



Andy Beshear
Governor

Jamie Link
Education & Labor Cabinet Secretary

Provider Capacity Committee Meeting

Minutes

August 13, 2024

9:00am – 10:00am

Zoom

Meeting ID: 857 3674 3195

Passcode: 694459

Attendees:

Nanci Howard (Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator)
Jeff White (Chair)
Sara Lynn (Additional member)
Katie Wolf Whaley (Council Chair)
Lori Norton (Council member)
Susan Brown (Additional member)
Kaitlyn Paschall (Council Member)
Andrew Johnson (Council Member)
Johnathan Carr (Additional Member)
Todd Coffey (Council member)
Annette Jett (Council member)
Ron O'Hair (Staff Support, OVR CRP/SE Branch Manager)
Anu Kumari (Administrative Specialist Senior)

Members Absent:

Staci Cain
Cora McNabb
Leslie Hoffmann

Welcome: Administrator, Nanci Howard welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a brief update of the project NEON (National Expansion on Employment Opportunities Network).

Introductions: Chair, Jeff White welcomed everyone, introductions were held. The agenda was reviewed by all participants. Administrator, Nanci Howard provided an introduction of the new employee, Anu Kumari, who will assist with Employment First Council duties and correspondence.

Neon Project Update:

Administrator, Nanci Howard provided an update on the NEON Project and mentioned the Employer Education and Engagement Committee is wrapping up their third part webinar series with subject matter expert (SME), Steve Blanks, from the Seeking Employment, Equality and Community (SEEC) organization.

Council Member, Katie Wolf Whaley provided an update on the NEON Project. She announced that through Project NEON, the Department of Medicaid and the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation are collaborating on the development of a workable understanding to streamline service provision. She continued to announce that due to the technical assistance granted, Project NEON will sponsor the opening Keynote Speaker at the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) as well as provide a session during the conference. The SME who will present is Tricia Jones Parkin but not yet decided. Katie provided a [Link](#) in the chat for the Kentucky APSE Conference.

Chair, Jeff White Provided an update on that NEON Project. He stated he has been working with Vocational Rehabilitation on the new service fee memo, which is still pending release. He further stated that due to the work through Project NEON, there is work being done to provide customized employment training to increase the capacity for individualized employment services among provider agencies.

Provider Workbook Discussion:

Chair, Jeff White discussed “the need to build provider capacity and mentioned the ongoing work on the Provider Workbook. He explained the purpose of the workbook is to assist providers with the development of policies for supported employment that meet the requirements of both OVR and waivers. He also highlighted the upcoming changes in payment structures that would allow providers to offer quality services without financial strain. The provider map is being updated quarterly to identify areas with insufficient capacity to meet the demand for services.

New Business “Best Practice Tools”:

- Chair, Jeff White introduced a set of Best Practice tools developed by David Hoff and Duane Shumate from Employment 1st in Missouri.
- Chair, Jeff White, mentioned that these tools cover various aspects of employment services, from pre-vocational services to long-term supports.
- Chair, Jeff White requested volunteers to review the Tools and provide feedback on their applicability and potential modifications for Kentucky.
- Sara Lynn and Council Member, Annette Jett volunteered to review the tools and provide feedback.

Highlighted Discussion about Ten Tools:

Chair, Jeff White explained why Provider Capacity is important for individuals with disabilities. Jeff discussed the ten best practice tools and provided an explanation of the benefits of using the tools. The following are a list of tools provided during the meeting:

1. Prevocational Services: Progress Assessment.
2. Career Planning: Checklist.
3. Career Planning: Job Exploration interview/ Profile.
4. Career planning: Discovery Experience Interview/ profile.
5. Career Planning: Personal Employment Profile.
6. Job Development: Action Plan.
7. Job Development: Business and Job Analysis.
8. Job Development: Placement Form.
9. Supported Employment: Placement Checklist.
10. Supported Employment: Monthly Retention Plan.

Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) Best Practice Tool:

Additional committee member, Johnathan Carr asked a question; “Would these services be paid for? These are [individuals] who have at least contacted the office and are waiting for their referral status to meet with a counselor. Does this opportunity allow them to engage in work-related activities while they wait?” In response to Mr. Carr’s question, Chair, Jeff White, mentioned that pre-vocational activities can indeed be a crucial part of preparing individuals for employment. One of the main concerns is that many people have a strong desire to get a job, but the lengthy process of initiating services can lead to distractions and loss of focus. This delay often results in individuals never returning to their employment goals. He continued, additionally, families may become overly concerned about the future of their loved ones, which can add to the stress and uncertainty. Pre-vocational activities offer a valuable opportunity to help individuals acclimate to the idea of employment. These activities allow them to feel like they are making progress even before they can access services through OVR. Moreover, some pre-vocational activities can be conducted simultaneously with other support services, ensuring that individuals receive comprehensive assistance while waiting for OVR services to begin. This dual approach can help maintain momentum and keep individuals engaged in their journey towards employment.

Council Member, Toddy Coffey asked question regarding “Best practice Tool” with Chair, Jeff White, “How can you capture this information to ensure that the person does not have to keep coming back and starting over again, especially if they are referred to another service provider?” Chair, Jeff White explained with brief details about Best Practice Tools and mentioned that task is match individuals with the right job that fits their skills and interests, and to provide the necessary support for their success. These practice tools will assist providers in:

- Helping individuals find the right job.
- Ensuring they receive appropriate training.
- Supporting them to maintain their job successfully.

Potential Supported Employment Rate Changes and Rollout:

Chair, Jeff White asked staff support, Ron O'Hair to provide updates on potential changes and the timeline for implementation. Ron O'Hair mentioned tentative dates to train OVR staff and CRPs on the new rate setting. Ron announced the possible implementation date is October 1st, 2024. The committee expressed excitement about the upcoming changes and discussed the importance of a smooth transition. Council member, Annette Jett offered the assistance of the Kentucky Association of Community Rehabilitation Providers (KACRP), an association representing CRPs, in supporting the rollout of the changes. Chair, Jeff White and Council Member, Katie Wolf Whaley appreciated the

offer and discussed the importance of collaboration among different organizations to ensure the success of the changes.

Additional Support:

Council Member, Katie Wolf Whaley shared plans to hire new staff as part of the Supported Employment Training Project expansion. The new positions will provide technical assistance and content development to support agencies in delivering quality employment services.

Action Items:

- Chair, Jeff White will send the Best Practice Tools to the volunteers for review and feedback.
- Administrator, Nanci Howard will forward the tools to all committee members.
- The committee will be discussing the feedback and explore ways to support the rollout and increase provider capacity.
- Chair, Jeff White mentioned the need to get the word out about the upcoming changes and discussed the potential for expanding the number of providers in the state.

Agenda For Next meeting:

- Committee members to review the “Best Practice Tools” and provide feedback at the next meeting.
- Council Member, Annette Jett to explore collaboration opportunities between KACRP and the Employment 1st Council.
- Chair, Jeff White and Council Member, Katie Wolf Whaley to continue monitoring and communicating updates on potential changes and timeline.
- Committee members to stay informed and prepare for the upcoming changes.

Adjournment

Chair, Jeff White and Administrator, Nanci Howard thanked everyone for their contributions and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

- **Date: November 12,2024**
- **Time: 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm**

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