

## **Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators for the VR Program**

### **§361.80 Purpose.**

The purpose of this subpart is to establish evaluation standards and performance indicators for the Program.

### **§361.81 Applicable definitions.**

In addition to those definitions in §361.5(b), the following definitions apply to this subpart:

Average hourly earnings means the average per hour earnings in the week prior to exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program of an eligible individual who has achieved a competitive employment outcome.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) means an employment outcome in which an individual with a significant disability operates a vending facility or other small business under the management and supervision of a designated State unit (DSU). This term includes home industry, farming, and other enterprises.

Exit the VR program means that a DSU has closed the individual's record of VR services in one of the following categories:

- (1) Ineligible for VR services.
- (2) Received services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE) and achieved an employment outcome.
- (3) Received services under an IPE but did not achieve an employment outcome.
- (4) Eligible for VR services but did not receive services under an IPE.

General or combined DSU means a DSU that does not serve exclusively individuals with visual impairments or blindness.

Individuals from a minority background means individuals who report their race and ethnicity in any of the following categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Hispanic or Latino.

Minimum wage means the higher of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, 29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1), (i.e., the Federal minimum wage) or applicable State minimum wage law.

Non-minority individuals means individuals who report themselves exclusively as White, non-Hispanic.

Performance period is the reporting period during which a DSU's performance is measured. For Evaluation Standards 1 and 2, performance data must be aggregated and reported for each fiscal year beginning with fiscal year 1999. However, DSUs that exclusively serve individuals with visual impairments or blindness must report each year the aggregated data for the 2 previous years for Performance Indicators 1.1 through 1.6; the second year must coincide with the performance period for general or combined DSUs.

Primary indicators means Performance Indicators 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5, which are specifically designed to measure--

- (1) The achievement of competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to the minimum wage or higher, particularly by individuals with significant disabilities; and

(2) The ratio between the average hourly earnings of individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to the minimum wage or higher and the State's average hourly earnings for all employed individuals.

RSA-911 means the Case Service Report that is submitted annually by a DSU as approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Self-employment means an employment outcome in which the individual works for profit or fee in his or her own business, farm, shop, or office, including sharecroppers.

Service rate means the result obtained by dividing the number of individuals who exit the VR program after receiving one or more services under an IPE during any reporting period by the total number of individuals who exit the VR program (as defined in this section) during that reporting period.

State's average hourly earnings means the average hourly earnings of all persons in the State in which the DSU is located.

### **§361.82 Evaluation standards.**

(a) The Secretary establishes two evaluation standards to evaluate the performance of each DSU that receives funds under this part. The evaluation standards assist the Secretary and each DSU to evaluate a DSU's performance in serving individuals with disabilities under the VR program.

(b) A DSU must achieve successful performance on both evaluation standards during each performance period.

(c) The evaluation standards for the VR program are--

#### **(1) Evaluation Standard 1--Employment outcomes.**

A DSU must assist any eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability, to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment.

#### **(2) Evaluation Standard 2--Equal access to services.**

A DSU must ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.

### **§361.84 Performance indicators.**

(a) The performance indicators establish what constitutes minimum compliance with the evaluation standards.

(b) The performance indicators require a DSU to provide information on a variety of factors to enable the Secretary to measure compliance with the evaluation standards.

(c) The performance indicators are as follows:

#### **(1) Employment outcomes.**

(i) **Performance Indicator 1.1.** The number of individuals exiting the VR program who achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exit the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

(ii) **Performance Indicator 1.2.** Of all individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services, the percentage who are determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

(iii) **Performance Indicator 1.3.** Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

(iv) **Performance Indicator 1.4.** Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

(v) **Performance Indicator 1.5.** The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings levels equivalent to at least the minimum wage as a ratio to the State's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the State who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report "State Average Annual Pay" for the most recent available year).

(vi) **Performance Indicator 1.6.** Of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who report their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they apply for VR services.

**(2) Equal access to services.**

(i) **Performance Indicator 2.1.** The service rate for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all non-minority individuals with disabilities.

**§361.86 Performance levels.**

(a) **General.**

(1) Paragraph (b) of this section establishes performance levels for--

(i) General or combined DSUs; and

(ii) DSUs serving exclusively individuals who are visually impaired or blind.

(2) The Secretary may establish, by regulations, new performance levels.

(b) **Performance levels for each performance indicator.**

(1)(i) The performance levels for Performance Indicators 1.1 through 1.6 are--

<u>Performance Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Level by Type of DSU</u>	
	<u>General/Combined</u>	<u>Blind</u>
1.1	Equal or exceed previous performance period.	Same
1.2	55.8%	68.9%
1.3	72.6%	35.4%
1.4	62.4%	89.0%
1.5	.52 (Ratio)	.59
1.6	53.0 (Math. Difference)	30.4

(ii) To achieve successful performance on Evaluation Standard 1 (Employment outcomes), a DSU must meet or exceed the performance levels established for four of the six performance indicators in the evaluation standard, including meeting or exceeding the performance levels for two of the three primary indicators (Performance Indicators 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5).

(2)(i) The performance level for Performance Indicator 2.1 is--

<u>Performance Indicator</u>	<u>Performance Levels</u>
2.1	.80 (Ratio)

(ii) To achieve successful performance on Evaluation Standard 2 (Equal access), DSUs must meet or exceed the performance level established for Performance Indicator 2.1 or meet the performance requirement in paragraph (2)(iii) of this section.

(iii) If a DSU's performance does not meet or exceed the performance level required for Performance Indicator 2.1, or if fewer than 100 individuals from a minority population have exited the VR program during the reporting period, the DSU must describe the policies it has adopted or will adopt and the steps it has taken or will take to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.

### **§361.88 Reporting requirements.**

(a) The Secretary requires that each DSU report within 60 days after the end of each fiscal year the extent to which the State is in compliance with the evaluation standards and performance indicators and include in this report the following RSA-911 data:

(1) The number of individuals who exited the VR program in each closure category as specified in the definition of "Exit the VR program" under §361.81.

(2) The number of individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings at or above the minimum wage.

(3) The number of individuals with significant disabilities who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings at or above the minimum wage.

(4) The weekly earnings and hours worked of individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings at or above the minimum wage.

(5) The number of individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings at or above the minimum wage whose primary source of support at the time they applied for VR services was "personal income."

(6) The number of individuals who exited the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earnings at or above the minimum wage whose primary source of support at closure was "personal income."

(7) The number of individuals exiting the VR program who are individuals from a minority background.

(8) The number of non-minority individuals exiting the VR program.

(9) The number of individuals from a minority background exiting the VR program after receiving services under an IPE.

(10) The number of non-minority individuals exiting the VR program after receiving services under an IPE.

(b) In lieu of the report required in paragraph (a) of this section, a DSU may submit its RSA-911 data on tape, diskette, or any alternative electronic format that is compatible with RSA's capability to process such an alternative, as long as the tape, diskette, or alternative electronic format includes the data that--

(1) Are required by paragraph (a)(1) through (10) of this section; and

(2) Meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section.

(c) Data reported by a DSU must be valid, accurate, and in a consistent format. If a DSU fails to submit data that are valid, accurate, and in a consistent format within the 60-day period, the DSU must develop a program improvement plan pursuant to §361.89(a).

**§361.89 Enforcement procedures.**

(a) If a DSU fails to meet the established performance levels on both evaluation standards as required by §361.82(b), the Secretary and the DSU must jointly develop a program improvement plan that outlines the specific actions to be taken by the DSU to improve program performance.

(b) In developing the program improvement plan, the Secretary considers all available data and information related to the DSU's performance.

(c) When a program improvement plan is in effect, review of the plan is conducted on a biannual basis. If necessary, the Secretary may request that a DSU make further revisions to the plan to improve performance. If the Secretary establishes new performance levels under §361.86(a)(2), the Secretary and the DSU must jointly modify the program improvement plan based on the new performance levels. The Secretary continues reviews and requests revisions until the DSU sustains satisfactory performance based on the current performance levels over a period of more than 1 year.

(d) If the Secretary determines that a DSU with less than satisfactory performance has failed to enter into a program improvement plan or comply substantially with the terms and conditions of the program improvement plan, the Secretary, consistent with the procedures specified in §361.11, reduces or makes no further payments to the DSU under this program until the DSU has met one of these two requirements or raised its subsequent performance to meet the current overall minimum satisfactory level on the compliance indicators.