

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Meeting Minutes Public Hearings on Priority Categories

Date: June 3rd, 2025
Time: 6:00PM - 7:00PM
Zoom Teleconference

Staff Present:

Cora McNabb, Executive Director; Susie Edwards, Deputy Director; Holly Hendricks; Chad Hunt; Nanci Howard; Anu Kumari; Rebecca Kinder; Dylan Kissack; Chelsea Nagle; Alisha Salyer; and Ashley Taylor

Guests Present:

Guests were in attendance.

Call to Order:

Susie Edwards, Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (KYOVR), Deputy Director, called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. She explained her role as facilitator and provided the public the primary reason for meeting which was to present to the public important proposed priority categories and obtain input and/or comment. She continued to state the presentation materials are available on the [KYOVR's website](#).

Opening Remarks:

Susie Edwards gave the introduction of key staff. She informed the public that Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART) and American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreting services were active and would be available at each of the public forums. The definition of public meeting was provided and the requirement to hold such meetings prior to adopting any major changes to KYOVR priority categories. The email address OVRPublicComment@ky.gov was provided for the public to send written comments and/or questions. The open forum section at the end of the agenda will give the public an opportunity to speak and provide input and/or comments and ask questions. Questions and answers will be published on the OVR website no later than June 27th, 2025, noon (EDST). Susie Edwards reviewed the agenda and stressed there would be time for questions and/or comments at the end of Executive Director, Cora McNabb's presentation.

Priority Categories Definition Presentation:

Cora McNabb provided a thorough PowerPoint presentation explaining the current priority categories and the proposed definitions. She explained the basis for order of selection and that it must be based on a refinement of three criteria and the definition of an individual with a significant disability. The three criteria consist of the following: 1) the number and the degree of functional limitations; 2) the amount of time needed for KYOVR services; and 3) the number of KYOVR services needed.

Cora McNabb provided information regarding functional capacities and announced that the current definitions are as follows:

OVR Current Priority Categories

Current Priority Category 1: Is an eligible individual with most significant disability that limits three or more functional capacities.

Current Priority Category 2: Is an eligible individual with a most significant disability that limits two functional capacities.

Current Priority Category 3: Is an eligible individual with a significant disability that limits one functional capacity.

Current Priority Category 4: Is an eligible individual with nonsignificant disability.

Recommended Priority Categories

The Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center of Quality Management and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) recommend three categories.

Recommended Priority Category 1 is eligible individuals with the “most” significant disability.

Recommended Priority Category 2 is eligible individuals with a significant disability.

Recommended Priority Category 3 is all other eligible individuals with disabilities.

Cora provided attendees with information regarding other states that are in order of selection and how many categories they have that are currently open. She announced the proposed refinement of categories as follows:

Proposed Draft Priority Categories

Proposed Category 1 is an individual with a “most” significant disability, an individual with a disability who has been determined eligible for KYOVR services, requires multiple KYOVR services over an extended period, and experiences serious limitations in four or more areas of functional capacity.

Proposed Category 2 is an individual with a significant disability, an individual with a disability who has been determined eligible for KYOVR services, requires multiple Vocational Rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, and experiences serious limitations in 1 to 3 areas of functional capacity.

Proposed Category 3 is an individual with a disability, an individual who has been determined eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services and does not meet the criteria for an individual with a most significant disabilities in terms of an employment outcome.

Additionally, another option for proposed recommendations was presented as follows:

Proposed Priority Category 1 is an individual with a most significant disability means an individual who has a significant disability that limits four (4) or more areas of functional capacity, in terms of an employment outcome.

Proposed Priority Category 2 is an individual with a significant disability means an individual with a severe disability that seriously limits three (3) areas of functional capacity in terms of an employment outcome.

Proposed Priority Category 3 is an individual with a significant disability means an individual with a severe disability that seriously limits one (1) to two (2) areas of functional capacity in terms of an employment outcome.

Proposed Priority Category 4 is an individual with a disability that does not meet the criteria for a significant disability nor the criteria for an individual with a most significant disabilities in terms of an employment outcome.

Deputy Director. Susie Edwards opened the floor for public comment. Questions and their respective answers were:

Open Forum:

- 1.) Is there an informational hub to direct consumers who are not eligible to for other disability services in the state?
 - The agency does not have an informational hub. Every individual who is determined eligible for services and is placed in a priority category the agency cannot serve, is provided information and referral services. The agency has a standardized comprehensive list that is provided to our counselors with multiple resources included. The agency has directed counselors to tailor information and referral services to what the consumer has expressed they need during their application and eligibility process.
- 2.) Now I recall that you displayed slides with proposals of the different types and numbers of categories, the first slide of which presented the possibility of three of said categories, "most significant", "significant", and "non-significant". Could the agency add a fourth Category to that list called "somewhat significant", in between (in degree/severity) the significant and non-significant categories, thereby addressing a possible "gray area" for those who feel they do not quite fit into either one of the two others in between?
 - I think what you are talking about is another category for "significant". The agency would not be able to call a category "somewhat significant", but the agency could call it "significant". The agency would have to define what

makes that category different from the others. You are correct. Some states have four, some have five, so the agency can certainly have more than three priority categories

3.) How many such categories do we in Kentucky have again?

- Currently there are four categories with category one and two both stating individuals with the “most significant” disability. This must be redefined.

i) Follow-up comment: So, in Kentucky, the "most significant" individuals are further divided into two subsets; I see.

4.) Regardless of what changes get passed, when/what date would changes go into effect?

- This is a process and actions that will have to occur are regulation changes and changes to internal policy. There is no specific date. The agency is committed to working on these changes as quickly as possible and keep everyone apprised of where the agency is during the process.

Additional Comments

- Will be logging off. Looking forward to minutes and information from this morning's meeting to be posted as well. Appreciate the information and transparency.
- Thank you all so much for hosting this Zoom meeting and giving us the overview of all the changes proposed and listed; God bless you all and have a good night.

OVR will document all submitted comments from this meeting and those submitted via email. The public comment period started May 21, 2025, and it will end June 27, 2025. The collected public comments will appear in the minutes from this hearing and will be published on the [OVR website](#) no later than June 27, 2025, at noon (EDT).

After public comment, Susie Edwards thanked the public for their participation and comments. She reiterated that minutes from the hearing would be up published on the OVR website no later than June 27, 2025, at noon (EDT). She noted the public comment period started May 21, 2025, and it will end June 27, 2025.

Adjournment

Susie Edwards thanked the participants and adjourned the public forum at 7:00PM.