



Division of Rehabilitative Services

Employment Service Organization Steering Committee (ESOSC)

Tuesday, July 13, 2021

11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

In-Person Meeting Location: 8004 Franklin Farms Drive Henrico, VA 23229

Minutes

Members Present: Shirley Lyons, Chuck McElroy, Alan Hargraves, Joanne Aceto, Megan Bergen, Chris Lavach, Jason Harper, Teresa Hall, Stephanie Hoer, Jim Fenerty

Members Absent: Robin Metcalf

DRS Staff Attending: Kathryn Hayfield, Dale Batten, Donna Bonessi, Anita Mundy, Leah Mills

Full Committee Call to Order and Introductions

Shirley Lyons, Chair

Chair Shirley Lyons called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. and welcomed members and guests. Ms. Lyons asked members and expected guests to acknowledge they were present when called.

Approve Meeting Minutes from April 13, 2021

Shirley Lyons

The Committee reviewed a draft of the meeting minutes dated April 13, 2021. A motion was made by Chuck McElroy to approve the minutes as written. Stephanie Hoer seconded the motion. All members present voted in agreement.

Approval of Agenda

Shirley Lyons

The Agenda was presented for approval. Anita Mundy, DARS staff to the Committee, requested a change in the order of the Agenda to accommodate Commissioner Hayfield's schedule so that she may address the Committee. The Committee members present unanimously agreed to make this adjustment.

Committee member, Chuck McElroy, stated that he understood that WISA services under LTESS-EES are being considered by DARS and asked that the service description be brought before the Committee for review. Megan Bergen made a motion to add WISA services provided under LTESS-EES to today's Agenda. Chris Lavach seconded the motion. All Committee members voted in favor of adding this topic to today's Agenda.

Public Comment

Shirley Lyons

Public notice was posted prior to the meeting. Public comment was requested to be submitted by July 9, 2021. Anita Mundy reported that no members of the public submitted public comment prior to the meeting.

Member of the public, Sharon Harrup of STEPS, Inc. employment service organization, was in attendance and made a statement of appreciation thanking DARS and the ESOSC for providing COVID-19 guidance through regular zoom updates to ESOs and relief funding to all of the organizations that were eligible for LTESS-EES funding.

Commissioner's Update

Kathy Hayfield, DARS Commissioner

Commissioner Hayfield addressed the Committee and thanked them for their recommendations in allocating relief funds to employment service organizations throughout the pandemic. The Commissioner reported that DARS was unable to provide an additional allocation of relief funds for the fourth quarter of SFY21 since DARS was seeing an increase in service delivery. The Commissioner stated that there is an approximate balance of \$700,000.

The Commissioner noted that VR referrals in Virginia are currently low and this appears to be a nationwide issue. The Commissioner noted that employers are understaffed and struggling to find workers. She noted that this is the prime time for opportunities for individuals to become employed.

The Commissioner reported that overall the VR program is in good shape. The good news is that DARS has funding available, but the bad news is that not as many individuals are currently requesting services. She expects that DARS will see improvement over the next few months as "life" starts to get back to normal from the pandemic. All categories remain open and DARS will keep these open as long as possible so that individuals may access services.

Emergency Relief Funding Update

Anita Mundy, DARS Staff

During the April 13, 2021 ESOSC meeting, the Employment Service Organization Steering Committee reconfirmed its recommendation to Commissioner Hayfield for DARS to allocate an additional round of emergency relief funding to ESOs from the Third Quarter of LTESS/EES FY21. Commissioner Hayfield accepted this recommendation and made available \$919,097 to eligible ESOs as COVID-19 relief funds for expenses associated with employment related services incurred during the third quarter (December 2020-February 2021) of the 2021 LTESS/EES Fiscal year.

Funds were awarded based on the number of LTESS/EES individuals served by an organization from December 1, 2020 to February 28, 2021. During the months of December 2020 through February 2021, 3217 individuals received services from 57 Employment Service Organizations using LTESS or EES funds. Four organizations out of the fifty-seven did not accept/receive relief funding, three organizations did not accept their full offers, and one organization was ineligible to receive an offer due to not submitting their Spending Report from Quarter 1. The funds were distributed on a per person basis, \$285.70 per person served in the Third Quarter ($\$919,097/3,217=\285.70). Emergency Relief Funding totaling \$25,801 for Quarter 3 went unclaimed.

LTESS-EES SFY End of Year Review

Donna Bonessi

LTESS-EES SFY21 End of Year Statistics

Deputy Director, ESSP, DRS

SFY22 Allocation Methodology

Donna Bonessi provided an end of year and statistics review for LTESS and EES for SFY21. In 2021, 3795 individuals were served by 57 employment service organization using LTESS funding and 203 individuals were served using EES funding. See breakdown of expenditures below.

Year to Date Summary			
	EES	LTESS	Total
Expected Expenditure	\$ 2,558,195.00	\$ 6,087,568.34	\$ 8,645,763.34
Actual Expenditure	\$ 1,081,912.75	\$ 4,388,901.63	\$ 5,470,814.38
Balance as of 05/31/2021	\$ 1,476,282.25	\$ 1,698,666.71	\$ 3,174,948.96
1st Quarter COVID Relief			\$ 758,661.74
2nd Quarter COVID Relief			\$ 795,753.00
3rd Quarter COVID Relief			\$ 893,295.39
Total YTD Balance			\$ 727,238.83

Ms. Bonessi presented two SFY22 Allocation Scenarios to the Committee for recommendations. Scenario 1 was based on utilizing the 3-Year Rolling average, and Scenario 2 was based on SFY21 allocations to ESO's.

After much discussion and no additional scenarios presented by the Committee, a motion by Stephanie Hoer was put forth which recommended that DARS use the SFY21 allocations as the allocations for SFY22 and that a mid-year reallocation be conducted based on the first 6 months of service delivery. Megan Bergen seconded the motion. All Committee members present at the meeting voted in favor of the recommendation.

EWISA Services as an Allowable Activity under LTESS-EES

Shirley Lyons, Chair

Per the addition of this item to the original Agenda, the Committee reviewed the EWISA draft service description. The original draft description permitted WISA services for individuals who utilized these services prior to case closure and who are currently receiving LTESS funding. The description did not include individuals working in extended employment services (EES). Additionally, the Committee discussed various scenarios under WISA services including the 8 hour per year cap written in the draft service description. Ms. Mundy noted that for clarification purposes, the LTESS-EES definition of a state fiscal year will be added to the service description.

A motion was put forth by Chuck Mc Elroy to make a recommendation to Commissioner Hayfield that WISA services be added as an allowable service activity for individuals who utilized WISA services prior to case closure and who currently receive services under LTESS or EES. The motion also included adding a statement to extend the 8 hour cap for WISA services based on an individual's specific needs. Approval from the LTESS-EES Provider Program Specialist will be required for WISA services that exceed 8 hours per year. Jason Harper seconded this motion. All members present voted in favor of this recommendation.

Future Roll-Off of Committee Members Discussion

Shirley Lyons, Chair

All members of the ESOSC began their 3-year Appointments to the Committee on July 1, 2019. The term end date for all members is June 30, 2022. The Committee members discussed reappointment procedures and responsibilities of the Associations that they presently represent to fill vacancies.

Addition of New LTESS Providers

Anita Mundy, Staff to the ESOSC

During the previous ESOSC Meeting, the Committee requested the review of new LTESS providers.

Ms. Mundy reported that no additional DARS employment service organizations have met the requirements to be eligible to receive LTESS-EES funding.

Review & Update ESOSC By-laws

Anita Mundy, Staff to the ESOSC

Ms. Mundy reviewed the section of the ESOSC By-laws that references the ESOSC’s Electronic Meeting Policy. Ms. Mundy noted recent legislation that was passed in regard to changes in FOIA regulations. Ms. Mundy and Ms. Leah Mills, DARS Policy Analyst, reviewed policy changes that DARS recommended for implementation by all of its Boards and Councils to meet FOIA regulations. Changes recommended are underlined as follows:

Electronic Member Participation Permission #1:

Disability, Medical Condition or Caregiving Obligations-

- a. The Committee shall record in its minutes the remote location from which the member participated and the fact that the member participated through electronic means due to disability, medical condition or caregiving obligation.

Electronic Member Participation Permission #2:

Personal Matters-

- b. The Committee shall record in its minutes the remote location from which the member participated and the nature of the personal matter cited by the member.

The Committee reviewed the changes recommended and a motion was made by Joanne Aceto to amend the Employment Service Organization Steering Committee (ESOSC) Bylaws (12/02/2019) to include the presented changes. Jim Fenerty seconded the motion. All Committee members voted in favor of the amendments made to the current electronic meeting policy. The presented changes will go into effect immediately upon the vote of the Committee. The Committee will review the revised ESOSC Electronic Meeting Policy at its next meeting on October 12, 2021.

Public Comment

None

Shirley Lyons, Chair

Upcoming Agenda Items, and Other Business

Shirley Lyons, Chair

The next meeting of the Employment Service Organization Steering Committee is scheduled for October 12, 2021. The Agenda will include the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.