State of Iowa
Iowa Department for the Blind
and
Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Parties: The parties to this Memorandum of Agreement are the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB) and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS), a division of the Iowa Department of Education.

Purpose: The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, places a major emphasis on providing services to eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities including a significant visual impairment. 34 C.F.R. § 361.24(d) provides, "If there is a separate designated State unit for individuals who are blind, the two designated State units must establish reciprocal referral services, use each other's services and facilities to the extent feasible, jointly plan activities to improve services in the State for individuals with multiple impairments, including visual impairments, and otherwise cooperate to provide more effective services, including, if appropriate, entering into a written cooperative agreement." Due to this emphasis, both IDB and IVRS desire to minimize duplication of effort and maximize the use of both agencies' resources and facilities in serving individuals with disabilities, which will enhance the ability of these individuals to achieve maximum independence by becoming employable.

Individuals with disabilities may require services from both IDB and IVRS to achieve their vocational goals and objectives. Individuals must require the unique services and meet eligibility for both agencies and show that a dual case is needed for the job candidate's best chance of independence and employment. If a dual case is not necessary, and the individual has a visual impairment that meets the eligibility criteria of IDB, the individual is then served by IDB and IVRS is not involved unless so requested by IDB.

It is mutually agreed that all participating IDB and IVRS staff will adhere to the following:

Populations Served:
Iowa Department for the Blind serves those individuals who have a visual disability that may constitute for that individual a substantial impediment to employment. In cases where substantial impediments to employment are caused by both the visual impairment and any other presenting disability, then the case is served by IDB. If the individual has co-occurring disabilities, IDB may seek out consultation and technical assistance from Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to assist with understanding, planning, and implementing services that address those other disabling conditions.

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services serves those individuals who have a non-visual physical or mental impairment that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment.

Deaf/Blind - Whereas IVRS serves individuals who are deaf, IDB serves those who are determined to be deaf/blind. If a person who is deaf is found to have a vision problem or has a condition that will lead to progressive and/or rapid vision deterioration that person is referred to the IDB for services.

I. Referrals

The referring agency shall submit a referral email or letter accompanied by all pertinent accumulated records and medical reports to the recipient's intake specialist for IDB or the Area Office for IVRS. When the individual applying for services from IVRS has a visual impairment, IVRS staff will refer the individual to IDB within 5 working days of the application. IDB staff will advise IVRS of their eligibility decision within 5 working days of the decision.

In cases where the individual applied for services from IDB and the job goal is one that requires services from both IVRS and IDB (i.e. Iowa Self Employment,) IDB will refer the individual to the local IVRS office and provide a copy of the supporting documentation of eligibility and the IPE identifying self-employment as the goal. A release of information must be signed by the job candidate to exchange information.

Technical Assistance: IVRS will provide consultation and technical assistance to IDB when an individual with a visual impairment that meets their eligibility criteria and has a co-occurring disability upon request and may do so without opening a case record. In cases where the individual was determined ineligible for IDB based on a visual impairment, and that is the only disabling condition, IVRS staff must request technical assistance from IDB if they are considering eligibility for IVRS services.

II. Dual Cases

Dual Cases - In most instances the individual with a visual impairment is served by IDB and IVRS does not open a case record. Only when it is clear that the services needed by the individual with the visual impairment exceed the consultation, technical assistance, the planning and service components of IDB may the individual receive services from both agencies (i.e. Iowa Self Employment Program, Transition Alliance Program, general cases involving dual disabilities which require extensive services from both agencies, etc).

A release of information must be signed by the applicant before contact can be made with the other agency. Medical information received is shared between the two agencies so a timely decision of eligibility can be determined. A meeting with both counselors and the job candidate of the referring agency will be conducted jointly within thirty (30) days of the application date. If the individual has a visual impairment that meets the eligibility requirements of the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB), IDB will be the primary manager and deliverer of services and IVRS will provide consultation and technical assistance on co-occurring disabling conditions as well as support services. .

a. Development of the IPE

Joint or dual cases require that IDB and IVRS Counselors consult with one another on the services to be provided. A copy of the plans are shared with both agencies and are kept in the job candidate's case record. Amendments and reviews will be conducted jointly, as needed or required and are shared with the respective agency. The IVRS IPE is in support of the goal established by the IDB Counselor and is not to contradict or be in conflict.

If the employment goal is for self-employment, or if the student is participating in a Transition Alliance Program through the Local Education Agency and IVRS partnership, the IVRS staff assigned to the case are the primary managers for delivery of services and the IDB staff are in a supportive role until the services

and supports provided under those programs have been completed. Upon completion of those services the IDB counselor then moves into the primary role of managing the case and provides the information to IVRS on progress, next steps, etc., until both agencies close the case.

b. Vocational Placement

Both counselors and the job candidate will actively participate in all job placement efforts when there is a dual case. Fees for community rehabilitation providers, and other vendors of placement services, are the responsibility of the IDB. At a minimum of ninety (90) days of employment and all services on IPE(s) have been provided, then both agencies may report a successful closure. Closure dates may vary between the agencies.

III. Social Security Reimbursements

The Social Security Coordinators for IDB and IVRS will work together to determine an equitable disbursement of the reimbursement funds.

IV. Staff Training

IDB and IVRS shall provide disability specific training to their partnering agency upon request.

V. Initiatives

Both agencies agree to involve the other agency in discussions on major initiatives that could impact service delivery to job candidates.

VI. Disagreements

If any disagreements regarding the provision of services arise, including a determination of whether or not the job candidate should be served by both agencies, a discussion will be held with the respective agency VR supervisor. If an agreement cannot be reached, the IVRS Bureau Chief and IDB VR Program Administrator will reach final resolution within ten (10) business days.

VII. Term of Agreement:

This Memorandum of Agreement shall be in effect from May 15, 2016 through March 31, 2019. One month prior to expiration of this agreement, the parties shall meet to renew and/or modify this agreement.

Iowa Department for the Blind

Richard Sorey, Director — Date: 5/11/2016

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

David L. Mitchell, Administrator — Date: 5/5/16