP AWARENESS & SUPPORT LEAGUE INC	2	0			
HENDRICKSON SERVICES LLC	7	3	43%	15.33	\$10.23
HENDRICKSON SERVICES LLC	1	0			
HR GEEK LLC	1	0			
INSPIRING DESTINATIONS	1	0			
JAIME KETCHUM	5	1	20%	20.00	\$9.10
JANIE RADINOVICH-BROSE	4	4	100%	22.00	\$9.64
JEWISH FAMILY & CHILD SVCS	3	0			
JILL DUNCAN	5	4	80%	23.00	\$9.20
JOB CONSULTANTS NETWORK INC	2	2	100%	33.33	\$9.15
JOE MAXEY	13	10	77%	21.91	\$9.17
JULIA ORR	3	2	67%	13.00	\$9.80
KARLEEN BURGETT	3	2	67%	18.50	\$9.38
KELLY WALLACE	6	3	50%	25.33	\$9.50
KRISTIN SCHULTZ	1	1	100%	20.00	\$10.40
KURT GEIST	2	1	50%	10.00	\$10.00
LCC SPECIALIZED SUPPORT SERVICES	7	1	14%	30.00	\$9.25
LESLIE A HAYASE	6	4	67%	13.00	\$9.13
LETS GET TO WORK INC	3	1	33%	12.00	\$9.30
LIFEWORKS NW	1	0			
LIVING OPPORTUNITIES INC	12	10	83%	12.90	\$9.35
LUTHERAN COMMUNITY SERVICES NORTHWEST	1	1	100%	8.00	\$12.00
MACRIEB CONSULTANTS	3	2	67%	11.50	\$9.33
MAHLI CARON	2	2	100%	8.50	\$9.30
MCCAULEY POTTER FAIN ASSOCIATES INC	14	6	43%	23.33	\$10.27

MCKENZIE PERSONNEL SYSTEMS	14	9	64%	12.11	\$9.40
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF SW OREGON	1	0			
MENTOR OREGON	20	16	80%	9.35	\$9.70
MICHELLE FLICK	1	0			
MID-VALLEY REHABILITATION	12	9	75%	19.44	\$9.48
MLM CAREER COUNSELING	2	0			
ONE TO ONE EMPLOYMENT RESOURCE	1	0			
OPPORTUNITY CONNECTIONS	4	0			
OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION OF CENTRAL OREGON	7	3	43%	4.00	\$9.15
OREGON COAST HEALTHY CHOICES	4	1	25%	12.00	\$9.10
OREGON SUPPORTED LIVING PROGRAM	1	1	100%	20.00	\$9.25
PACIFIC OPPORTUNITIES INC	39	17	44%	14.76	\$9.50
PARKER VOCATIONAL SERVICES	1	0			
PARTNERSHIPS IN COMMUNITY LIVING INC	2	1	50%	10.00	\$9.10
PATHWAY ENTERPRISES INC	2	0			
PEARL BUCK CENTER INC	14	10	71%	13.80	\$9.46
PORTLAND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT INC	1	0			
RAISA FUDIM	3	2	67%	6.00	\$9.30
REACH INC	1	1	100%	39.00	\$10.00
REHABILITATION CONSULTANTS LLC	3	1	33%	15.00	\$9.10
RISE INCORPORATED	23	10	43%	23.80	\$9.87
RIVERSIDE TRAINING CENTERS INC	3	1	33%	4.00	\$9.50
ROBIN S DELAMORA	1	0			

SOCIAL COMMUNICATION CLINIC	3	2	67%	12.50	\$10.55
SOURCE FOR WORK	4	0			
SOUTHERN OREGON ASPIRE	3	2	67%	12.50	\$9.18
SOUTHERN OREGON GOODWILL INDUSTRIES	15	5	33%	15.60	\$9.87
SPRUCE VILLA INC	3	1	33%	10.00	\$9.15
ST VINCENT DEPAUL SOCIETY OF LANE COUNTY	1	0			
STACIA ELISABETH BAKER	6	2	33%	22.00	\$9.63
STAR OF HOPE ACTIVITY CENTER INC	6	1	17%	25.00	\$9.30
STEPHEN B BASON	3	2	67%	11.50	\$9.18
SUNRISE ENTERPRISES OF ROSEBURG	7	5	71%	12.60	\$9.14
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES INC	20	10	50%	17.70	\$9.43
TARA ANDERSON	2	0			
TRELLIS LLC	15	9	60%	18.56	\$9.18
TRENDSITIONS INC	1	1	100%	20.00	\$9.50
TVW INC	2	1	50%	20.00	\$9.68
UNITED CEREBRAL PALSY OF OREGON	30	20	67%	17.76	\$9.64
V.A.L.U.E.A.D.D.E.D. INC	1	0			
WEST COAST INC	3	1	33%	25.00	\$9.10
WESTERN IDAHO TRAINING COMPANY	3	2	67%	26.00	\$9.25
WHERE YOU WANT TO BE	5	1	20%	15.00	\$9.25
WORKFORCE CONNECTIONS	2	1	50%	20.00	\$9.50
Total Average	5.5	2.9	53%	15.96	\$9.50

* A successful outcome at VR is an employment outcome that is maintained for at least 90 days.

**Average hours worked by ODDS individuals placed by vendor.