Goals and Priorities September 14 2021

a. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by proactively working to recruit, hire, and retain qualified vocational rehabilitation counselors, including in a way that is inclusive and culturally competent, thereby providing for greater continuity and consistency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services.

b. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services to the growing population of older workers, many of whom will be unable or unwilling to retrain for work in a different field from their current occupations, thereby enabling these older workers to become or remain successfully employed.

c. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing appropriate vocational rehabilitation services that support the maintaining of a healthy lifestyle that is conducive to becoming and remaining successfully employed, thereby enabling a greater portion of our consumers to become and remain successfully employed.

d. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by providing vocational rehabilitation training and counseling that is designed to enhance and improve the soft skills of our consumers, which are becoming an increasing barrier to our consumers becoming and remaining successfully employed.

e. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by partnering and working with community colleges and One-Stop centers to more effectively utilize services available through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and Wagner-Peyser programs.

f. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by working cooperatively with the New Mexico Department of Health so as to develop opportunities for competitive and integrated employment for persons who are blind or visually impaired, which will be accomplished by working in partnership with the Medical Assistance Division, the Developmental Disabilities Supports Division, and the Behavioral Health Services Division.

g. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide employment preparation training for adults and transition students, including through the addition of an apartment training facility to be constructed adjacent to the Center. The proposed apartment facility will increase the capacity of the Orientation Center, will enable the Orientation Center to provide more realistic training, will eliminate the need to rent costly and less appropriate private apartments, and will reduce the number of instances in which costly out-of-state training will be necessary to meet the needs of consumers.

h. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Orientation Center to provide training for adults and transition students that is designed to remediate or mitigate any deficiencies in skills that may be related to the pandemic, and to take advantage of new telework opportunities.

i. Increase the number of consumers served through enhanced Outreach Activities; including media outreach, use of paid advertising, through increased collaboration with ophthalmologists and optometrists, and through the use of the Technology for Children program to conduct outreach to school districts.

j. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes of transition consumers by providing enhanced Pre-Employment Transition Services, including assistive technology where appropriate as a part of an Individualized Plan for Employment, by providing assistive technology through the Technology for Children Program, by conducting increased outreach activities, by conducting educational activities to meet the specific needs of transition students, by increasing proficient use of Braille and Braille math, and by providing services designed to remediate or mitigate any deficiencies in these areas that may be related to the pandemic.

k. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing services in a way that genuinely honors the "informed choice" provisions of the Rehabilitation Act, enabling Commission consumers to have the opportunity to obtain employment at higher levels of compensation.

l. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes achieved by consumers by providing a quality and expanding Newsline system that gives consumers access to employment listings, business news, and other important information, including through both local Newsline and through NFB-Newsline.

m. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of services to transition students.

n. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes by using the Skills Center to meet the needs of vocational rehabilitation consumers and potential vocational rehabilitation consumers, including using it for provision of services that are designed to remediate or mitigate any deficiencies in skills that may be related to the pandemic, and to take advantage of new telework opportunities.

o. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the provision of independent living training to vocational rehabilitation consumers, including through the proposed apartment training facility at the Orientation Center.

p. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the provision of increased telework employment opportunities, including opportunities in rural portions of the state.

q. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes for consumers who are Deaf-Blind through collaboration and partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, with the Community Outreach Programs for the Deaf, and with the Commission for Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including through the delivery of assistive technology to consumers who are Deaf-Blind.

r. Enhance the number and quality of employment outcomes through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) by shortening the time required for vendors to complete the required training, including by using Randolph-Sheppard Act training offered by the Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired.