



Commission on Rehabilitation Services Meeting

May 9, 2025
10 a.m. (Eastern)
Virtual Via Zoom

MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order/Roll Call/Welcome

- a. The meeting was called to order by Jennifer Diaz

V	Mandy Blaise	V	Kate Barrow	A	Ron Brown
V	Katie Connel	V	Jennifer Diaz	A	Mason Ellis
A	Abby Fleenor	V	Shawn Fulton	V	Kate Heger
A	Zaida Maldonado-Prather	V	Danie'l Mize	V	Ian Ragains
A	Cadence Riley	A	Marc Ruiz	V	Stacey Smith
V	Willaine St. Pierre-Sandy	A	Kindall Stewart	V	Mike Thibideau
V	Barbara Thompson	V	Theresa Koleszar	V	Kristina Blankenship
V	Jeff Russell	V	Ryan Revell	A	Whitney Ertel
V	Mike Foddrill	V	Courtney Scott	V	Amanda Ormstedt

(A=Absent, P=Present, T=Teleconference, Virtual =V, I=Invited Guest)

II. Approval of the March 14, 2025, meeting minutes

- a) The Commission voted unanimously in favor

III. Public Comment

- a) There were no members of the public who made comment

IV. BRS Director's Update – Theresa Koleszar

a) Updates from March Meeting

- Bylaws submitted for posting on VR Commission page of BRS website – sent to membership via email
- CSNA finalized and submitted for posting on VR website – link forthcoming
- Customer Satisfaction Committee update will be provided at September meeting
- Federal fiscal year 2025 final VR grant funding was received in April (continuing resolution), reflecting an increased award over prior year however state match would be needed to draw the additional federal funds
- Establishment projects remain on track to begin July 1, 2025

b) VR Updates from FSSA Quarterly Financial Review

- BRS Program Metrics - Enrollment
 1. 1,659 VR applicants in SFY25 Q3; 4,677 YTD
 2. 14,082 open VR cases/individuals served in SFY25 Q3; 16,866 YTD

3. 1,321 VR cases closed in SFY25 Q3; 4,105 YTD
4. 552/1,321 (42%) of VR closures exiting with employment in SFY25 Q3; 1,384/4,105 (34%) YTD
- BRS Program Metrics – Outcomes
 1. 82% of BEP sites operated by blind vendors in SFY25 Q3 and YTD
 2. 299 Indiana Interpreter Certifications issued by DHHS in SFY2025 YTD; 4 issued in SFY25 Q3
 3. Annual VR spend per case SFY25 YTD \$2,579 (will increase as SFY progresses)
 4. 1,384 total VR exits in Competitive Integrated Employment SFY25 YTD; 552 in SFY25 Q3
 5. VR waiting list was reduced to 0 in October 2024
 6. SFY24 aggregate annual earnings: VR participants exiting with employment and retaining employment one year after exit: \$23,963,352
 7. In CY24, 267 VR participants receiving SSI/SSDI achieved employment earnings meeting SSA thresholds for reduction/elimination of cash benefits
- VR Client Service Spend Breakout SFY2025 YTD
 1. Highlights: Employment Services - ~\$18M, Pre-Employment Transition Services \$8M, Postsecondary ~\$5M
 2. Employment Services and Pre-ETS account for almost half of client service spend
- c) VR Participants breakdown from CSNA (SFY22-SFY24)
 - Almost 4/5 eligible individuals have a most significant disability
 - More than 1/3 have a primary impairment of Intellectual/Developmental disability
 - Mental health is most common type of disability when factoring primary and secondary impairment

V. Officer Elections

- a) The group reviewed the officer positions and duties
- b) Jennifer Diaz stated her interest in continuing to serve on the Executive Committee for another year
- c) The group was instructed to email Marc Ruiz if they are interested in serving as an officer

VI. VR Staff Awards

- a) The group voted in favor of holding the VR Staff Awards this year

VII. Committee Assignments

- a) Executive Committee – Marc Ruiz, Danie'l Mize, Jennifer Diaz

- b) Policy and Collaboration – Mike Thibideau, Kate Barrow (tentative), Mandy Blaise, Kate Heger (VR staff rep Shanida Sharp-Byrnes)
- c) Education/Outreach – Ian Ragains, Danie’l Mize, Shawn Fulton, Marc Ruiz, Ryan Revell (VR staff rep Kristina Blankenship)
- d) Customer Satisfaction – Kate Barrow, Barbara Thompson, Jennifer Diaz, Willaine St. Pierre-Sandy (VR staff rep Amanda Ormstedt)
- e) Federal Reporting – Mike Thibideau, Stacey Smith, Mandy Blaise (VR staff rep Theresa Koleszar)
- f) Ad Hoc/VR Staff Awards – Shawn Fulton, Ian Ragains, Jennifer Diaz, Kate Heger, Cayce Stewart (VR staff rep Amanda Ormstedt)
- g) Theresa Koleszar will reach out to potential VR staff representatives for each committee
 - Will provide support with logistics, scheduling, expertise, knowledge

VIII. Other Business

IX. Meeting Adjourned

Future meeting dates:

Date	Time	Location
September 12, 2025	10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Hamilton County Tourism 37 E Main St Carmel, IN 46032
November 14, 2025	10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Bosma Enterprises 7225 Woodland Drive Indianapolis, IN 46278