

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NONPROFIT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

VR attributes its success in part to long-standing relationships with a network of twenty-four private and nonprofit community rehabilitation facilities/programs located throughout Georgia. These facilities provide a wide variety of employment and work readiness services to VR consumers that include vocational evaluation and training; work adjustment and skills training; supported employment and job coaching; job development, placement, and retention; extended/transitional employment; and specialized services for persons who have visual or hearing impairments.

The VR Program understands the need for additional service providers to maximize service efforts for unserved and underserved populations in rural areas throughout Georgia. Through these partnerships, VR has developed 309 service agreements and contracts to meet the need of consumers in rural counties. These include 269 agreements with non-CRPs and 40 agreements with CRPs. Of these agreements, 127 are for supported employment alone, 156 are service agreements, and 26 are contracts for VR related services.

Cooperative agreements (including contracts and/or memoranda of understanding) have been established with all entities from which VR purchases services. Each agreement:

- Defines the scope and nature of services provided by both agencies.
- Establishes principles for the development of working between the two agencies.
- Establishes criteria by which the cooperative operations may be reviewed and evaluated in order to determine their effectiveness.
- Defines programs and establish criteria for admission, monitoring and successful completion of services.

Contents of each cooperative agreement include:

- Purpose of the agreement that outlines program services, number of persons to be served, and timeframe for provision of services.
- Legal basis for handling interagency disagreements.
- Role, function, and responsibility of each agency, and referral and reporting procedures.
- Consumer staffing and consumer rights to informed choice about their vocational rehabilitation program.
- Financial procedures for submission of invoices for services provided, and payment amounts and schedules based on consumer outcomes.
- Supervision and number of work hours for each consumer receiving services.
- Outcome measurements.
- Statement of assurance of compliance.

Each agreement is reviewed at least annually. If needed, agreements are amended based on changes in law and/or methods for improving the provision of services.