

**EVALUATION AND REPORT OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING IDENTIFIED GOALS
AND PRIORITIES AND USE OF TITLE I FUNDS FOR
INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES
[Attachment 4.11(e)(2)]**

REPORT OF PROGRESS

Workforce Investment

LRS continues to be involved with the Workforce Commission and its twenty-one (21) Workforce Investment Areas. A local Workforce Investment Board (WIB) oversees each of these Workforce Investment Areas. LRS is represented on each of the 21 boards.

Within the 21 Workforce Investment Areas, 53 Career Solution Centers have been established. LRS has working relationships with all 53 locations. Twenty-two cost allocation plans have been completed by the WIBs, and approved by all parties, including LRS. We continue to pay expenses to the local Career Solution Centers for our participation, as per the local cost allocation plans.

LRS' Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continues to provide consultation to the Career Solution Centers regarding assistive technology and other accessibility issues as needed. In addition, our agency's Rehabilitation Employment Development Specialist (REDS) serve as the LRS liaison for all Career Solution Centers within their region. Their duties at the Career Solution Centers include "LRS Public Awareness" as well as providing services to consumers in job seeking skills techniques and employment development.

The agency is committed to the success of Workforce and collaboration with the Career Solution Centers. The LRS Program Coordinator assigned to workforce investment meets regularly with all eighteen WIB Directors to identify any barriers or special challenges to consumers of LRS and methods to coordinate with WIA partners and Career Solution Centers.

Louisiana Rehabilitation Council

LRS and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) continue to work in partnership to strengthen existing services and develop innovative new services to better serve people with disabilities in Louisiana. The Council regularly allows time for public input at their meetings to capture comments from consumers and others involved in the rehabilitation process. The Council's establishes committees that research, study, and recommend solutions to LRS on vocational rehabilitation issues.

The Council has also developed a proactive campaign to point out the positive aspects of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to the Louisiana State Legislature. Success stories and statistics are used to highlight the services provided to citizens of Louisiana who

have disabilities and wish to become employed.

LRC developed and distributed a consumer satisfaction survey in 2007. Two focus groups met with LRC to help refine the final draft of the consumer satisfaction survey. The revisions to the instrument included adding information to the cover letter which included additional information about the Council, adding a telephone number to call for assistance, and the length of the survey was shortened. LRC distributed 3,000 consumer satisfaction surveys to LRS consumers in April 2007. LRC is currently receiving the completed surveys from consumers. The consumers surveyed have until June 30, 2007 to return the surveys. Once the deadline ends, LRC will compile the responses and distribute a report of the findings in 2008 to LRS and other interested parties.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Quality Assurance (QA): During the 2006 review cycle, (which was from January 2006 through September, 2006), LRS' quality assurance staff randomly selected and reviewed 567 consumer service records. 108 caseloads in seven (7) LRS regions were reviewed. The remaining region, New Orleans, was omitted from the 2006 QA reviews due to the closure of the New Orleans offices which were damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the displacement of staff from August 29, 2005 through January 17, 2006.

Samples were drawn statewide from the following statuses: Trial Work/Extended Eligibility, Eligibility, Service, Closed Rehabilitated, and Closed Other. The statewide rate of counselor compliance with agency documentation requirements delineated in the QA-1 monitoring form was measured at 94% ($\geq 90\%$ is considered "Satisfactory") for the 2006 review cycle (up from 93.7% in 2005).

All regions achieved a "Satisfactory" rating during the review cycle for casework documentation compliance measured by the monitoring form. Regional scores ranged from 92.6% to 94.9%. Corrective action recommendations resulting from QA monitoring activities have been implemented in all LRS regions. The QA-1 monitoring form was revised to incorporate changes to LRS procedures implemented over the past 12 months.

A special ad hoc review of all Master Counselor/Master Specialist caseloads (33) in the state at that time was conducted by the Quality Assurance Unit. A total of 330 cases were reviewed. Based on the information obtained from this review, revised procedures and review instruments were developed and approved by the LRS Director effective September 27, 2006. The major procedural change involved making the Quality Assurance Unit responsible for conducting Master Counselor/Master Specialist reviews.

CRP Monitoring and Evaluation

LRS has implemented a three-pronged approach to monitor and evaluate community rehabilitation programs.

1. LRS monitors community rehabilitation programs at the regional level by requiring providers to meet certain quality indicators and submit additional documentation to verify the accuracy of reports. Counselors review reports for content and follow up with consumers and employers to determine satisfaction and accuracy of reporting.
2. LRS monitors community rehabilitation programs at the state level through programmatic and fiscal site reviews. Promulgated standards are used to evaluate quality of services, accessibility and outcomes.
3. LRS also monitors community rehabilitation programs through an annual renewal process. This process initiated at the regional level and concluding at the state level provides for additional monitoring and evaluation.

Rate Setting

LRS monitors rates on an as-need basis as per the Director's or Vendor's request. Currently the agency is working on setting rates for several CRP's.

Cultural Diversity Initiative

The State of Louisiana currently has two Section 121 Vocational Rehabilitation programs, namely the United Houma Nation Vocational Rehabilitation Program (UHNVRP) and the Central Louisiana Intertribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program (CLIVRP). These programs were established with Section 121 grants and provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians living within established service areas. During this fiscal year 2006, LRS and the Tribal programs continued to provide coordinated services under the collaborative agreement to make the rehabilitation process more responsive to the needs of American Indians with disabilities. The collaborative agreement allows for mutual acceptance of eligibility decisions, the provision of services through concurrent (joint) cases, and the sharing of resources, to include the Tribal programs having access to the Exceptional Entrepreneurs of Louisiana (ExcEL) Program at the University of New Orleans. LRS and the Tribal programs have presented cross-training opportunities to facilitate the development of staff persons who are culturally sensitive and competent. The LRS annual Academy of Rehabilitation Counselor Training has proven to be an effective venue for sharing between the different cultures.

A module that addresses multi-cultural counseling issues and outreach has been developed and incorporated into all training academies for newly hired rehabilitation counselors. LRS employees are provided opportunities to attend cultural diversity workshops/training provided by outside entities to include conferences and university

degree programs.

Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology (AT) Program is negotiating a new three year contract for AT service delivery with Louisiana Tech University. As of the 3rd Quarterly Report on the current contract, over 285 consumers received direct AT evaluation and assessment services. These services included computer assessment, activities-of-daily-living (ADL) evaluations, home and job-modification evaluations, adaptive driving and transportation evaluations, vehicle modification reports, and seating and positioning assessments for wheelchairs and wheeled mobility systems. The overall goals for 2007 were for 250 consumers to receive direct AT-related services.

In 2006-2007 LRS assisted Louisiana Assistive Technology Network (LATAN) in expanding a grant from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to provide state-wide demonstration-learning, lending, and purchasing assistance of assistive technology. As a result of this expanded role, which includes distribution of assistive technology (AT) and durable medical equipment (DME) to disaster victims, LATAN has joined the Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) and has participated with LRS in planning for emergency response for persons with disabilities.

In 2007 LRS participated with the Department of Health and Hospital (DHH) task force to increase consumer awareness and access to “affordable-accessible” housing. This task force worked with Governor’s Office for Disabilities Affairs (GODA) to help consumers in need of affordable-accessible housing. Again, this is all-the-more critical since the Storms of 2005 resulted in across-the-Gulf housing shortages.

Since January, 2006 LRS has provided a part-time staff member to work with the Transition Recovery Operations (TRO), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Government Services Administration (GSA) and Governors’ Office. The “Essential Services Committee” reviews issues at the long-term trailer sites, and the contracted rental assistance program during the recovery phase of the post-Katrina/Rita housing crisis. This person continues to interact with the FEMA and the UMCOR subcontractor, Family Recovery Corp. to assist persons with disabilities and all others with re-location housing options. A major programmatic outcome of this effort was a proposal of “Ramp Up Louisiana”, an interagency referral model for assistance with home modifications for accessibility.

The AT program continues to provide review of ADAAG issues for new construction of business and organizations serving the public, in coordination with the State Fire Marshall’s office.

LRS/AT provides a review and voting board member to the Department of Labor (DOL) Second Injury Fund Board. This mandated program resulted in savings to the State of Louisiana of over \$14 million dollars in 2nd Injury medical insurance settlements.

Social Security Reimbursement

The Social Security Administration approved payments to Louisiana Rehabilitation Services in the amount of \$2,078,199.14 for the reimbursement program ending FFY 2006. LRS also receives reimbursements as an Employment Network (EN) as a result of the Ticket-To-Work/ Work Incentives Improvement Act through the **Milestone Outcome** method. The agency has received over \$121,000 in Ticket payments, for 55 consumers, since March 2004.

LRS continues to play a key role in Ticket-to-Work in the State of Louisiana. The agency maintains a statewide 1-800 Ticket Hotline number, which was installed in 2002. Beneficiaries around the state receiving a Ticket can call this number to learn more about their Ticket and how LRS can help them. In 2002 LRS also developed two brochures to help explain the Ticket Legislation. One brochure targets consumers and the other targets professionals. LRS continues to network and collaborate with the Benefits Planning Assistance and Outreach Program, the Medicaid Purchase Plan Program, as well as many other agencies in the state to assure Ticket-to-Work success in the State of Louisiana.

Informed Choice

LRS held public meetings statewide so members of the public would have the opportunity to provide comments relative to the substantive revision to the State Plan Attachments for the Vocational Rehabilitation Program SFY 2008. Individuals attending the public meetings were in favor of LRS' proposed revision to the State Plan. No written comments were received.

LRS is a workforce partner and has staff participating in the Career Solution Center locations in Louisiana. As a result of this linkage, LRS staff has increased their knowledge and awareness of other agency's services. This benefits LRS consumers informed choices which is afforded to them through the LRS Counselors. LRS staff also imparts valuable information as rehabilitation professionals to our partnering agencies.

Training/CSPD

LRS was awarded a new five year RSA In-Services Training Grant for the Federal Fiscal Year period October 10, 2005 – September 30, 2010 and is currently in the second grant year. Training initiatives for LRS have been impacted as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita and the subsequent Governor's Executive Order freezing all services and programs requiring a state match. As a result of this, LRS requested and received an extension to spend grant funds that LRS was not able to spend during the freeze. Training activities resumed in July of 2006 and include the following activities listed below.

LRS staff statewide continues to receive assistance from the agency to pursue graduate study in Rehabilitation Counseling. Five employees graduated with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling in 2006. As of June 2007, sixteen employees are working towards a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling utilizing the University of North

Texas' Distance Learning Program, Southern University Baton Rouge On-Campus Program and Southern University Distance Learning Program.

LRS continues to hold an annual Academy for Rehabilitation Counselors to prepare all new counselors for services delivery. The 2006 Counselor Academy was held in October & November of 2006 and had 18 participants. The 2007 Counselor Academy was conducted in April and May of 2007. Thirteen new counselors and rehabilitation employment development specialists participated in this intense two-week training. Six staff members participated in training for employment development specialist conducted by the Region VI RCEP at the University of North Texas.

LRS training staff and the Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology continue to coordinate training for staff in assistive technology. The Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology attended the annual Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) conference and conducted statewide in-service training for staff on assistive technology.

Management and supervisory staff continue to attend training programs to improve their skills. LRS continues to send staff to Region VI Community Leadership Institute for Change Knowledge (CLICK), Executive Leadership, and Civil Service Mandatory Supervisory Training classes as well as other management courses offered through the Louisiana Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) to enhance their skills. Region VI Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program provided training to management and supervisory staff on project management. In the Fall of 2007 LRS will institute a formal Professional Development Program to formally address the need for succession planning as it relates to the retirement rate of agency staff.

All regional offices continue to hold monthly In-Service Training sessions for all staff. Each region is required to conduct four hours of In-Service Training per month. In addition to In-Service training at the regional level, staff participated in numerous trainings provided by external sources. Employees attended training such as Ethics training at the Annual Professional Development Symposium, ExCEL Small Business Program, Mental Health Workshops, Computer training, Assistive Technology, Specialized Training on Deaf-Blindness and Blind Services training.

LRS implemented a new case management system AWARE in May 2005. In November of 2006 and June of 2007, all new staff received "hands-on" training to insure that they have adequate knowledge to utilize this software when managing or gathering information from a caseload. The training section continues to be active in maintaining the training/procedure manual for the AWARE system. LRS training section coordinated JAWS training with Freedom Scientific, makers of JAWS Software, for visually impaired counselors as related to the AWARE program.

Transition Services

LRS continues to renew and revise existing local cooperative agreements, as applicable, with the 65 parishes and 4 special school systems in Louisiana.

LRS previously had two designated transition counselors in the Thibodeaux and Shreveport regions. This year we have designated transition counselors in the remaining 6 regions. We continue to plan training specific to transition that will give the counselors the additional guidance and resources needed to better serve transition students.

LRS implemented a pilot program in January 2007, in the Thibodeaux region, entitled "Bridging the Gap." This program is providing job readiness training to select students while they are still in high school. The students receive intense job readiness training and job placement services in their exit year. Thus far the program is proving successful. In addition a Regional Transition Core Team (South Central Louisiana Region III Core Transition Team) was formed in the Thibodeaux Region area in 2007. This team ensures the successful linkage of students with disabilities to appropriate support service agencies. DOE and LRS plan to establish regional teams throughout the state as well as parish core teams. This will be part of the state transition plan.

The LRS Program Coordinator for Transition and the Program Manager for the Department of Education work closely together collaborating on joint agency trainings and meetings throughout the year to network and share information. They are also responsible for assisting in the coordination and provision of transition services within each agency to address the improvement of agency operations through collaborative problem solving on identified barriers (e.g. policies, eligibility process, resource allocation); assurance of effective service provision through the support of local interagency core teams, cross-agency training, outreach, and other needed activities; capacity building of young adult and family outreach efforts; continued support of innovative models and practices related to transition; and continuous provision of information and technical assistance.

Recently a team of 8 representatives from various agencies including DOE, OCDD, Families Helping Families, Work Incentives Program, Department of Labor and LRS attended the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center's conference where we received assistance in writing a state plan for transition services. Part of this plan includes obtaining an executive order from the governor to establish the Louisiana Statewide Transition Council. Some of the partner agencies to be included are Louisiana Rehabilitation Services; Louisiana Department of Education - Division of Special Populations; Louisiana Department of Labor-Workforce Investment; Families Helping Families ; Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities; Office of Mental Health, Governors Office of Disability Affairs, and United Houma Nation.

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Due Process

During Federal Fiscal year 2006, there were eleven scheduled Fair Hearings, which is six less than the amount from the preceding year. There were two Mediations, which is a decrease of two over the preceding year and there were two 4th Level Reviews. In addition, there were two requests for Civil Actions, which is the same number as the previous year. The Impartial Hearing Officers and Impartial Mediators continue to receive updates and revisions to LRS policy manuals, technical assistance manuals, and training on these policies and guidelines as needed.

Innovation and Expansion Activities

During State Fiscal Year 2006-2007 LRS used the innovation and expansion funds per allowable expenditures identified in the federal regulations 34 CFR 361.35 to support the salaries, travels, and activities of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council staff person and its members and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

Randolph Sheppard

There are currently 88 Randolph Sheppard Vending facilities throughout the State of Louisiana. The program is working to develop new manned locations at sites such as the Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans and the VA War Veterans Home in Reserve. In addition, the program is still refurbishing and remodeling locations in New Orleans which were affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The Randolph Sheppard Program is continuing work on the Request for Proposal for seeking new and managing existing Unassigned Vending locations. The state licensing agency met with members of the Randolph Sheppard Elected Committee of Blind Vendors for ideas regarding details for the RFP.

In addition Randolph Sheppard has been in contact with the United States Post Office to determine possible locations for both unassigned vending, as well as manned locations.

With the addition of a new Randolph Sheppard Program Specialist, we are now focusing on improving the program. The responsibilities of the Program Specialist include quality assurance, manager's insurance, and training for new and existing managers. The quality control portion of the responsibilities focuses on developing new reporting procedures designed to capture needed information for the RSA-15, but also to ensure that Licensed Managers are following the rules and regulations in the Randolph Sheppard Program Manual and Standards of Operation. The new quality control measures are also designed to improve program accountability from within by conducting self-monitoring.

The Executive Director of Blind Services, the Randolph Sheppard Program Manager, and the Randolph Sheppard Program Specialist are trying to implement measures which not only will make the managers more accountable, but will ultimately enable them to have more control of and responsibility for their locations by obtaining more accurate information.

This process began by conducting a mandatory training for all managers on techniques for maintaining records. The agency is investigating the possibility of training for all managers on the use of cash registers, including both x and z tape readings. This cash register training issue was identified at our recent mandatory training as a major road-block to increased accountability.

Further training will be done with our Randolph Sheppard Management Analysts on issues related to blindness, including recognizing when additional training in alternative techniques to deal with blindness is warranted.

Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services

The LRS Program Manager for Deaf Services continues to work cooperatively with the Louisiana State University Outreach & Technical Assistance Coordinator (SOTAC) in Baton Rouge to provide training and services to counselors serving consumers who are deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, late-deafened and those with speech impairments.

Following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Louisiana lost a large number of certified ASL interpreters who relocated out of state. As a result of this and a national shortage of interpreters, LRS has formed an agreement with a technical college for a pilot project to use Video Remote Interpreting services at the post-secondary setting, to provide interpreting to consumers when an American Sign Language interpreter is not available.

LRS and Institutions of Higher Education have signed a MOU for the provision of support services, which includes ASL interpreting for LRS consumers attending Louisiana Colleges and Universities.

Employment Initiatives

Self-Employment

LRS entered into a new contract with University of New Orleans' Training Resource and Assistive-Technology Center (UNO-TRAC) beginning April 1, 2007. The contract allows for UNO-TRAC to continue providing self-employment training services to eligible consumers interested in self-employment as a vocational option. The self-employment program, Exceptional Entrepreneurs of Louisiana (ExcEL) at UNO-TRAC began in 1995 and has continued since that time with success. For the past 3-year contract period, there were 60 consumers with successful self-employment outcomes.

LRS' Rehabilitation Employment Assessment Programs (REAP) play a critical role in evaluating consumer's strengths and using interventions that will increase their employability. In the shifting job market, jobseekers and workers with disabilities must be as vocationally flexible as their non-disabled peers to insure their competitiveness.

Within the overall framework of the REAP model of assessment and job placement designed to maximize the involvement and employability of the consumer, LRS incorporated a short-term work readiness skills training and a job placement component in the agency's existing REAP's.

Job Fairs

LRS, in partnership with the Louisiana's Medicaid Purchase Plan and the Louisiana Business Leadership Network, participated in the planning and implementation of the Louisiana 2006 Job Fairs for people with disabilities. The Job Fairs were held in October 2006 in nine cities across the state, the 8 LRS Regions plus Mandeville, La. Approximately 250 businesses participated; 1500 individuals attended, 90 were interviewed for a job, and 30 were hired.

LRS continued to actively participate on the Louisiana Commission on Employment of Mental Health Consumers. During the 2006-2007 year, the focus of the commission was to develop a plan to address barriers that prevent persons with mental illness from obtaining and/or maintaining employment. The final report to address the barriers and recommendations was completed and submitted to the legislature in April 2006.

Office and Mental Health (OMH) and LRS Collaboration and Training

The Louisiana Office of Mental Health, in conjunction with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services, is sponsoring a two-day training on the Employment of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities in June 2006. The training will begin with the concept of work as a treatment strategy. Activities will be targeted to draw out participants to discuss all aspects of work and their belief systems. Representatives of successful Supported Employment programs from within and outside the state will be introduced to the group and will be available for questioning. Basic concepts of Supported Employment for individuals with psychiatric disabilities will be presented. The importance of collaboration and partnership will be explored. Participants will be challenged to conceptualize implementation at the local level. Consultants will work with sponsor

leadership to develop follow-up strategies.

VR Business Network

LRS Management Staff has appointed a Core Team consisting of personnel at LRS State Office to assure that LRS' VR Program has a coordinated and unified statewide system in place consistent with the National VR Business Network. The Network will provide services and meets the needs of the VR consumers and businesses and provides VR staff with local, statewide and national access to employers' needs as well as other employment resources to increase employment outcomes. The core team meets regularly to develop and implement strategies to assure that a strong infrastructure is created to support the Network from a state level. The Network will guarantee that persons with disabilities and business needs will be met.

Supported Employment Continuous Improvement Project (SECIP):

LRS signed a three-year contract with Louisiana State University Health Science Center, Human Development Center (LSUHSC – HDC) to implement a Supported Employment Continuous Improvement Project (SECIP). The contract became effective July 1, 2006, is designed to implement best practices which will improve the quality of services and outcomes achieved by LRS-SE Providers.

LSUHSC – HDC project staff will meet with all vendors of supported employment services to assist in three core areas of need: 1) access to employment services for those individuals with significant support needs, 2) development of successful employment placements and improved rates of successful closure, and 3) enhanced supported employee satisfaction in services and employment options.

Evaluation and Reports of Progress Standards and Indicators

EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

The Federal Performance Indicators in some areas continue to be affected by the devastating and residual impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the state and its citizens; recovery efforts are still moving very slowly. In some other respects, due to the 100% federal funding the agency and the consumers served had experienced some positive outcomes regarding service provision. These storms devastating effects include but are not limited to the following:

- Continued displacement of consumers and staff resulting from the hurricanes still almost 2 years after the storms
- Lack of housing and shelter and/or appropriate housing and shelter
- Continued closure of one of LRS' offices located in the New Orleans proper area
- Reduction in available public transportation
- Substantial increase in the cost of living in many areas of the state, most significantly in the New Orleans and surrounding areas

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.

	FFY 2006	FFY 2005	Difference
Louisiana	1582	1704	-122

This year's FFY numbers are much lower than average, due to the devastating impact of hurricanes Katrina and Rita's in August and September 2005 on the state. However, it is important to note that as a result of Louisiana being granted a waiver of the state match and appropriated additional federal funds which have enabled us to serve all five categories as of January 10, 2006; LRS has already achieved 1500 successful closures up through the 8th month of 2007 FFY (based on closure data for 10/1/2006 – 6/7/07).

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

	Successful Closures	Cases Closed After Services	Percent Successful
Louisiana	1582	3193	49.5%

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

	Successful Closures	Minimum Wage	Successful Closures Earning at Least Minimum Wage	Percent Earning Minimum Wage
Louisiana	1582	\$5.15	1576	99.6%

Louisiana’s percentage in this area continues to be high. It is expected that the agency’s performance in this area will remain high.

Performance Indicator 1.4: Of all individuals who exit the VR Program in competitive, self-, or BEP employment with earning equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

	Earning Minimum Wage	Earning Minimum Wage and Significantly Disabled	Percent Earning Minimum Wage and Significantly Disabled
Louisiana	1576	1526	96.8%

Louisiana Rehabilitation Services’ VR Program operates under a very stringent Order of Selection process with five Order of Selection Groups (OOS). Up through January 10, 2006, there were very few active cases that were not classified as significantly disabled as we had only been able to serve OOS Groups I and II. As a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita’s devastating impact in August and September 2005, Louisiana was granted a waiver of the state match and appropriated additional federal funds which have enabled us to serve all five (5) OOS. Therefore, it is anticipated that this percentage will continue to decrease slightly over time as we have been able to serve the non-significantly disabled since January of 2006.

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).

*Note: from the Louisiana Employment and Wages Report for 2005

	Hourly Earnings of VR Clients	Average Annual State Wage	State Average Hourly Earnings	Ratio
Louisiana	11.54	33,592.00	16.15	.71

Louisiana’s ratio for the State and the State’s VR consumers continues to be higher than the federal minimum standard. The State’s average hourly earnings increased by 9.2% and the VR consumer’s hourly earnings increased by 9.4% over last year’s performance.

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.

	Earning Minimum Wage	Income Largest at Application	Percentage Largest at Application	Income Largest at Closure	Percentage Largest at Closure	Percentage Difference
Louisiana	1576	525	33.3%	1506	95.6%	62.3%

EQUAL ACCESS TO SERVICES

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.

	Non-Minority Exiting Program	Non-Minority Who Received Services	Non-Minority Service Rate	Minorities Exiting Program	Minorities Who Received Services	Minority Service Rate	Ratio
Louisiana	4004	1912	47.8	2776	1281	46.1	.96

It is anticipated that the LRS Vocational Rehabilitation Program will continue to achieve results in line with those indicated in this performance standard area.

Report on How Funds Reserved for Innovation and Expansion

Were used in the Preceding Year - State Fiscal Year 2006

Support of Louisiana Rehabilitation Council	\$ 87,228
Support of Statewide Independent Living Council	\$126,367
Total	\$213,595