

## Minutes from CRP Advisory Committee Meeting September 23, 2024

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### **In Attendance:**

DORS Staff: Jody Boone, Toni March, Patrick Peto, Darlene Peregoy, William Georg, Wanda Peele, Randy Diehl, Tamla McDowell-Omodho and Catherine Drake

Individuals representing DORS CRPs attended this virtual meeting. All CRPs and CAS providers were invited.

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### **Introductions/Presentations**

#### **Jody Boone (Director, Acting DORS Director):**

- There are still some funds available for FY 24. DORS has received a reallocation grant of about \$4.9 million dollars for FY 24 and will be using that to get as many bills paid and services provided to individuals.
- If you are a provider and have not yet invoiced for services provided, please do so by no later than November 1, 2024. If they are received after that date, we will likely not be able to pay for those services. If you provided some services by September 30, 2024 but not all please bill for those services provided by November 1, 2024 so that you may be able to be paid by the end of the year (new authorizations will be issued for services needed after November 1, 2024). If no services were provided under an authorization issued prior to July 1, 2024 and you don't see those services will be provided before September 30, 2024, let DORS know and will close that authorization out and issue a new one. Due to federal regulations, we must make sure services and payments are issued during the same time period. Kate and Tamala will send an email out with the dates clearly written to providers.
- If you have any outstanding invoices from October 1, 2022 and June 30, 2024, please get those invoices in no later than November 1, 2024. If the invoices are not received by November 1, 2024, we will not be able to pay them because they will be considered out of our period of performance. You can check with the local DORS office to check on invoices and where they are in the payment process. If you are rebilling an invoice, please state that this is a second invoice or rebilling.

#### **Patrick Peto (Program Manager- Quality Assurance, Policy & Planning):**

- The Adult learning Experience is up and running and we are starting to see referrals and hearing of preliminary successes.

- We are working towards the standardization of the PreETS services with a newly introduced directive with the learning objectives being more standardized in nature that are going in similar types of goals/opportunities.
- We have developed a new administrative approval tool which is a online instrument that will hopefully help us track administrative approval when they are processed thru the field as well as running a report each month that will help us keep track of requests coming in, help with statistical analysis on the types of services that we are providing as well ensuring that these administrative approvals that are being resolved in a timely manner. These processes should be rolled out in the next few upcoming weeks.
- We have increased our service delivery rate 90% (+) from last year until this year for direct placement/assessment services. Job search assistance has gone up 722 individuals more in quarter 4 of this year compared to quarter 4 of last year. Benefits counseling also saw an upsurge with 217 more individuals this year. PreETS services saw a substantial increase in the number of students with disabilities receiving services through the program, along with an increase in students receiving occupational/vocational training. There has been an increase in individuals that are still employed 6 months and 12 months after receiving services surpassing the previous year.

**Darlene Peregoy (Director, Administration and Financial Services):**

- DORS has had an organizational change where we created a Community Resources Branch under which has four Staff Specialists including two Staff Specialists for CRPs (Kate Drake and Tamla McDowell-Omodho), a Staff Specialist for Vendors (Brian Haas) and a Staff Specialists for Grants and Independent Living(Janice Drakeford) along with a new Program Manager(William Georg).

**William Georg (Program Manager II Community Resources and Administration Support):**

- Reminder that DORS has a website available for CRPs that includes updates, resources and the most recent forms ([dors.maryland.gov/crps/pages/resources.aspx](https://dors.maryland.gov/crps/pages/resources.aspx)).
- DORS is in the process of updating CRP policies, including those for Cooperative Agreements, Provisional Cooperative Agreements and Monitoring Status.

**William Georg (Program Manager II Community Resources and Administration Support):**  
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- DORS is also updating Policy for Vocational Evaluators and Career Assessment Services including ICVE and developing a pathway for conditional or provisional ICVE
- DORS remains in collaboration with Maryland Works on requirements for providers to participate in the Employment Works Program (EWP). Those requirements include a

Cooperative agreement with DORS and remaining in good standing. Job coaching must be provided to remain in good standing. The DORS CRP Team monitors those core services with our AWARE Services report

- As a reminder, please review your Cooperative Agreements and be aware of the expiration dates.
- Please be sure to advise DORS if your organization has an address change, when this happens DORS will need a new W9 and a blank invoice so we may update our records.
- Please inform DORS if there are any changes in leadership at your organization

**Jody Boone (on behalf of Derick Serra Program Manager, Technical Branch):**

- It is almost time to renew the RISE Program (Reaching Independence thru Self Employment) so Derick has been working with the MSDE Office of Procurement to come up with a scope of work and get the RFP (Request For Proposal) ready to send out hopefully before the end of the year. We have been working with Psychometric Solutions for almost the past five years and are in the final year of our contract and it is almost time to solicit proposals.
- The Eligibility Determination Unit has had a pilot program in place with the University of Maryland's Center for Transition and Career Innovation which ended July 31, 2024 and we have been working on an agreement to continue those services. CTCL has been handling all the PreETS referrals and completing the qualification work required before we can begin to provide services for our students with disabilities.
- PreETS fees have been established and the information has been sent to the providers who are going to be providing Pre-Employment Transition Services along with the objectives that are related to those services. The old rates still apply to those service if those consumers were enrolled prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and the new rates apply to consumers enrolled on September 1, 2024, or after.
- Please feel free to contact Jessica Markum([jessica.markum@maryland.gov](mailto:jessica.markum@maryland.gov)) or Derick Serra([derick.serra@maryland.gov](mailto:derick.serra@maryland.gov)) for questions/concerns.

**Mutassim Fadl (Employment Services Specialist):**

- We are currently looking for CRPs to provide service to consumers who are blind/low vision to receive the enhanced rate. To be considered, candidates must come through the DORS office and have had Blindness 101 Training which contains viewing of training videos and other resources which will allow them to be certified/qualified to provide services to consumers at the enhanced rate. The enhanced rate is 25% higher than most standard rates. The training is free and a list of CRPs who have completed the training

will be sent to Tamla along with a list of those who have not completed the training. Links for the training will be sent to supervisors to disperse to current and new employees. If you have not received the link, or for any questions/concerns please contact Mr. Fadl ([elmuttasim.Fadl@maryland.gov](mailto:elmuttasim.Fadl@maryland.gov)).

**Wanda Peele (Program Manager II- Business Relations Branch):**

- We have a training for National Disability Employment Awareness Month from September 30<sup>th</sup> until October 4<sup>th</sup>. It will be a 5-day training from 10:30am-2:30pm with a 30-minute lunchbreak for all DORS consumers.
- Training will consist of subjects such as Resume Enhancement, Job Searching Strategies, ADA Disclosures & Accommodations (How to inquire about accommodations), Time Management, Effective Communication, Workplace Etiquette and more. Consumers must attend all 5 days of training to receive a Certificate of Completion which can be used when applying for positions. The certificate will also be uploaded onto Aware into the consumer file. An information bulletin has been sent out on how to register for those training courses along with dates and times. This training is for consumers that are job ready with an updated resume.
- We also have Resume Training on October 21st that CRPs are also offered to join in on to help DORS consumers who may need assistance developing resumes. The Federal Resume Training is at 10am-12pm and the Standard Resume Training is at 1pm-2:30pm. This training along with the aforementioned trainings can also be done by request by contacting William Brownlee ([William.brownlee@maryland.gov](mailto:William.brownlee@maryland.gov)) or Wanda Peele ([wanda.peele@maryland.gov](mailto:wanda.peele@maryland.gov)).

**Randy Diehl (MIS Director)**

- Staff has been having issues with gaining access to some of the CRP referral links. In order to publish a CRP's referral link on InDORS, please send a request for link usage to Kate or Tamla on letterhead. The following process will occur: the link is vetted through the Maryland State Department of Education's Change Control Board which consists of a form requesting access, providing the link and when access will be needed. The board meets weekly, moves fairly quickly and is used mainly as a security measure. If a firewall is blocking a link a request must be made through Office of Information Technology (OIT) to be removed.
- We obtained an additional 30 licenses for use with SARA Application for support staff to access more of the database. Along with the additional licenses, a new "Zoom" like feature has been added to SARA allowing a secure HIPPA compliant video conferencing

tool between the counselor and the consumer to launch shortly in the future.  
Consumers can opt out of SARA at anytime and can rejoin in the future.

**Katherine Jones (Chairperson, Maryland State Rehabilitation Commission):**

- The MSRC are looking for new members. Candidates would have some level of expertise in the fields of education, rehabilitation, employment, business/industry and advocacy. The purpose would be to analyze plans, needs assessments, policy issues and reports along with consumer satisfaction studies so that MSRC can assist DORS with its services. The council meets four times a year(virtually).
- This is a Governor Appointed Position so if you are interested or want more information, please email Katherine ([Katherine.jones@maryland.gov](mailto:Katherine.jones@maryland.gov)) for instructions on how to apply online.

**William Georg (Program Manager II Community Resources and Administration Support):**

- If anyone has ideas or thoughts of types of trainings that DORS can provide that may be beneficial to you or staff of your organization feel free to email thoughts/ideas to [William.Georg@maryland.gov](mailto:William.Georg@maryland.gov) in order to make future quarterly meetings as beneficial as possible.

**Questions/Concerns**

**End of Meeting**

**Next Meeting: January 27, 2025; CRP Advisory Committee**

**9:30 - 11:00 AM**

Join [Zoom Meeting](#)

**Meeting ID: 814 2270 1450**

**Passcode: DORS**