

# CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Hotline for Disability Services

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## State Rehabilitation Council February CAP Report October-November-December

1. **Application for services completed:** Individual contacted CAP with concerns that VR closed his case, yet he was not satisfied with the 2 part time jobs he had and really wanted to continue working with VR to find full time employment. Had expressed interest in full time employment from the start. When individual asked to work with VR again he was referred to CAP. **OUTCOME:** Visited with Office Director who felt there was a documented pattern by the individual of finding dissatisfaction with every job he had. Said that they had met with the individual to create a plan that was agreeable to all and that the plan was followed through on and individual agreed to case closure at that time. Office Director believed current employment was the best possible situation for client and that he was not underemployed. Also, discussed behaviors that had caused problems in the past. After reviewing case notes, I did not see the pattern of behaviors that were described and if that was an issue, I didn't see how it had been addressed. The individual had been successful in full time employment previously and the reasons that he was dissatisfied with certain jobs appeared to be legitimate reasons, yet he was able to hold on to those jobs despite this fact. He appeared to be cooperative with VR, appreciated the assistance and followed up with employers as he was asked, beyond a few individual instances. He was noted as having a very good work ethic and a quick learner. He felt that VR had been trying to close his case for the last few months and felt pressured to agree to case closure once he started the 2<sup>nd</sup> part time job. Individual also felt that he could always come back to VR, not understanding that he would not be found eligible for services when he did. Individual eventually applied with VR, was found eligible and was given a new Counselor to work with to meet the client's individual needs.
2. **Individual assigned to new counselor/office:** Client came into office with issues regarding VR and a Supported Employment program. He felt that the two offices were not communicating with each other and was confused by which agency could help with certain things. Requested a new Counselor based on the fact that he didn't like how his

case was being handled...not quick to meet his needs, not returning phone calls in a prompt manner, not keeping in touch with him and especially not taking the time to explain things to him. He didn't feel that his choices were being respected or his decisions being supported. **OUTCOME:** Visited with Counselor and Supported Employment Specialist regarding case. Counselor acknowledged that he should have done a better job of making contact with client and the supported employment program. Reviewed policy on expected contact with supported employment providers and clients with the VR Counselor. Client felt Counselor sent him to supported employment so he wouldn't have to work with him, but client did express the desire to continue working with the supported employment program as well. Discussed client's interest in having a new VR Counselor with Office Director and this decision was supported. After some follow up, client and new Counselor were doing well and things were progressing positively.

3. **Communication re-established between individual and another party:** Individual contacted CAP after applying with VR and being told that services would be put on hold because of the new Order of Selection (OOS) process. The OOS had not officially started yet as of this date. **OUTCOME:** Reviewed case notes and visited with counselor and Office Director regarding concerns. Counselor explained that she had given the individual the OOS information, but didn't mean to imply that he wouldn't receive assistance at this time. Only intended to provide the information to make him aware of possible changes. We discussed the need to keep things moving forward as they always have with determining eligibility and services and all were in agreement. Followed up and found client had been determined eligible and moving along with services.
4. **Communication re-established between individual and another party:** Client concerned with the professionalism of staff...not returning phone calls and getting back in a timely manner. Not moving things along to find employment. **OUTCOME:** Client stated that he liked all the staff in the office, so was not wanting a new Counselor, but just wanted them to be more professional with him and his case. He didn't want to get anyone in trouble, but didn't know what else to do. I discussed case with Office Director and let client know that they were now aware of the issues he had concerns about and they would make sure communication with him was regular and that if he was having any concerns with the Counselor to be sure and let the Office Director know so it could be handled promptly. It appeared services had been provided. After follow up, client had found a job and stated that things were going fine and he had no other issues.
5. **Eligibility determination expedited:** Individual had recently applied for VR services and felt things were moving too slowly. **OUTCOME:** After review of case notes, I noticed that it had only been 1-2 weeks since individual had applied for services. I let the individual know that VR has 60 days to determine eligibility, but that I would visit with Counselor since individual was currently receiving SSI, a former Nebraska VR client and most recently a former VR client in another state to see if things could move a little quicker. He was recently accepted into college for the spring semester and if VR was supportive of

this goal he could receive some needed support services, possibly with a Post-Secondary assessment. After discussion with Counselor, eligibility was determined and Post-Secondary assessment began.

6. **Alternative resources identified for individual:** Client called in with concerns involving transportation issues with VR to her job. **OUTCOME:** Reviewed case notes and noticed that client was already working with Ombudsman, Paige Rose. I discussed case with Paige to let her know that client had contacted CAP as well and that I would visit with client to see how I could help or have her continue to work with Paige. When I visited with client her main concern changed from transportation and VR to help with rent, due to a pending eviction. The issue with transportation had been resolved at that point. We then talked about several different resources that might be able to assist her with rent in the community, as well as to find an Advocate for her.
7. **Alternative resources identified for individual:** Client emailed asking for help with VR. Wanting to work in self-employment while not losing his SSI and other important benefits. Stated that VR had been unable to help, seemed harsh and disparaging. Felt like no one helped him explore or gather more information on what he was interested in with his self-employment ideas and that no one was on his side at VR. **OUTCOME:** After reviewing case notes, talking with Counselor, Self-Employment Specialist, Program Director for Employment Services, Easter Seals and extensive visits with client, I determined that the main issue for the client at this time was determining how the income he would earn would affect his benefits that he desperately needed and did not want to lose. VR had also discussed this with the client. It really was not about the self-employment goal/business idea or plan at this time or whether VR would support or not support that goal, but more about if the plan could be realistically achieved within his needs. Client agreed and I connected him with his Independent Living Center to assist him with figuring his benefits out with the other agencies he was working with and made sure he was connected with Disability Rights for his Social Security issues. I told him I would let VR know what he was feeling during his experience with them and that he could contact me at any time in the future if he found that he could work without losing the benefits he needed and continue on with determining his self-employment goal.
8. **Individual assigned to new counselor/office:** Client called in with concerns that she would like to transfer to another office, but felt Office Director was against the transfer. Wanted to work with a specific Counselor and stated that the location would be more convenient for her. **OUTCOME:** Visited with Office Director and client. Office Director was not opposed to the idea, but after reviewing case notes felt the case was at a standstill and wanted to set up a meeting to find out the reasons why and what the client's reasoning was before making the move and having the same issues come up again. Meeting was held and transfer was agreed upon, although client would not work primarily with the specific Counselor she requested, but with the Office Director. Client did not feel comfortable with this idea at first, but did agree to a compromise that would allow the Counselor she requested to sit in on meetings and consult on the case.