

Approved 2018.09.06

Minutes - May 3, 2018

SRC Policy and Procedures Committee

SRC Policy and Procedure Committee		
Thursday, May 3, 2018	10:00am - 12:00pm	Waterbury State Complex Room Cherry C HC 2 South 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT 05671
Meeting called by	Sherrie Brunelle, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:04 am	
Members Present	Sherrie Brunelle (Chair), Courtney Blasius, Jessica Brennan (by phone), Amanda Kohle, Sam Liss, Michelle Paya, Marlena Hughes	
Members Absent		
SRC Liaison	James Smith, DVR Budget and Policy Manager	
SRC Coordinator	Debra Kobus	
Interpreters	n/a	
Speakers/ Presenters	n/a	
Guests		
1) Introductions (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	Those in attendance went around the table and introduced themselves.	
Conclusions	Thanks to everyone!	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
2) Approval of Agenda (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	Sherrie asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. Sherrie moved, and it was seconded, to add under the Consumer Rights Chapter review of the research she has performed on the subject as well as how best to get this chapter done. In addition, Sherrie moved, and it was seconded, the following discussion items be added under Other Business as potential new	

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	policies: 1. Disruptive behavior and violence 2. Gender identity 3. Voter registration There was no further discussion. All approved modified agenda – Vote unanimous 7-0-0.	
Conclusions	Motion passes - today's agenda accepted.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
3) Open for Public Comment (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	There was no public comment.	
Conclusions	n/a	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
4) Approval of Minutes – March 1, 2018 (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	Sherrie asked the group to review the March 1, 2018 minutes for any proposed any changes/additions. Sherrie requested edits of citations on pages 3 and 6. Amanda moved to approve and it was seconded with the edits proposed. All approved with edits. Vote 7-0-0. Edits for March 1, 2018 minutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On page three citation change • On page six citation change 	
Conclusions	March 1, 2018 minutes approved with edits.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload approved minutes to http://vtsrc.org/members/meeting-minutes/procedures-policy-committee/	Debra Kobus	5/8/2018
5) Public Hearings and/or Public Meetings (James Smith)		
Discussion	James will schedule a public hearing for the following	

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	policies changes. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When to open a post-employment case versus a new VR case• Chapter 102: Informed Choice• Chapter 313: Audiology Services and Hearing Aid Purchases		
Conclusions	James will schedule a public hearing/meeting for the above policies changes.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline	
Public Hearing scheduled for recently approved policies (see above).	James Smith	tbd	
6) Consumer Rights Chapter (Group)			
Discussion	<p>Sherrie did some research on how other states handle Consumer Rights and put together a binder with this information, which was then circulated for everyone to review.</p> <p>Sherrie said at the last meeting she was going to pull together a 2nd draft but ran out of time. From this second draft a one-page document from this policy was to be developed by the group.</p> <p>From Sherrie's research, she found that there were several states that developed a consumer guide that had more comprehensive information in it. Is this something that we should do? Marlana thought that both a one-page document and a consumer guide would be helpful.</p> <p>James asked if the purpose of the Consumer Rights Chapter was for staff or for consumers. Sherrie said that it was her understanding that one would be for VR staff and the one-page would be for consumers.</p> <p>Sherrie handed out some one-page documents for the members to review (a readability review has not been performed on these).</p>		

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	<p>James said that VR had in the past a small Consumer Rights Manual that we might want to consider bringing back.</p> <p>Sherrie said we could pull together an FAQ. James said that we currently do have an addendum included in our Policy Manual and we could add the FAQ to this.</p> <p>Marlena said the question format in Rhode Island’s Consumer Guidance Manual was very good. Amanda agreed that the question format seemed best.</p> <p>It was agreed that it was more important to develop a document for consumers at this point. A subcommittee comprised of Sherrie, Amanda, and Marlena will work over the summer on deciding what format would be best.</p> <p>Sherrie will make copies of the research she obtained for Amanda and Marlena and will get the materials out to them by the end of next week. Sherrie will reach out to Amanda and Marlena to set a date for follow up.</p> <p>Amanda will get VR’s orientation materials to Sherrie and Marlena.</p> <p>James said that Maine’s Consumer Guidance Manual seemed the best to him. Sherrie said the manual was put together by Maine’s Client Assistance Program.</p>	
Conclusions	See above	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
<p>Sherrie will make copies of the research she obtained for Amanda and Marlena and will get the materials out to them by the end of next week. Sherrie will reach out to Amanda and Marlena to set a date for follow up.</p>	Sherrie	May 11, 2018

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Amanda will get VR's orientation materials to Sherrie and Marlena.	Amanda	May 11, 2018
To Parking Lot: Agenda items for upcoming meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumer Rights - September's agenda• Financial means testing - September and November's Agendas• Car Repairs – September's agenda• Supported employment – January agenda• Career Pathways – January check in• Self-employment – November agenda	Debra to reminder committee	tbd

**7) Review Parking Lot Items & 2018 Priorities – Agenda
September 6, 2018 (Sherrie Brunelle)**

Discussion	<p><u>Career Pathways</u> James let the group know that there are 8 charter groups looking at Career Pathways which should result in significant products towards the end of this year. Sherrie said that it would be premature then for the P & P Committee to develop policies on this until the charter group completes their work.</p> <p><u>Car Repairs</u> James believes that something could be provided related to transportation/car repairs at the next P & P meeting in September.</p> <p>Sam asked if we are talking about a larger discussion of transportation or car repair guidance? James clarified that if we change guidance around car repairs, it will have ramifications in the Transportation Chapter itself.</p> <p>Amanda desires more specific guidance around this subject as different VR offices interpret it differently</p>
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which leads to complaints sent to the Client Assistance Program.

James will pull together a couple of counselors to look at what might be some appropriate revisions to the Transportation Chapter particularly as it applies to Car Repairs providing clarity, consistency, and perhaps “travel training” guidance. Marlana is interested in working on this item. **This priority can be put on September’s agenda.** The broader discussion of transportation would be more appropriate for the Full SRC.

Self-Employment

Sherrie hasn’t seen any self-employment intakes that were resolved in the outcome that people wanted to achieve. Jessie said that she tells her consumers that if self-employment was easy, everyone would be doing it. She does have several consumers that are interested in self-employment.

Sherrie thinks that the problem may be related to the amount of money that VR provides to consumers as Maine provides approximately \$7500 and Vermont provides much less.

Amanda agrees that most of her consumers are unsuccessful. VR counselors do not have business degrees and she often refers consumers to the Small Business Association and would appreciate guidance on this.

James said that we need to find another source of funding besides from the consumer and VR and if they can obtain this funding be provided additional resources.

Goal

Determine the benefits we can provide related to self-employment with the goal of providing clarity,

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	<p>consistency, and policy guidance.</p> <p>The self-employment priority will be put on November’s agenda. An open invitation will be sent to the district offices asking those that would like to provide comments on this subject to the P & P Committee.</p>	
Conclusions	See above.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
<p>James will pull together a couple of counselors to look at what might be some appropriate revisions to the Transportation Chapter particularly as it applies to Car Repairs providing clarity, consistency, and perhaps “travel training” guidance. Marlena is interested in working on this item. This priority can be put on September’s agenda.</p>	James	Tbd (revisions due by 9/6 P & P Meeting)
<p>The self-employment priority will be put on November’s agenda. An open invitation will be sent to the district offices asking for comments on this subject.</p> <p>Goal Determine the benefits we can provide related to self-employment with the goal of providing clarity, consistency, and policy guidance.</p>	James	Tbd (Comments due by 11/1 P & P Meeting)
<p>To Parking Lot: Agenda items for upcoming meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Rights - September’s agenda • Financial means testing - September and November’s Agendas • Car Repairs – September’s agenda • Self-employment – November’s agenda 	Debra to remind committee	tbd

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported employment – January’s agenda• Career Pathways – January check in		
8) Other Business (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	Discussion of potential new policies: 1. Disruptive behavior and violence 2. Gender identity 3. Voter registration	
Conclusions	Add this discussion to September’s agenda	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
To Parking Lot: <i>Agenda items for upcoming meetings:</i> September Agenda Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consumer Rights• Financial means testing (part 1)• Car Repairs• Discussion of potential new policies:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Disruptive behavior and violence2. Gender identity3. Voter registration November Agenda Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial means testing (part 2)• Self-employment January Agenda Items: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supported employment – January’s agenda• Career Pathways – January check in	Debra to remind committee	8/20/18
9) Adjournment (Sherrie Brunelle)		
Discussion	Sherrie asked if there was a motion to adjourn. Sam moved to adjourn and it was seconded. Vote unanimous 7-0-0.	

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Conclusions	Motion passes. Adjourned at 11:51 am	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft Minutes uploaded to http://vtsrc.org/members/draft-minutes/	Debra Kobus	5/8/2018
Draft minutes emailed to Committee Members	Debra Kobus	5/8/2018
Minutes approved by Committee	Committee Members	9/6/2018
Approved minutes uploaded to http://vtsrc.org/about/meeting-minutes/	Debra Kobus	9/11/2018
<u>Parking Lot:</u>		
<p>Draft Policy on Post-Secondary Training and Education after planning meetings are completed related to WIOA's new requirements.</p> <p>This should include discussion about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSA policy directive speaks to what happens when one defaults on a loan so when we get to the Post-Secondary Education Chapter we will need to talk about that piece and make sure it is clearly reflected in our policy; • We also need to flesh out VR's policy on what VR will pay for related college expenses including College Steps. 	James Smith	tbd
Chapter 310 - Supported Employment - ideas where improvements could be made	Michelle Paya	By 1/3/2019 P & P Meeting
Schedule Public Hearing regarding approved P & P Manual guidance:	James Smith	tbd

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1) When to open a post-employment case versus a new VR case (APPROVED 3/1); 2) Chapter 102: Informed Choice (APPROVED 3/1); 3) Chapter 313: Audiology Services and Hearing Aid Purchases (APPROVED 3/1)		
VR is directed to look at the programmatic implications of applying a means tests both for consumers and VR operation	James Smith	9/6/18
<p><i>Agenda items for upcoming meetings:</i></p> <p>September Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Rights • Financial means testing (part 1) • Car Repairs • Discussion of potential new policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disruptive behavior and violence ○ Gender identity ○ Voter registration <p>November Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial means testing (part 2) • Self-employment <p>January Agenda Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported employment – January’s agenda <p>Career Pathways – January check in</p>	Debra to remind the group	tbd

FOR REFERENCE only - 2018 PRIORITIES taken from November 2, 2017 P & P Minutes

1. Priority: Develop chapter on Career Pathways.
 Discussion occurred about the most reliable ways to assist individuals in this endeavor. James stated that post-secondary education and Career Pathways are combined in VR’s new performance measures. This requires supporting people in careers and career development and the most reliable way to do that, outside of helping people find employment, is to support them in obtaining access to and pay for post-secondary training and sometimes education. James expects VR will be investing

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more into credential attainment through mid-skill technical training as it is a reliable way to get people in higher wage positions and helps to stop individuals from not progressing out of entry level work. Sherrie concurred and said that obtaining employment is not the end goal for VR – advancing in employment is also a significant emphasis of WIOA. According to her counterparts in different states, a discussion about whether the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) grants and funding should be considered a comparable benefit or not. Discussion also centered on renaming this priority to Credential Attainment.

2. Priority: Develop clearer guidelines around self-employment to include discussions around post-secondary education and training policy as it relates to self-employment; when VR is to get involved; and how VR is to get involved, i.e. assistive technology or tuition support.

James said the Self-Employment Chapter is not clear as to when to approve and when not to. We appear to have a high failure rate when it comes to self-employment and what equals work. There is a lot of interest in having more structure to this chapter. Sherrie agreed that this committee should make it a priority as it is one of the areas that she sees in the Client Assistance Program that has a lack of clarity and people come to them because they do not agree with the decision that was made. There are also questions surrounding the amount of money allocated to start your own business as it is low as compared to what it is, and we don't have any clear guidance on whether the consumer should be required to demonstrate they can secure funding elsewhere.

3. Priority: In-depth discussion on car repair guidelines to make the guidelines clearer.

Sherrie said the Client Assistance Program (CAP) of Vermont Legal Aid's Disability Law Project gets a lot of inquiries about denials or problems accessing funding for vehicle repairs rather than vehicle purchases. The current policy is that someone who needs vehicle repairs can access up to \$1000 over their time working with VR. VR also uses Car Coach but there is nothing in the Policy and Procedure Manual about how that works. Vehicle repairs need to be tied to employment.

4. Priority: Develop a chapter on Consumer Rights and Denial of Benefits.

Sherrie will consult with the Client Assistance Program (CAP) in drafting a first chapter of Consumer Rights and will report back. Sam would like to have discussions to include financial means testing around some of these priorities. The discussion could begin in this committee and then go out to the Full SRC. Sherrie agreed.

James wondered if there could be means testing for a single service. Sherrie said that having a financial means test is generally something that is not mandated but can be

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initiated by VR at the State level. Sherrie will research the single (individual) service question.

Sherrie asked if there should be a **priority listing for working on these policies:**

Sam said that Self Employment would be the next important chapter after Consumer Rights.

James stated post-secondary training and education would impact more people than Self Employment and the guidance surrounding Self Employment was not particularly good.

Michelle stated that Consumer Rights and Self-Employment would be her choice for priorities. Michelle added that VR counselors need to be guided on the post-secondary training and education requirements because they need to be doing this now.

James will be responsible for coming up with a first draft for a self-employment/post-secondary training and education policy since VR must start reporting on this metric. James will draft up guidance for the January meeting.

In addition, a letter is needed for VR counselors to use when they are denying benefits. Sherrie will find out if the Client Assistance Program (CAP) would be willing to draft up a letter on Denial of Benefits under Consumer Rights. The guidance on this chapter would take some time.

Sherrie reminded the committee that Informed Choice/Hearing Aid Chapter is on the agenda for the January meeting, so we may need to adjust January's agenda somewhat. James said the Hearing Aid Chapter is important as it is one of those areas where means testing may be applicable.

Motion by Sam - the committee's 1st priority should be credential attainment and the other post-secondary options in Career Pathways; 2nd Self-Employment and 3rd Car Repair, Michelle seconded. No further discussion. Calla abstained. All committee members approved.

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