

**Long Term Employment Support Services Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
DRS Central Office, Richmond, Virginia**

October 20, 2008

July 8, 2008 LTESS Steering Committee Meeting:

The LTESS Steering Committee met on October 20, 2008 from 12:20 to 1:20 PM at the DRS Central Office in Richmond, Virginia.

Members Present: Sharon Taylor, Amy Thomas, Debbie Williams, Shelley Reichard, Sharon Barton, Soneli Bhadra, and John Craig

Members Absent: DeVonne Williams and Sandy O'Dell

DRS Staff Attending: Jack Hayek, Joe Ashley, Jay Windsor, Scott Fraley, Tim Olive, and Dale Batten

Call to Order

Sharon Taylor (Sbtaylor@goodwillcva.org) called the meeting to order and asked that the committee introduce themselves to the audience. After introductions, the July Draft minutes were reviewed and approved.

Public Comment None

Old Business

LTESS: standing agenda items

- 1) Identification of Issues
Please reference the ESOAC discussions concerning the State General Fund reductions.
- 2) Identification of Problems
It was noted that ESOs are not only facing the LTESS/EES reductions, but also reductions from CSBs, Order of Selection and contract work.
- 3) Problem Solving/Recommendations
John Craig started the discussion about how to respond to the significant reduction in LTESS dollars. He asked the committee what strategies they might be considering and mentioned several he was considering:
 - * Identifying consumers no longer needing follow along
 - * Identifying consumers in group settings that may be able to move to individual settings
 - * Insuring the job coaches are providing appropriate services

- * Identify consumers needs and level on intensity of services
- * Reducing workdays from 5 days a week to 3 or less.

Jack Hayek agreed that these were appropriate measures for ESOs to consider, but wanted to review the reduction in days worked for unintended consequences and impacts on other requirements.

New Business

1) Ticket Reimbursement (SSA/LTESS Supplanting)

Dr. Joe Ashley joe.ashley@drs.virginia.gov and experts from the Social Security Administration outreach contractor, CESSI, discussed the opportunities available through the new Ticket to Work Partnership Plus Employment Model. The experts on the phone were John Halliday, Center for Community Inclusion, University of MA at Boston, Sallie Rhodes, CESSI Ticket to Work Program Specialist and Emily Malsch, Virginia Account Manager from the SSA Ticket to Work Recruitment & Outreach Team.

The discussion highlighted that there were 145 clients served by DRS that earned income to the level that DRS was reimbursed by SSA for costs of services. This year, due to regulatory changes, the Ticket retains value after DRS has closed the case in an employed status. An Employment Network provider can accept a Ticket Assignment from a DRS client working at substantial gainful employment levels and be eligible for “Phase II” payments. The Ticket is worth about \$15,000 to the Employment Network if the client continues to work at SGA. A wide range of services can be provided to the client by an Employment Network, but the discussion focused on Supported Employment Services and how a client who is working at SGA and funded through LTESS can also provide the EN with outcome./milestone payments. Resources can be found on the “What’s New” Link on the ESSP website <http://www.vadrs.org/essp/whatsnew.htm> for more information on employment networks and how to sign up.

2) Organizational Session-Election of Committee Chairperson

Sharon Taylor called for nominations for the LTESS Steering Committee Chairperson. No nominations were offered so committee members were asked to volunteer to serve as committee chairperson. Amy Thomas AAthomas@co.hanover.va.us volunteered to serve as LTESS Steering Committee Chairperson for 2009. John Craig formally nominated Amy Thomas and Sharon Barton second the nomination. The committee members approved the nomination.

Public Comments

Sherman Gifford raised the issue of the 3-year rolling average negatively impacts on new organizations to grow their LTESS funds. The Committee said it would take his concerns and would start discussions on the issue. DRS will review the experience with new organizations and seek to have some additional information for the committee’s review next meeting.

Joanne Ellis questioned the impact on post employment services within the Order of Selection (OOS). Scott Fraley will ask Policy and Planning how OOS impacts Post Employment Services. Also, Joanne wanted to know if follow along could be less than monthly, say quarterly? The response was that the Federal guidance given to DRS was monthly and DRS will see if that is in regulation or if the program has some flexibility.

Adjournment 1: 20 PM Sharon Taylor

2009 Steering Committee Meetings: January 13, 2009
April 14, 2009
July 14, 2009
October 13, 2009

NOTE: VTC sites of Abingdon, Roanoke, Portsmouth and Fairfax have been confirmed for these dates.