

## JANUARY 2019

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services has been a collaborative workforce system partner in developing an Iowa Unified State Plan for employment. This is based upon the Workforce Innovation Opportunities Act, which is the first legislative reform of the public workforce development system in more than fifteen years. We are utilizing our State Plan as a foundation for service delivery and oversight and our strategic plan is a tool for visioning and guiding us to positive employment outcomes on our journey. Each area office develops a local office decision making tool, which highlights strengths and weaknesses that are integrated at the local level to implement our State Plan and link to our strategic plan goals. As an agency of close to 400 employees that cover the State of Iowa geographically, and includes the Disability Determination Bureau, communication and consistency is a constant challenge. We have deliberately separated out the planning for our Disability Determination Bureau and they work as a unique bureau with their own individualized goals and plans, linked to the overarching mission of the agency. We are excited to be a collaborative partner within the workforce system and recognize the key role our work provides in moving forward a Future Ready Iowa Workforce.

This web page is being developed as an opportunity to provide a glimpse of the initiatives that are occurring across the state as we develop and implement strategies to impact employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The information is not meant to be full detailed explanations of every effort, but is to be used as a means to provide open communication and encourage innovation, creativity in local areas to facilitate positive service delivery. It will also serve as an archived communication setting, where updates and progress can be reviewed. Each of the sections will be updated on a bi-annual basis so you can see what review and progress is occurring and additional initiatives will be added as applicable.

This is being implemented as a recommendation from our Quality Assurance Survey Committee which was organized in 2015 as a part of a consultation group working with the agency and Dr. Darlene Groomes, PhD, CRC, LPC, Associate Professor with Human Development and Child Studies at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. Dr. Groomes is working with us to provide assistance in how we use customer satisfaction data as well as how we can improve our strategic planning and implementation to be a flexible change agent in translating knowledge and communication through the agency. One of the recommendations was to improve communication of various initiatives being implemented that are linked to our State Plan and Strategic Plan goals. Annual Area Office visits occur in efforts to discuss strategic plan progress and area office supervisors and bureau management are leading the implementation of strategies to enhance employment outcomes and the quality of VR service delivery.

Planning is only as effective as our implementation and review, therefore, this is an important effort which is linked to our strategic plan goals. Our Current Strategic Plan covers 2015-2018. Our Quality Assurance Survey Committee will be meeting through 2017 to review and discuss priorities, strengths and weaknesses and act as a further communication link to local area office work. This information will be used as a basis to inform future strategic planning efforts. We hope to move Strategic Planning efforts to impact:

- Visionary Leadership
- Customer Focus
- Valuing Employees and Partners

- Managing for Innovation
- Management by Facts
- Focus on Results and Creating Value

We encourage all staff to think about the work we are doing in these areas that needs to continue and what needs to change. The results of these conversations will influence the work of the Committee and the agency's future strategic plan. Current priorities, which are related to the initiatives linked on this page include:

- Use of technology and how we can continue to maximize effectiveness
- Engagement of our Job Candidates and facilitating service delivery
- Pre-Employment Transition Services – ensuring we expend 15% and are doing it to impact employment outcomes
- Maximizing business services and being accountable to how we create value to our business partners
- Effective collaboration with our CORE WIOA partners in implementing the Unified State Plan and transitioning to a combined state plan
- Improve agency response of human resource areas, recruitment, training, orientation and staff follow-up

Please explore the ideas and come back and visit again. This is a work in progress, as updates occur, they will be dated, so we can gain a historical perspective of progress and change.