

Minutes – November 1, 2012

SRC Policy and Procedure Committee

SRC Policy and Procedure Committee		
Thursday, November 1, 2012	9:30 am – 11:30 am	VABVI, 60 Kimball Avenue, South Burlington, VT 05403
Meeting called by	Sam Liss at 9:50 am	
Members Present	Karen Hussey, John Alexander, and William Pendlebury (via phone)	
Members Absent	Jennifer Whitmore	
SRC Liaison	James Smith, DVR Budget and Policy Manager	
SRC Coordinator	Rebekah M. Stephens	
Interpreters	-----	
Speakers/Presenters	-----	
Facilitator	-----	
1. Today's Agenda		
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Discussion	Confirmed that Training Chapter 311 is Chapter 311 not 310.	
Conclusions	Today's agenda approved as written.	
2. Approval of Minutes – September 6, 2012 Committee Meeting		
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Discussion	Sam Liss made motion to approve. John Alexander 2nded.	
Conclusions	Unanimous vote to approve September 6, 2012 Committee Meeting minutes.	
Action Items		Person Responsible
Approved minutes uploaded to website www.VTSRC.org		Rebekah Stephens
Deadline		
11/9/2012		
3. Homemaker Closures – Data Review – Brattleboro Follow-up		
-----	James Smith	
Discussion	James apologized to Committee as he has been unable to follow up on this topic with the Brattleboro manager at this time, due to preparing for upcoming RSA audit. James asked for William Pendlebury's input on the topic. Brattleboro had 11 homemaker closures, more than double of any other VR office. William believes that the long term working experience possessed by the Brattleboro staff may be a factor in the use of the homemaker closure code. Newer counselors may not be as experienced in the circumstances necessary to justify this type of closure. William agrees that homemaker closures should not be used to avoid 28 closures. William has had rare opportunities to use homemaker closures in his office. Current procedure is to secure supervisor's approval before using a homemaker closure code. William feels that Leo Schiff, Brattleboro supervisor, should be brought into the discussion. The Committee suggested a specialized training for all VR counselors on the topic of homemaker closures. James informed the Committee that federal funders do not like homemaker closures. The goal of VR is employment. James is concerned that a specialized training would actually increase the number of homemaker closures across the State. Sam Liss suggested VR supervisors have at least a discussion with counselors around this topic. James explained to the Committee that there is a suspension code #24 that could be used for cases where consumers require intensive life intervention but are not ready for employment yet. So instead of closing the case as a homemaker or an unsuccessful, the case could be suspended. Generally a case is suspended for not more than 6 months. The counselor will periodically review the case to see if the consumer is ready to resume services. The new electronic case management system will make these reviews much easier for the counselors. John Alexander recommended that VR counselors make a phone call to consumers at the 6 month review and invite the consumer back for services. Karen Hussey recommended when suspending a case, specific action items should be included on case.	
Conclusions	James is going to email the regional supervisors with a summary of this discussion. The recommendation of coming up with a systemic approach to using the suspension code will be discussed	

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with the regional managers. James is thinking about adding a procedural piece on suspension code usage		
were regional managers have to approve all homemaker closures or examples of situations when a home-maker closure is not appropriate.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Email regional managers with summary of today's discussion on homemaker closures and Committee recommendations	James Smith	11/30/2012
Copy of email to regional managers to be sent to William Pendlebury	James Smith	11/30/2012
Review of homemaker closures to determine if procedural piece should be included in Policy and Procedure Manual	James Smith	12/15/2012
4. Chapter 301, \$250.00 Spending Guideline Survey Results		
-----	James Smith	
Discussion	James handed out the "Spending Guidelines Survey" results to Committee	
members. This survey was sent out to all VR counselors and regional managers (70 people). 41 responses out of 70 were received. The survey was not confidential and names were requested. The Committee reviewed the survey. Responses with an approximate 50/50 split between "too high & just right" responses were discussed. Question 5. Chapter 302: Health Services; Inpatient physician and hospital services \$2500. It is extremely rare that VR spends this amount of money on this type of service as most individuals have insurance. Sam Liss requested an example of when this type of expenditure would be warranted. Will Pendlebury shared that it is so rare he can't even come up with an example. John Alexander thought it would be interesting to know how much money is spent during the year in this area. James said he would review the budget and get an answer to that question. Question 5. Chapter 302: Health Services; Eye Glasses \$400. Committee read through individual responses on page 26 of survey. The Committee found it very interesting how VR counselors have adapted their skills to providing services to consumers in the most efficient and cost saving ways possible. Local VR offices have developed contacts with local vendors. The knowledge around these relationships is typically shared verbally between counselors. Karen Hussey suggested that a resource guide be put together for all VR counselors instead of relying on verbal communications. James reminded the Committee members that these dollar amounts are guidelines only and are not to be considered caps or limits. Question 6. 303: Maintenance; Stipends for unpaid work tryouts \$50 per week. This is Progressive Employment. James shared that this guideline cannot be changed as it is regulated by law. The reimbursements are not to be considered wages and therefore the amounts paid cannot resemble wages in any way. Karen Hussey suggested they should be called "training offsets" instead of "stipends". This survey predates the recent training on Progressive Employment. James feels it would be a good idea to do a training for the supported employment partners on this topic of stipends. Question 12. 311: Training; Full time Post Secondary Education \$600 per semester and Part time Post Secondary Education \$300 per semester. The expectation under this guideline is that consumers will pursue traditional sources of financial aid prior to seeking out VR. Currently for every dollar that VR provides, VSAC will reduce the aid they provide by one dollar. VR will generally assist a consumer with items not covered under traditional financial aid, for example, books. This is a tricky area because VR is here for employment. John Alexander asked James where the guideline amounts come from? James shared that the guidelines are set through State policy and are individual to each State.		
Conclusions	Excellent survey. The individual feedback from the VR staff was very helpful and provided insight into how staff are assisting consumers.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Provide total of money spent on "Inpatient physician and hospital services" for last year to P&P Committee members	James Smith	1/3/2013

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5. Review of Final Draft for “Chapter 311, Training, Section III, Post Secondary Education”		
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Discussion	James needs a vote on this final draft today so that it will be ready for the public meeting. Committee members made several suggestions for changes. James feels that because the chapter is so long that separating the chapter into 2 separate chapters may be necessary at some point in the future. Sam Liss agrees that a separation of the chapter into 2 chapters would be appropriate. The Committee recommended the following changes: Chapter 311, not 310. Change Chapter title to “Training and Post Secondary Education”. Page 2, Section I. Definitions; D. 2 nd sentence “job-readiness” to be replaced with “industry recognized qualifications for a specific job or career.” Page 3, Section III. Post-Secondary Education; 3. “when completed”. Replace with “upon completion”. Page 4, B. 3 – confidentiality was discussed. James to determine new wording to address confidentiality under this section. Page 8,(half way down page), “There is considerable research...likely to be employed <u>on</u> graduation.” Replace on with upon. Page 8, (3/4 way down page), “As with any guideline, there may be exceptions <u>to this guideline...</u> ” Take out “to this guideline.” It is redundant. Page 8, last full paragraph, “The VR counselor may utilize a variety of tools to <u>assist</u> academic skills, ...” Change assist to assess. Page 9, (half way down page), “In general, VR counselors <u>may</u> develop...” Change may to should or leave out entirely. Page 9, (3/4 way down page), “Prior, to committing to completion of a two or ...” Take out comma after prior. Page 10, “all the criteria for closure in Chapter 204, then the case may be closed...” James needs to review this paragraph and determine wording to specify that this is an exception to the general rule. Consideration has to be given to keeping open a case for financial funding and meeting the VR requirements for employment closures. Page 10, last sentence before Section G. “It is recommended <u>that</u> whenever possible, the consumer...” Add a comma after that.	
Conclusions	Sam Liss called for a consensus vote on Chapter 311. The Committee accepts Chapter 311 with inclusion of all suggested changes.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Change Chapter number from 310 to 311	James Smith	TBD
Change Chapter title from Training to Training and Post-Secondary Education	James Smith	TBD
Page 2, Section I. Definitions; D. 2 nd sentence “job-readiness” to be replaced with “industry recognized qualifications for a specific job or career	James Smith	TBD
Page 3, Section III. Post- Secondary Education; 3. “when completed”. Replace with “upon completion	James Smith	TBD
Page 4, B. 3 – confidentiality was discussed. James to determine new wording to address confidentiality under this section	James Smith	TBD
Page 8,(half way down page), “There is considerable research...likely to be employed <u>on</u> graduation.” Replace on with upon	James Smith	TBD
Page 8, (3/4 way down page), “As with any guideline, there may be exceptions <u>to this guideline...</u> ” Take out “to this guideline	James Smith	TBD
Page 8, last full paragraph, The VR counselor may utilize a variety of tools to <u>assist</u> academic skills, ...” Change assist to assess	James Smith	TBD
Page 9, (half way down page), “In general, VR counselors <u>may</u> develop...” Change may to should or leave out entirely	James Smith	TBD
Page 9, (3/4 way down page), “Prior, to committing to completion of a two or ...” Take out comma after prior	James Smith	TBD
Page 10, “all the criteria for closure in Chapter 204, then the case may be closed...” James needs to review this paragraph and determine wording to specify that this is an exception to the general rule	James Smith	TBD

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Page 10, last sentence before Section G. “It is recommended <u>that</u> whenever possible, the consumer...” Add a comma after that	James Smith	TBD
6. Continued Review of Manual Changes/Updates to Date		
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Discussion	Not discussed today due to time constraints.	
Conclusions	None.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Put this agenda item on January 3, 2013 draft agenda for P&P	Rebekah Stephens	
7. Other Business		
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Discussion	Committee discussed election of a new P&P Chair. William Pendlebury nominated Sam Liss. Sam Liss nominated Karen Hussey. Karen is concerned because she has never chaired a Committee. James Smith gave a brief summary of the general duties of the P&P Chair. Karen is going to think about the nomination and let the Committee know if she is willing to accept the nomination.	
Conclusions	Karen to think on the nomination and inform Committee of her decision. If Karen accepts nomination, the Committee will vote via email.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Inform Committee of acceptance or decline of nomination for Chair of P&P	Karen Hussey	12/3/2012
8. Adjournment		
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Discussion	None.	
Conclusions	Adjourned at 11:45 am.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Submit draft minutes for approval by Committee	Rebekah Stephens	11/30/2012
Upload draft minutes to website www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	11/30/2012
Minutes approved by Committee	Committee Members	1/3/2013
Approved minutes uploaded to website www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	3/1/2013