

Minutes from CRP Advisory Committee Meeting January 27, 2025

In Attendance:

DORS Staff: Dr. Erik Bonner, Darlene Peregoy, Erica Kneesi, Beth Lash, William Georg, Wanda Peele, Randy Diehl, Tamla McDowell-Omodho, Brian Haas and Catherine Drake

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

Introductions/Presentations

Darlene Peregoy (Director, Administration and Financial Services):

- Introduction of the new DORS Assistant State Superintendent Dr. Erik Bonner.
- Dr. Bonner joined DORS on October 16th, 2024. Dr. Bonner has extensive experience in education/special education, administration, operations and leadership. He began his career as a teacher, special educator, school administrator and then progressed to director positions in Boston, Chicago and Houston where he focused on advancing equity and achievement for all stakeholders. Dr Bonner holds a bachelor's degree, two master's degrees and a Doctorate from the University of North Texas and a master's degree in management studies from the Yale University School of Management.
- Dr. Bonner has a passion for education and for vocational services for students and adults with disabilities. This along with his strategic vision, collaborative approach and focus on data driven outcomes position him as a fitting new leader for DORS. He's excited to bring his expertise to his new role, where he will continue to champion equity, innovation and excellence.

Dr. Erik Bonner (Assistant State Superintendent):

- DORS will focus on reimaging and strengthening what we have always done.
- The goal is to listen, learn and build off those opportunities and ensure we continue to put our best foot forward for our consumers and/or participants.

- Moving forward, DORS will uphold the PACS (Professionalism, Accountability, Communication and Safety). Representing the state as an anointed authority, DORS will continue to be professional. Being accountable means knowing mistakes happen and that's okay but what is not okay is that we continuously fail and do the same thing over again. The goal is to work towards strengthening those bridges and then coach people through it in a great partnership. We must work in tandem together and make sure we communicate effectively. People should feel physically and psychologically safe within our agency and the partners we work with.
- Representing the state as an anointed authority, DORS will continue to be consistently professional and offer optimal customer service whether internal, external or for our consumers or partners by treating people better than we would like to be treated.

Beth Lash (Director, Office of Field Services):

- DORS is currently well staffed while we are currently filling open positions in the Eligibility Determination Unit along with some positions in Annapolis, Suitland and Wheaton.
- DORS has an EARN Grant which we are partnered with Howard Community College, The Autism Society of America along with The Arc for a Certified Logistics Associate and Certified Logistics Technician training program through Howard Community College which are tuition free along with partnerships with local employers for externship experience.
- DORS is also partnered with the Maryland Department of Disabilities for the Maryland transition linkage tool, along with the school system and the DDA to create a database and communications system among partners serving students with disabilities.
- "Quick Wins" are goals that can be accomplished quickly (within 30-40 days) by using our internal/external and our partners by taking part in calls/meetings thus establishing that we are listening to feedback whether good, bad or indifferent, ensuring we grow and expand together.

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).

William Georg (Program Manager II Community Resources and Administration Support):
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- DORS remains in collaboration with Maryland Works and DORS helps to monitor requirements for providers to participate in the Employment Works Program (EWP).
- To participate with the EWP and obtain some of the larger service contracts, CRPs are required to have an active cooperative agreement and remain in good standing with DORS. Remember to be aware of expiration dates. When staff reaches out to providers to update agreements, items such as addresses changes/changes in leadership require a new W9 and blank on file. When contacted by DORS for the purpose of updating agreements, please respond within a short time period.
- Job coaching and Job development are considered core services we want to see all CRP's providing to our consumers. The DORS CRP team monitors these core services through the Aware Services Report via authorizations created, items paid out and ensuring everything has come to fruition for the consumers.
- Good Standing generally means that job development and job coaching services make up about 10% of the overall business with DORS. The CRP team considers an organization's size, staffing and capacity when assessing good standing. The CRP team can also work with organizations to better interface with DORS field offices and help connect them with consumers in need of job development and job coaching.
- If your organization would like to do more than job coaching and job development, please reach out to myself (william.georg@maryland.gov) or Kate Drake (catherine.drake@maryland.gov), Tamla McDowell-Omodho (tamla.mcdowell-omodho@maryland.gov) and we will assist with interfacing with the DORS field offices and/or obtain more consumers if that is something that you are looking for.

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

- The BSR's are offering training regarding resume writing courses for standard resumes and federal resume training. The training has been done virtually and now will also be given in person, working in groups and then going over the training course with instructors and consumers to discuss topics covered and what may be also needed to make the training better in the future.

- A new newsletter has been slated for release which gives access to CRP's and lists the dates/times of available trainings along with current job openings from partners and different business associates of DORS. To ensure CRPs can access the newsletter, please make sure all email addresses are correct and up to date (william.georg@maryland.gov or wanda.peele@maryland.gov).
- The next resume training will take place April 22nd but there may be standard resume training done before that date. If a "in person" resume training is available before the April 22nd date, we are going to reach out to possibly 3,4 CRPs to register their staff for that training. When registering for training, please remember to check the box stating either virtual or in-person training in order to properly schedule/accommodate all those involved.

Randy Diehl (MIS Director):

- CRPs are creating their own referral links and to use the CRP's referral link the following process will occur: the link must be 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 Change Control Board looks for the collection of confidential information (PII) and ensuring the information is secure in transit and at rest. Due to federal law, the applications must be accessible to all potential end users. A SOC 2 report must be filled out by the applications creator (whether in-house or contracted) along with an Accessibility Report (website accessibility as in accordance with WCAG guidelines).
- SARA is a bi-directional communication system that DORS uses with its consumers to send and collect information whether SMS or email. DORS has been in contact with the team at SaraWorks concerning updates to the vendor portal. SARA allows consumers to opt out/in at any time using the vendor portal.

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

Brian Haas (Staff Specialist, Vendor Coordinator):

Invoicing-Best Practices Presentation

• Tips on Reviewing Invoices•

- 1) All invoices must meet the requirements set forth by the Comptroller of Maryland.
- 2) Ensuring the information is correct on the invoice helps to prevent a provider from being marked inactive.
- 3) The vendor's information must match what is on file with DORS.
- 4) DORS will return invoices if the information provided does not match what is on file with DORS.
- 5) DORS can only make simple corrections with confirmation from vendors.

• 10 Item Invoice Checklist•

- 1) Bill To Information- (Make sure the invoice is addressed to the DORS location listed on authorization)
- 2) Vendor Name- (Vendor name must be listed as it is on the DORS vendor system)
- 3) Payment Address- (Vendor's remittance/payment address must be listed as it is entered in the DORS vendor system)
- 4) Vendor Number- (The 9-digit EIN Number must match how it is entered in the DORS vendor system)
- 5) Consumer Name/PID (PID not case number)- (Only one consumer/authorization per invoice)
- 6) Purchase/Authorization Number
- 7) Description/Date of Services Provided- (Includes description/dates of services provided)
- 8) Invoice Date
- 9) Invoice Number
- 10) Total Amount

Questions/Concerns from attendees:

End of Meeting