

**EVALUATION AND REPORT OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING IDENTIFIED GOALS
AND PRIORITIES AND USE OF TITLE I FUNDS
FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES**

The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL)/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program conducts an annual assessment of the effectiveness of program services. This assessment is carried out in accordance with evaluation standards and performance indicators established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Georgia VR exceeded six categories of the national standards.

Federal Program Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators
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Evaluation Standard 1- Employment Outcome. A Designated State Unit (DSU) shall assist any eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability, to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment.

- **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 exited the VR Program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

Required Performance Level: Equal or exceed previous performance period.

Actual Performance: 425 (passed with an increase of 425 individuals served).	
○ # of Employment Outcomes for FY2003	4,161
○ # of Employment Outcomes for FY2004	4,586

Explanation for meeting RSA Standards:

The increase of 425 consumers achieving employment outcomes in FY04 is the result of concentrated marketing of VR services to employers and local businesses, increased availability of nontraditional employment options, restructured staff roles and responsibilities, and the co-location of several VR hub offices into GDOL Career Centers.

- **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.

Required Performance Level: 55.8%

Actual Performance: 56.83% (passed)	
○ # of Successful Employment Outcomes	4,586
○ # of Unsuccessful Employment Outcomes	8,069

Explanation for meeting RSA standard:

During FY2004, the VR program made significant efforts to pass this standard. These include:

1. Decreased referrals under the contract with the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program for assessment,
 2. Decision not to place TANF referrals on VR caseloads who were being referred for assessment only and who did not express a desire to apply for VR services (use of statuses 1 and 9), and
 3. Emphasis on proper assessment of rehabilitation needs which hopefully lead to more realistic plans and more successful rehabilitations.
- **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 Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage of \$5.15.

Required Performance Level: 72.6%

Actual Performance: 88.25% (passed)	
o # of Employment Outcomes	4,586
o # of Competitive Employment Outcomes	4,047

Explanation for meeting RSA Standards:

To successfully meet the employment needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, GDOL/VR maintains collaborative efforts and working relationships with a network of 24 local Community Rehabilitation Programs and 380 supported employment service providers. Each VR consumer engaged in supported employment programs are paid comparable wages for the same or similar work performed by non-disabled workers

Through community work adjustment training with local businesses, VR consumers are given the opportunity to participate in paid work experiences that simulate competitive expectations. They learn vocational skills, positive work behaviors, and job seeking skills that are necessary to compete for integrated, competitive employment. Many of these consumers are paid at least minimum wage, and are ultimately hired by the sponsored business at competitive employment wages.

- **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, 62.4% are individuals with significant disabilities.

Required Performance: 62.4%

Actual Performance: 86.11% (passed)	
○ # with Competitive Employment Outcomes	4,047
○ # of Competitive Employment Outcomes for All Individuals with Significant Disabilities	3,485

Explanation for meeting RSA standards:

The GDOL/VR Program operates under an Order of Selection system that ensures that individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected first for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services. The system is based on significance of disability. Individuals with significant disabilities are secondary priority, and all other eligible individuals in descending order of the severity of their disability are third priority.

- **Performance Indicator 1.5:** The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exit the VR program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earning 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).

Required Performance: 0.52

Actual Performance: 0.500 (did not pass)	
○ Average Hourly Wage for Individuals with Competitive Employment Outcomes-	\$8.44
○ Average Hourly Wage for State-	\$16.88

Explanation for not meeting RSA standard:

Many factors impede the potential for more success in the number of successful employment outcomes that consist of increased earning potential, health benefits, and career advancement. The presence of a significant disability can be a challenge when seeking competitive employment at or above state and national wage levels for GDOL/VR consumers. The Longitudinal Study on Vocational Rehabilitation Services Programs showed that Georgia consumers are younger; lack a high school education, and have little or no work experience. Additionally, 1/3 of the GDOL/VR caseloads are transition cases.

Because of the current economy, workers with more education and experience are accepting low-paying positions, which limits the job market options for workers with less education and less work experience.

Plan for Improvement:

GDOL/VR will continue to promote supported employment services and other supports to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities. VR will maintain collaborative relationships with corporations and government agencies in Georgia that promote equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Further, VR will implement Quality Assurance strategies to ensure proper coding of consumers employment wages.

- **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 reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at exit and the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of support at application.

Required Performance: 53.0

<i>Actual Performance:</i> 65.73 (passed)	
○ Primary Support is Own Income at Application	757
○ Primary Support is Own Income at Closure	3417

Explanation for meeting RSA Standards:

The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) assists Georgians who are blind or visually impaired to become profitable independent business operators, specifically vending facilities, snack bars, and food service establishments. Referrals are accepted from the VR Program and individuals are trained to become licensed vendors and are subsequently placed into a business enterprise. The average gross salary per vendor is \$42,000 per year with average annual sales of approximately \$250,000.

Standard Indicator 2: Equal Access to Services

Standard 2 measures whether individuals from minority backgrounds have been provided equal access to VR services at the same rate as non-minority individuals.

- **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.

Required Performance: .80

<i>Actual Performance:</i> .947 (passed)	
○ Non-Minorities Exiting the VR Program	6,374
○ Non-Minorities Who Received Services	4,105
○ Minorities Exiting the VR Program	6,499
○ Minorities Who Received Services	3,964

Explanation for meeting RSA Standards:

The implementation of services to groups for assessment purposes has been beneficial to the VR program. This practice allowed us to serve the TANF customers, many of who were minorities, and determine their interest and eligibility for services prior to opening a case for plan development.