

Memorandum

TO: Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors and Job Placement Specialists
CC: Vocational Rehabilitation Specialists, Kris Peterson
FROM: Glenn Morton
DATE: April 2, 2008
SUBJECT: Meeting Announcement & Results of December 14, 2007 Meeting

The next informal meeting between court staff and certified vocational rehabilitation service providers is scheduled for Friday, April 18, 2008, at 2:00 pm. The meeting will be held at the court's administrative offices at 1221 "N" Street, Suite 402, in Lincoln (TierOne Center). Meetings are held on a quarterly basis, with future meetings tentatively scheduled for July 25, 2008, and October 17, 2008.

The following are the results from the December 14, 2007 meeting. If you have questions or concerns about any of the discussions or decisions at this meeting please notify the court's Vocational Rehabilitation Section prior to the next meeting and they will be considered at that time.

- 1. Meeting Schedule for 2008:** Tentative meeting dates were identified at the meeting, but revisions were required following the meeting due to scheduling conflicts. As noted above, future 2008 meetings are now scheduled for July 25, 2008, and October 17, 2008. It was decided to move the meetings back one month, as compared to previous years, in order to avoid meeting in December.
- 2. ACOEM Work Disability Prevention Guidelines:** There was a brief discussion regarding the ACOEM Work Disability Prevention Guidelines and a nonprofit "60 Summits Project" which is intended to promote the implementation of these guidelines. Information on this topic can be found at <www.webility.md> (see the links on the left side of the home page).
- 3. New VR Plan Form:** There was a brief discussion of the new VR plan form, with the general agreement that the new form and instruction sheet are working well. It was understood and agreed that when a new plan is required because of changes to the information in boxes 5 or 6 of the plan form it is acceptable to cite to documents already in the court's possession.
- 4. Supplemental Billing Requests:** When the new VR plan form was being drafted it was also recognized that a better method is needed for requesting, approving, and tracking supplemental billing requests. To this end, a new supplemental billing request form was circulated and discussed at the meeting and approved for use at that time. However, further internal discussions at the court resulted in some additional revisions to the form. The revised form was then circulated to all certified counselors on February 13, 2008, with instructions that it

could be used from that date forward. A copy of the revised form is attached, and it is also available on the court's web site in PDF format.

5. Technology Training: There was continuing discussion regarding technology training for counselors as a cooperative effort between NE IARP and the court's IT and VR staffs. It was suggested that this may be a good topic for NE IARP's annual meeting, perhaps to include an overview of where the court is going with electronic filings and how this could impact vocational rehabilitation, followed by a consideration of how the counselors could interact better and more efficiently with the court using the technology they now have available. It was recognized that such training could be very timely given that much of the industry is now requiring that communications be done electronically.

6. Data Collection: There was a beginning discussion of possible ways in which additional data could be collected regarding the vocational rehabilitation program and the success of vocational rehabilitation plans. The court is increasingly being asked for such information, but existing data is insufficient to allow the court to fully respond. It was suggested that the Case Closure Form could perhaps be amended to provide necessary data, but it was felt that the form would not be a good vehicle, at least without follow-up. The strengths and weaknesses of surveying as an appropriate tool were also discussed, along with the possibility that counselors might do follow-up inquiries to their clients after completion of a plan. Regardless of the method to be used, it was recognized that we must be clear about what data we want to collect and why, and that the questions must be designed appropriately. It may also be necessary to revise the court's computer system in order to adequately collect and analyze the data.

7. Next meeting agenda items. At the next meeting on April 18, 2008 we will address the following as time permits:

a. Proposed VR Rule Changes: The court has scheduled a public hearing for April 24, 2008 to consider proposed changes to the court's Rules of Procedure. Drafts of possible changes to Rules 36, 37, and 44 were circulated to all certified counselors on February 13, 2008, although further changes were made prior to publication of the final proposed rules. Information regarding the public hearing, including proposed changes to Rules 37 and 44, may be found on the court's website at:
<www.wcc.ne.gov/new/rule_hearing_20080424.htm>.

b. Data Collection: There will be a continuing discussion of the data which should be collected regarding the vocational rehabilitation program and the success of vocational rehabilitation plans, and appropriate methods to collect, store, and analyze the data.

c. Job Placement Plans. What is the counselor's role in job placement and what are the counselor's responsibilities while a job placement plan is in effect? Is it appropriate to write a job placement plan in order to rule out job placement as an appropriate priority?

8. Future meeting agenda items. The following topic will likely be addressed at future

meetings. Any suggestions for additional agenda items are welcome.

- a. LOE Training & Fact Sheet. It was decided at the September 14, 2007 meeting that the court staff and counselors will partner in LOE evaluation training efforts and in development of a court “fact sheet” on LOE evaluations. The court’s specialists will prepare a draft fact sheet for consideration at a future counselor/specialist meeting, and training efforts will be considered after development of the fact sheet.

SUPPLEMENTAL BILLING REQUEST

Complete in accordance with Instructions for Completing Billing Information on the Vocational Rehabilitation Plan form when additional funds are needed to complete an existing plan. If there are changes to the Type of Plan, Training/Vocational Goal, or length of the plan another Vocational Rehabilitation Plan must be submitted.

Employee Name: _____ Date of Request: _____

Reason for Request: _____

A. TUITION & FEES: \$ _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
 Authorize to: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

B. REQUIRED BOOKS: \$ _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
 Authorize to: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

C. GENERAL SUPPLIES: \$ _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
 Authorize to: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

D. REQUIRED SUPPLIES: \$ _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
 Authorize to: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

E. SPECIAL FEES: \$ _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

 Authorize to: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

F. TUTOR INFORMATION & FEES: Start Date: _____ End Date: _____
 Hourly Rate: \$ _____ x Hours Per Day: _____ x Days Per Week: _____ x Number of Weeks: _____ = **Total:** \$ _____
 Authorize to: _____ SSN/FEIN: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Requested by: _____ Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor/ Certification # WCC Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist