

Goal 1: Implement strategies to increase awareness and access to services/resources.

- Strategy 1.1. Promote an *Employment First* philosophy that *WORK* is the first and preferred option for all individuals, including youth.
- Strategy 1.2. Expand efforts to ensure the state's workforce represents the most advanced, diverse, skilled, and future ready workers.
- Strategy 1.3. Generate concentrated efforts to increase South Dakotan's knowledge and understanding of VR services and ensure that individuals with disabilities can access services through consumer-friendly processes.
- Strategy 1.4. Increase dissemination of information with potential clients about how to access or connect with VR services (i.e., website, other VR related information).
- Strategy 1.5. Provide VR related materials and/or information in other languages and make it available as needs are identified.
- Strategy 1.6. Explore and partner with organizations/agencies to broaden outreach efforts to reach underserved minority groups, i.e., Oyate' Circle, Multi-Cultural Center.

Goal 2. Identify and support students and youth with disabilities with making informed choices for successful daily living and participation in education/training leading to career pathways through the provision of individualized services.

- Strategy 2.1. Continue to invest resources in developing school to work programs, i.e., Project Skills, Project SEARCH, Pre ETS summer camps; and other trainings (e.g., self-advocacy, self-determination, rights/responsibilities), and promote similar activities i.e., Parent Connection's "Shift Training".
- Strategy 2.2. Collaborate with employers, CILs, and workforce development system partners to increase opportunities for youth with disabilities to participate in paid work-based learning experiences, explore career options, and develop the soft skills/professional skills necessary for lifelong employment success.
- Strategy 2.3. Coordinate vocational rehabilitation services for students and youth with disabilities who are attending post-secondary programs.
- Strategy 2.4. Increase and strengthen transition services for eligible students and other youth with disabilities who are exploring their employment future. ~~with an emphasis on those from underserved minorities i.e., Native American, Black/African American, Latino/Hispanic, Asian.~~
- Strategy 2.5. Conduct outreach activities to better identify and serve underserved youth with disabilities, i.e., youth home schooled, in foster care, served through alternative educational programs, corrections/juvenile detention programs; to encourage their participation in transition services and programs to improve future employment opportunities.
- Strategy 2.6. Conduct outreach activities for teachers, students with disabilities, and their family members to provide information on VR services and how to access the VR program.

Goal 3: Provide services and supports to assist individuals with disabilities with making informed choices regarding employment, money management, and personal and work relationships, to live as independently as possible.

- Strategy 3.1. Provide training on strategies and tools for VR Counselors to assist clients in reaching their employment goal.
- Strategy 3.2. Promote the utilization of counseling strategies and tools to access the client's critical strengths and barriers in order to enhance their personal life status and employment skills.
- Strategy 3.3. Explore and utilize different strategies and/or technology in order to increase the amount of time VR counselors engage with clients, especially those with significant disabilities, to improve outcomes impacted by guidance and counseling.
- Strategy 3.4. Identify and assist individuals with disabilities looking for advancement, career change, enhanced earnings to increase client choice and success rate of obtaining a better employment pathway.
- Strategy 3.5. Provide training to staff to improve communication and provide services in a **culturally**-responsive manner.
- Strategy 3.6. Continue efforts to increase and expand provider supports for employment and life skills development.
- Strategy 3.7. Increase awareness, supports, and the utilization of self-employment as an outcome for VR clients.

Goal 4: Facilitate the delivery of VR services to enhance earnings, employee benefits, retention, and career advancement for clients.

- Strategy 4.1. Improve client engagement i.e., rapid engagement, timeliness of eligibility decisions, IPE development, need for other services.
- Strategy 4.2. Reduce the administrative burden to allow meaningful guidance and counseling to engage clients to improve quality of employment outcomes, retention, and advancement.
- Strategy 4.3. Increase knowledge base and understanding of VR, Mental Health, CRP's, Native American VR Programs to enhance service delivery for mutually served individuals.
- Strategy 4.4. Provide **cultural humility/intelligence**-training for VR staff and partners to improve provision of **culturally**-responsive services.
- Strategy 4.5. Increase awareness and referrals to Benefits Specialists and services for VR clients.
- Strategy 4.6. Increase work experience opportunities for adults with disabilities with a focus on individuals with mental illness and other underserved populations, including those living in very rural areas.
- Strategy 4.7. Continue with the development and utilization of vocational skills training for individuals with disabilities.

Goal 5: Facilitate the development of a strong statewide community partnering with workforce systems, businesses, State Government, tribal systems, schools, service providers

and service organizations to enhance services to individuals with disabilities eligible for services.

- Strategy 5.1. Continue work to improve the structure, accessibility, and administration of workforce delivery systems across the state to align programs and services in an accessible, seamless, and integrated manner.
- Strategy 5.2. Ensure employers/businesses have access to workers and the technical assistance needed to employ individuals with disabilities; and to increase their understanding of how to attract and retain qualified individuals with disabilities as part of their workforce.
- Strategy 5.3. Expand services to rural and remote areas to provide employment related services, i.e., job development, job coaching, follow along services.
- Strategy 5.4. Identify and work with partners to develop and expand the use of work experience, internships, apprenticeships, and other job entry possibilities at various levels, i.e., local business, county, state, and federal positions.
- Strategy 5.5. Maintain and expand the utilization of extended services for assuring successful employment for supported employment clients.
- Strategy 5.6. Continue funding and support for the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. The innovation and expansion activities from these council's fund support staff for the councils, National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Governor's awards, and other activities related to the goals/strategies.