

VR Ombudsman Report
9/1/17-12/31/17

Worked with client from October through December to handle complaint of VR not finding her a job in a timely manner. This client has an untreated behavioral health disability but VR made her eligible solely on physical issues. Significant financial strain and threat of eviction elevated anxiety. Applied for services in July; however, follow through was not consistent and only had 1 placement appointment. She contacted Sen. Howard's office 2-3 times who in turn requested action. Also threatened to go to Gov. Ricketts and to write an expose for Pro-Politico about Nebraska VR.

Consulted with team and office director who had staffed her case multiple times. Community Resource listing had been provided twice. VR fixed her car (threat made to mechanic on duty who said they would not work with her again) and paid for gas; authorized for interview clothing (unused authorization).

Met with client for skills assessment. Provided resource listing a third time. Authorized for psychological assessment hoping to qualify her for services and a case manager with Community Alliance, dental exam at Creighton as she complained she had several rotten teeth causing medical issues. Both authorizations went unused. Planned for OJE, provided job lead for temporary seasonal employment, paid for car insurance. Started an SOS temporary clerical position with Probation and she did get hired for the seasonal position at Fat Brain Toys. Prior to receiving the payment to help with car insurance, it had lapsed and we paid for taxi service to both positions for a couple weeks.

I had consulted with both State Ombudsman Office and Scott Summers, NDE Legal Counsel due to the threats. Scott provided guidance on documentation. Client ended communication and when we followed up with both employers found out she had worked up until week before Christmas at Fat Brain and until Dec. 4th at SOS Position which she ended as needing time to sort out personal problems. VR Placement staff contacted SOS Supervisor on Dec. 4th at client's request that she needed advocacy help asking for a leave of absence. No contact from client until she emailed her counselor on 1/18/18 that she has found a job as a Scheduler in Council Bluffs. VR Counselor has tried reaching out again to get necessary employment information necessary to put in follow-up.