


Vocational Rehabilitation Update

Inclusive Service Delivery: All Means All

- Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) serves individuals with disabilities who have unique backgrounds, needs, priorities, and skills. Individuals are diverse in:
 - Gender identity and sexual orientation
 - Race and ethnicity
 - Disability, including mental health and substance use
 - Prior life experience, including subminimum wage employment
- Bias and Stigma  Mindset shift



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How is VR Supporting Inclusive Service Delivery?

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion workgroup
- Discovery Cohort
- Revised guidance to VR staff
 - WIOA requirements for youth seeking subminimum wage employment; and individuals of any age working at subminimum wage
 - Serving individuals with substance use disorder
 - Serving individuals with mental health diagnoses
 - Considerations for disability priority determination
 - Cultural considerations in serving individuals with mental health diagnoses
 - Harm reduction training
 - Employment as part of the recovery process



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How is VR Supporting Inclusive Service Delivery?

- Training to employment service providers, including sharing ideas for improving inclusive and equitable service delivery
 - Ensure an individualized approach - do not assume that substance use results in barriers to employment in all situations – depends on type of substance used, frequency of use, desired employment outcome, etc.
 - Address stigma and bias with your team
 - Embrace employment as an important part of recovery
 - Be informed – consider training needs of staff
 - Be mindful of forming opinions prior to meeting a participant
 - Belief that individuals can benefit from VR services/can work
- Mental Health Employment Summit



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Partnership with the Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)

- Mental Health and Employment Taskforce
- DOL/ODEP Technical Assistance – Advancing State Policy Integration for Recovery and Employment (ASPIRE)
 - Indiana is 1 of 7 states selected to receive this TA
- Individual Placement and Support (IPS) - evidenced based employment approach for individuals with mental health conditions
- Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) may apply to become an IPS ‘Early Adopter’
- <https://www.in.gov/fssa/dmha/funding-information/>



Takeaways and a Look Ahead

- Takeaways from the day?
 - Use the chat box to share one thing you learned, a new idea you gained, a connection you made, etc.
- Tomorrow (Day 2) – Theme: ‘It Takes a Village’
 - Panel presentation: Link Between Mental Health & Employment
 - NAMI: In Our Own Voice
 - Protective Factors to Support Employee Well-being



THANK YOU!

