



IDVR Quarterly CRP Meeting - Notes

May 24, 2023

Purpose of the meeting: To examine systemic and programmatic areas; an opportunity to share projects, initiatives and look at ways to improve processes.

Meeting Facilitator: IDVR CRP Manager, Ryan Waddell

Notetaker: Dayane Williams

Goal for this meeting: Transparency, Improved communication, Increased consistency across State service delivery, Increased opportunities for all CRPs to participate in meetings with IDVR, Systemic CRP topics (not individual CRP issues or specific cases).

Topics:

IDVR Rate Methodology Project

RFP Published May 3, 2023

- ✓ RFP was developed and sent to the Division of Purchasing.
- ✓ Division of Purchasing published the RFP on May 3, 2023.
- ✓ The selection process is open, and the offers will be evaluated by an evaluation team.
- ✓ Any questions on the rate methodology project need to be directed to Division of Purchasing.

New CRP Referral & Initial Staffing

CRP Referral Document

Feedback from CRPs:

- ✓ Helpful.
- ✓ Seems to put everyone on the same page.
- ✓ No improvements to the form needed at this time – all issued with the previous form have been addressed.
- ✓ It is helping staffing go smoothly.

- ✓ The form does not include the customer's High School and city and it can be helpful to have it on the initial CRP referral. However, most CRPs agreed that this information is on the resume, or it is collected during JSA.

Feedback from IDVR Managers:

- ✓ Better form.
- ✓ Help keep them on track.
- ✓ The field to put other people to contact is helpful especially for initial contact or follow-up.

CRP Capacity & Taking Referrals

Ongoing Issue

- ✓ Changes in staff such as Employment Specialists, Job Coaches, etc. as well as staff ending employment, having heavy caseloads, unfamiliar staff, etc. must be communicated to IDVR as soon as possible so that service delivery times and JSA engaging are not drastically affected. In such cases, please communicate with the corresponding IDVR Manager, counselor, and CRP Manager prior to communicating to the customer.
- ✓ If there is someone who is going to be able to do initial staffings in a certain amount of time, please let IDVR know as well.
- ✓ If you have to decline a referral because of loss of staff or heavy caseloads, please also let the corresponding IDVR Manager, counselor and Ryan know via email. There is no penalty for declining a referral. It is better to decline a referral that has the customer wait.
- ✓ Continual communication between the employment specialist and the IDVR counselor is best for our customers.
- ✓ Clear communication avoids conflicting messages between CRPs and IDVR.

CRP Initiating Service/Timeframes

Issue: When the CRP accepts the referral, and then gets assigned to an individual employment specialist, this is being counted as the official acceptance of a referral and is leaving customers waiting over three weeks for services

- ✓ To clarify when a CRP accepts a referral that date becomes the acceptance date
- ✓ Most CRPs stated that the referrals come to the CRP leaders, and they assign them accordingly
- ✓ CRPs agreed that normal lead time to schedule a referral is within two weeks of the acceptance date

- ✓ CRPs agreed that if the lead time exceeds two weeks, the CRPs will contact IDVR staff to communicate the lead time will be over two weeks

Customer Involvement

Customer issues

It was reported that some customers are not being included in their JSA and are being told *that is the process*. Customers report that they end up just sitting at home or doing whatever until the Employment Specialist contacts them for an interview. In addition, the Employment Specialist is doing the customer's JSA without the customer when the customer had expressed interest in being involved in that process.

- ✓ During the initial CRP staffing, it should be explained what level of involvement the customer will have, and as a best practice, if a customer wants to participate in their own job search, this should be honored to the extend possible.
- ✓ Again, close communication between CRPs and IDVR staff is necessary to avoid misinterpretations. In addition, when communicating with the Counselor, please include the respective VRA as they have access to Counselor's calendar, and can help communicate information.
- ✓ In addition, if you communicated with the Counselor and do not receive a timely response, please contact the respective IDVR Manager.
- ✓ Initial communication should be via email.
- ✓ Referrals and all documentation should be sent via SecureShare / secure email.

Pre-ETS Job Shadow – Alison Lowenthal

Clarifications & Discussion

- ✓ Per Federal guidelines, IDVR is not able to pay for job shadow setup time, and RSA under the law is clear that the only service that we can pay for is the actual service.
- ✓ Idaho CRPs can contact CRPs in other states to find out how the service payment structure differs from Idaho.
- ✓ IDVR is only able to pay when the direct service is occurring.
- ✓ Most job shadows are between two to four hours.
- ✓ Students are allowed to repeat services if it is determined by the VR Counselor that the student could benefit from doing so.

- ✓ However, we do not allow them to repeat it in the same situation. We want to help them learn how to generalize the work-readiness skills that they are learning, not just being in the same job environment. We want to provide student with onsite work-readiness instruction to help them learn those soft skills and different skills to be successful in different types of learning environments, not just that they can do the one job correctly because that would be job coaching and that is not what we're looking at for the students at this point in time.
- ✓ The point about pre-employment transition services is to encourage students to apply for general or traditional VR services so that we can better serve them.
- ✓ For customers with Most Significant Disabilities (MSD), please email Alison if you have ideas about motivation, engagement techniques, or tips.

CRP Staff Training Discussion

CRP Staff Qualifications and Training

Discussion: What kind of qualifications you are looking for in an applicant and what training is provided once hired?

CRP Responses:

- ✓ Sales experience.
- ✓ Good with people.
- ✓ Eager to help.
- ✓ Do not get frustrated when hearing a “no.”
- ✓ Willing to ask questions.
- ✓ Be creative.
- ✓ Able to build a rapport with an employer.

Training:

- ✓ On the job training by going out into the field.
- ✓ Follow curriculum that has been developed by the CRP.
- ✓ Follow trainings approved by the CRP such as the ACRE Certification from Utah State University, Certified Employment Supports Professional Training Certification (CESP), or other national training certifications.
- ✓ If you have other examples of trainings that you have sought out for your staff or are interested in getting specific training for your staff, feel free to send Ryan an email.

IDVR Authorizations & Billing/Report – Discussion

IDVR Counselor Issuing Auths for 30, 60, 90 days

- ✓ Due to feedback received regarding inconsistencies in the VR process for authorization in different regions. It was agreed that VR will end the authorizations at the end of a month and not the middle of a month.

Billing /Report

- ✓ VR is spending a lot of time reviewing errors on invoices.
- ✓ VR is repeatedly asking the CRPs for reports and invoices.
- ✓ Since the CRP manual is being revised at this time, it may be a good idea to include examples about what needs to be on the reports or a template that the CRPs can follow for consistency.

Submitted CRP Questions

- Submit CRP questions/agenda items two (2) weeks prior to the CRP Meeting (Next meeting: July 19th. Questions/agenda items due by July 5th)
- CRP questions – Association questions vs. individual CRP.
- Associations: Please identify CRP(s) (as well as regions affected, if applicable).
- Provide specific information (**not regarding individual cases*).
- Promptly respond to IDVR requests for clarifying information.

Next CRP Meeting

- Every odd month – 3rd Wednesday
- **July 19, 2023, 2:00pm to 4:00pm (MST)**
- Please submit meeting topics and questions 2 weeks prior – July 5, 2023

CRP Submitted CRP Questions for May 24,2023

IACP Questions

1. There have been some concerns brought up with employers not feeling comfortable with signing the Timesheet for Assessment: CBWE. This is largely due to the fact that the employer is seeing this as something that could hold them liable for someone who is not there employee. Just some discussion around this may be warranted.

During the August 24th CRP meeting, the CBWE timesheet was presented, which had a place for “Guardian” signature; however, based on consensus CRP feedback during that meeting, Guardian was replaced with a CBWE Site Manager/Supervisor signature. The new CBWE process requires the CBWE Site Manager/Supervisor to sign the completed CBWE timesheet as third-party verification of the hours worked during the CBWE. A CBWE Site Manager/Supervisor verifying hours worked during the CBWE does not create an employer/employee relationship. Furthermore, the CRP should make it clear to the employer and customer of the purpose of the CBWE and that it does not constitute an employment relationship or even imply that there is an employment opportunity at the CBWE site. (This was also discussed during the November 16, 2022, CRP Quarterly Meeting.)

IDVR requested specifics for this question – no response.

2. We are seeing interpretations for all services varying widely from Region to Region. This seems to be for all services and how they are to be implemented and what to expect from the CRP. (Updated Manual would help this)

IDVR sent an email to all CRPs on May 3, 2023, requesting CRPs provide individual feedback or recommended clarifications to the CRP manual. IDVR received feedback from two CRPs.

3. Discussion of average timeline for clients to access IDVR services. What is an average timeline from application to being able to access CRP services (where needed). We are seeing an uptick in the number of cases that are coming to us asking if they can just get their own job and access CSE. Has there been an overall delay in getting clients up and running?

IDVR enhanced the CRP referral document and developed a new process for the Initial CRP Staffing to improve consistency and improve the customer experience. There are many factors, so there is not an average length of time; it is individualized. Currently, there is no waitlist, no order of selection, no delay in services, and IDVR is outperforming federal timeframe requirements.

- *94.2% of SE eligibilities are within 60 days of application.*
- *96.4% of all eligibilities are within 60 days of application.*

- *93.4% of SE initial plans are within 90 days of eligibility.*
- *94.9% of all initial plans are within 90 days of eligibility.*

So, while we are still well above RSA's expectations for timeliness to eligibility and plan for SE cases, some of these cases do tend to take longer than for non-SE cases.

4. Is there an idea if the Pre-ETS rates will be revisited anytime soon?

IDVR Pre-ETS rates will be included as part of the rate study

5. CRP Manual updates- Is there a timeline to being able to access an updated CRP manual to allow services to be more clearly defined? Will there be a chance for CRPs to be able to give comment on this updated Manual?

IDVR is currently reviewing and updating sections of the 2019 CRP Manual.

On May 3, 2023, the CRP Manager solicited all CRPs to provide feedback or recommended clarifications for the CRP Manual - Only 2 CRPs responded.

ACCSES-Idaho Questions:

Regarding Pre-ETS:

6. Why was the newest bid request made? Is there a place where the outcomes are published?

Currently open for bid. Please contact Idaho Division of Purchasing for more information.

7. Was this bid request for the summer program?

No.

8. There is some confusion due to the fact that some CRP's have been requested to submit another bid, and others have been notified that they are Pre-ETS providers without even submitting a bid. Can you clarify this.

Currently open for bid. Please contact Idaho Division of Purchasing for more information.

9. DO we need to sign a new contract each year?

Currently open for bid. Please contact Idaho Division of Purchasing for more information.

10. Is there a link to see who is a Pre-ETS provider by region, so we can refer people if we cannot provide the service?

CRPs cannot refer an individual for VR services to another CRP. Refer individuals to the regional IDVR office. The VR Counselor will work with the individual to make an informed choice as part of the VR process.

11. Can we get some clarification regarding Ryan's role? Does he review all plans that will be provided by CRP's?

Ryan Waddell does not review/approve VR plans. IDVR is not aware of plans provided by CRPs.

Regarding the CBWE cap per week per client:

*(** CBWE-SD is not "capped" at 5-hours per week. By accepting a CBWE referral, the CRP agrees to conduct a minimum of 5-hours per week of site development for the CBWE. IDVR issues an authorization for all 15 hours at once.)*

12. Can you explain how the 5-hr. minimum was determined?

***Regarding 5-hours per week CBWE Site Development requirement:** During the August 24, 2022, CRP Quarterly meeting, it was discussed as to why the restrictions in the contract were added. IDVR explained that this was put in place to ensure timely services to the VR customer and provide consistency and timeliness for the counselor to make an eligibility determination. VR is obligated to follow federal regulations.*

13. Can we discuss another way to ensure authorizations are being acted on in a timely manner?

Open discussion: Ideas about ensuring timely CBWE site development that ensures consistency and timeliness for the counselor to make an eligibility determination?

Beau James: IACP members had a discussion and sees the importance of the weekly 5-hour time requirement for CBWE-SD in keeping things moving; IACP understand why there is the requirement.

Cherree Hite: If we spend 5-hours per week [doing CBWE-SD], then we cannot predict the next week's hours we need to spend. Why not issue 15 hours and give CRPs 3-4 weeks to find a site [without a weekly requirement]. Regional Managers provided feedback that Cherree's example has been tried before and it did not work well.

(No discussion/recommendations from ACCSES-Idaho)

14. It is difficult for job developers to have this cap since it would limit an employment specialist/job developer to eight clients at any given time, which is very restrictive. Can there be a conversation about another approach to managing the timeframe for completing the authorized work that would be more focused on good communication between the VRC, CRP and client?

Open discussion: Ideas about ensuring timely CBWE site development that ensures consistency and timeliness for the counselor to make an eligibility determination? This impacts customer engagement.

15. Has there been an evaluation of the effectiveness of the requirement to have CRP's "BILL" VR for the money we pay the client when they have done the CBWE? Has it made a difference?

During the November 16, 2023, CRP Quarterly Meeting, it was discussed that prior to creating the new CBWE contract, the majority of CRPs were already paying the customer minimum wage during the CBWE, which they paid out of their hourly rate. The new CBWE process adds reimbursement to the CRP for paying the customer minimum wage in addition to the \$54 hourly rate. All other costs the CRP incurs related to the CBWE are built into the \$54 per hour reimbursement rate.

IDVR has not evaluated the effectiveness of CRPs billing VR for CBWE wage reimbursement.

16. Has there been any movement towards doing a rate study?

Idaho Division of Purchasing published the IDVR Rate Analysis RFP on May 3, 2023. Please contact Idaho Division of Purchasing for more information.