

## May 2020 Commission Report

Hello Commissioners, please see the numbered details below that reflect activity within the VR program since COVID-19 as well as fiscal year 2020.

1. Collaboration is ongoing with SBVI Division Administrator and Field Coordinators in both employment divisions.
2. Staff continue to work from home. Staff continue to come to the field offices on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays to carry out some basic functions and then return to home.
3. Weekly meetings with management continue with Zoom. Most of the issues center on work productivity, staff needs, supplies, and most recently plans to return to work.
4. Transition summer programs that had hands on work experience have been cancelled, however, virtual opportunities for STEM, employability trainings, self- advocacy and other pre-employment services will still be provided. Renee continues to have meetings and promotes ideas of thinking outside the box to maximize opportunities for our transition aged youth!
5. In the near future we will be asking our frontline staff to communicate with clients in regards to updates pertaining to possible work re-open/business practices, and COVID-19.
6. Our Business Services Team, has worked with frontline staff to capture email contact information to our clients that are job ready. The Business Services Team has generated a distribution list for jobs, being sent to clients.
7. We continue to cancel authorizations for appointments that are not going to be carried out due to COVID-19. With that being noted it is expected that some routine physical restoration services will pick up now that things are opening up.
8. Our Employment Support Services Team collaborated with our Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP's) regarding COVID-19 and its impact on services. A flexible strategy approach is on-going to work with CRP's in allowing them to work with clients using Technology, and alternatives to direct face to face contact.
9. Big thanks to Jonathon Woodward, and his team along with Randy Weaver to assure staff have the ability to work as best a possible from home. Adobe software has recently been purchased that will allow our staff to use technology to capture e-signatures were allowed.
10. VR/SBVI has a group of counselors meeting with the Institute for Community Inclusion along with counselors in other states to discuss work strategies as a result of COVID-19.
11. VR/SBVI has met with management and has asked that each Program Manager submit a return to work plan. These plans will be used by the Division Administrators to develop a plan to submit to Director Fruendt. So far I have been very impressed with our staff and management to work within this newly created environment.
12. VR management has completed a recent round of case reviews regarding field services. As always training needs will be addressed.
13. Currently we have some critical needs in NW Oklahoma and our Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Unit due to counselor vacancies.
14. Production – For 2020 up to May 1<sup>st</sup>. The VR employment program has processed 2,209 applications for employment this is up from 2019 by 130. For 2020, there have been 1286 plans for employment written, this is down from 2019 by 816. For 2020 there have been 678 successful employment closures, this is up from 2019 by 194.

In closing this report out. I want to again note how impressed I am with our team. Our management has taken great care of the offices and our staff. Our frontline staff continue work as best they can in this new environment to carry out employment services to Oklahomans with disabilities, and meet the needs of vendors and partners as best they can. We have great employees.

Mark Kinnison, M.Ed., CRC, LPC-S  
VR Administrator, ODRS