

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
May 11, 2020

Executive

Cabinet Secretary Justin Brown, Human Services and Early Childhood Initiatives, hosts a videoconference meeting each Friday at 11am. These meetings keep us updated on COVID-19; new projects/deadlines; budget; and a variety of other matters.

The State of Oklahoma recently went through a rebranding. New guidance was received for state agencies to respond to the new state brand. The DRS Communications team has been working on developing and releasing new communication templates. Thank you to Jody Harlan and team!

Director has participated in school and division budget preparation meetings with the CFO and staff.

Electronic signatures throughout DRS is critical for maintaining efficiency and performance, especially through teleworking. Director hosted a meeting to select one format for all staff to utilize. Thank you to Jonathan Woodward for assisting with this issue.

Director participated in a meeting with WIOA core partners to discuss re-opening of American Job Centers. At this time, no date has been decided to re-open.

Director and staff participated in the VR/SBVI performance team meeting.

Director and Executive Team are developing a return to physical work location plan. This will be a phase in approach to continue managing workforce and performance responsibilities.

Daily – continuous issues being resolved around COVID-19; teleworking; performance; and budget.

Executive Coordinator – Stephanie Roe
Access for All- Star Accessibility Framework

This framework will be a workforce system policy that sets an equal expectation for the workforce system to improve accessibility. The framework includes an evaluation tool, process to monitor continuous improvement and provides formalized training resources. The task force is in process of identifying an accessible learning management system to assist in tracking and providing the training resources and reviewing stakeholder input that was received. A new timeline for Phase 1 implementation of this project will be established in the coming weeks.

State Agency and Community Stakeholder Communication

At the request of our Cabinet Secretary, DRS has been asked to log communication with state agencies and community stakeholders related to COVID-19 since March 16th. Coordinated efforts with Executive Team members are underway to provide this information weekly as requested.

Governor's Executive Order 2020-03

DRS has been tasked with undertaking a comprehensive review of the agency's administrative rules to identify costly, ineffective and/or outdated regulations. Each chapter of the DRS administrative rules will be reviewed to identify any rules in need of revisions and/or identify any anticipated needs to introduce new regulatory restrictions during the 2021 rulemaking process. Tina Calloway will be dispersing the chapters to the appropriate reviewers the first week of May.

ADA – Charles Watt

Charlie continues to be a resource for staff in regards to reasonable accommodation requests and is preparing for the first web-based training for DRS on reasonable accommodations. ODMHSAS (Okla. Dept. of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services) has also requested Charlie to provide an hour-long Zoom presentation on accommodation issues in employment and post-secondary educational settings.

Risk Management – Elaine Woodward

The Adobe 9 software licenses must be upgraded to Adobe Pro DC. The licenses have now been ordered and will be issued to 97 employees once received. 105 emergency licenses of Adobe Sign have now been ordered as a result of COVID-19 and she is responsible for assigning these licenses as well.

The annual FY21 Motor Vehicle Liability survey has been issued and will be reported to OMES Risk Management.

Process Improvement – Lyuda Polyun

AWARE

With the Covid-19 related office closures the AWARE team has seen a significant drop in the number of help desk requests coming from field staff. We've been able to shift our focus to testing a new version of AWARE, begin preparation for the use of a new database to store scanned case documents, and develop training materials that will be distributed to staff in our continuous effort to improve the quality and accuracy of the case information that goes into our quarterly Federal report.

Case Reviews

The QA team held a conference call with AWARE staff to review RSA-911, OK State Auditor and WIOA Core Programs Joint Data Element requirements and what constitutes supporting documentation in the case record. To ensure information entered in AWARE and submitted to RSA is accurate, the QA team is preparing to design a data validity instrument. Discussion revolved around the 15 components that require validation from application through closure and what problems could be foreseen with auditing internally.

Program Standards, Statistical Research

The research staff completed the SBVI Orientation & Mobility survey report.

The team completed their participation in the Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort, but will continue to work with participating Oklahoma partners to improve data sharing under W.I.O.A.

The team are working on a research project examining the effects of economic recessions on the employment of individuals with disabilities.

The team began participating in the evaluation meetings for the Employment and Training Alliance of Central Oklahoma.

One of the research staff participated in a multi-agency collaboration with OMES to update the supplemental questionnaire for Statistical Research Specialist I and II applicants.

The team continues to work on evaluation revisions for the transition programs and VIBE.

The team began developing an all staff survey regarding their experience and satisfaction of teleworking.

***Respectfully submitted by
Melinda Fruendt, Executive Director***