

**State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Employment and Partnerships
Committee Meeting Minutes**
September 30, 2019

Members Present

Carol Carr
Tim Stump
Jennifer Baier
Adam Robson
Judith Castro
Susan Voirol

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Carol Carr called the meeting to order at 1:2 pm in the DERS Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of August 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Jennifer Baier moved to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2019 SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee meeting. Susan Voirol seconded the motion. The committee approved the minutes by unanimous voice vote.

VR Toolkit Discussion

Carol Carr summarized that the committee had been discussing the items that would be included in the Arizona Employer Toolkit. She noted that she sent a draft Table of Contents to the committee members based on the Ohio Employer Toolkit information. Carol Carr inquired whether committee members had any preference or feedback regarding the potential document title. Jennifer Baier stated that she liked the term "inclusive" although many employers might not be familiar with the term and would likely understand "Employment Empowerment". Judith Castro agreed that many employers would not be familiar with the term "inclusive". Adam Robson stated the Employer Toolkit would offer information regarding creating an inclusive workforce, and the title should grab the employer's attention. Ms. Castro

stated that not all employers would be familiar with the language that state agencies or community organizations would use. Jennifer Baier suggested the Employer Toolkit be titled "Creating a Diverse Workforce" or "A Job for All". Susan Voirol suggested the toolkit be called Employer Toolkit and include a tagline. Jennifer Baier stated the title could be Employer Toolkit – A Job for All. Carol Carr agreed that the title should include reference to the document being a toolkit. Jennifer Baier suggested the title be Arizona Employer Toolkit: A Job for All – Hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities. Susan Voirol agreed and noted that most states clarify that the toolkits were specifically for hiring individuals with disabilities. Carol Carr stated the full title could be Arizona Employer Toolkit – A Job for All – Diversifying your workforce through the hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities.

Carol Carr stated the Table of Contents included an Introduction, which would indicate the information included as well as a How to Use This Guide section. Carol Carr stated the toolkit could also include a Historical Overview and inquired whether the section should be included in the beginning or the end. Judith Castro stated the overview could be included at the end of the toolkit for employers interested in that information. Tim Stump stated the overview could be removed because each employer would be interested in diversifying their workforce for different reasons. Judith Castro stated that including the historical overview would not affect the overall document and could still be included. Adam Robson stated if the overview was brief and did not greatly increase the document size, the history could be added. Carol Carr stated the historical overview would be 1-2 paragraphs, with links to information. Adam Robson suggested the overview be included in the toolkit and the committee could review the document in its entirety. Carol Carr stated that when employers were presenting to their stakeholders, historical information could be useful when discussing the need for diversifying the workforce.

Carol Carr stated the Table of Contents would also include definitions and acronyms and inquired whether that information should be included at the end of the document. Susan Voirol stated that many employers would not be familiar with the commonly used acronyms. Adam Robson stated he would share the acronyms included in the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) manual. Carol Carr inquired whether the acronyms should be included in the beginning or the end. Adam Robson stated the acronyms and definitions could be included at the end of the toolkit. Tim Stump suggested the toolkit include a crosswalk also. Mr. Stump noted that each state had different processes, and suggested the toolkit offer universal information. Carol Carr agreed that each state had different procedures and stated the toolkit could be updated as necessary to address questions. She noted the toolkit could also include a FAQ section with some of the

commonly asked questions. Adam Robson stated that a FAQ section could include the historical overview information also.

Carol Carr inquired whether the document would be an interactive electronic source where employers could ask questions and receive a response. Susan Voirol stated the information could be posted on the Employment First website and could include a "Contact Us" page. Carol Carr stated the employer could ask a question, which could be answered by anyone with access to the questions. Ms. Carr inquired whether the toolkit should include that option down the road. Adam Robson stated the document should be included on the Untapped Arizona website, once they had relaunched the organization. Carol Carr stated she had been in contact with Untapped Arizona representatives and would meet to discuss the committee's goals.

Carol Carr stated the Table of Contents also included a "Building the Business Case" and inquired whether the section should include the historical overview. She noted the section would also include items such as dispelling the myths of employment. Adam Robson stated that each item under that section could be included in a FAQ section. Carol Carr inquired whether the toolkit would be geared towards first time employers or employers that had hired individuals with disabilities. Susan Voirol stated the toolkit would likely be used by first time employers that were seeking guidance on how to hire individuals with disabilities. Adam Robson stated the information could be used by first time employers and employers that had hired individuals with disabilities, although the wording should be geared towards first time employers. Tim Stump stated that not many employers would be considered experienced when hiring individuals with disabilities. Mr. Stump stated that most employers were familiar with the reasons for hiring individuals with disabilities, such as an increased profit or to recruit new talent and were knowledgeable with Assistive Technology (AT). Tim Stump stated that out of 100 individuals hired, only 3 required accommodations, and noted that employers struggled more with the mechanics of hiring individuals with disabilities. Adam Robson stated the toolkit should include the information regarding accommodations to alleviate employers' fears that they would be required to spend significant money on accommodations. Tim Stump stated that many clients did not disclose their disability, and would therefore, not require an accommodation. He noted that most accommodations were less than \$600.

Carol Carr inquired whether RSA had a database that could search for providers according to county or zip code. Tim Stump stated he was not proficient with the database, Libera, although the counselors could locate that information. Carol Carr inquired whether it would be possible to provide a list of providers in a geographic area. Judith Castro stated that the information would be available for clients, although she was unsure whether

the information would be available to the public. Carol Carr inquired whether employers would benefit from having access to that information. Tim Stump stated that employers could benefit from knowing the providers in a specific area. Jennifer Baier agreed that employers would benefit from having that information. Carol Carr stated the information would have to be updated regularly. Judith Castro stated that some organizations were vendors with the state, although the organizations did not have staff to serve the clients in a timely manner. Tim Stump stated that RSA was unable to reach all of the individuals with disabilities that were seeking employment and noted that employers would be unlikely to reach those individuals either. Judith Castro stated that in Yuma, ARIZONA@WORK had been active in promoting the services and noted that counselors visited schools, libraries, and housing centers to provide outreach as well. Judith Castro stated the Yuma counselors developed a resource book distributed at Job Fairs with resources such as the job providers. Tim Stump stated that employers needed to reach out to the general public to try to recruit individuals with disabilities.

Carol Carr stated the Table of Contents also include a section, "Where do I Find Candidates", and noted that each community had their own recruitment processes. Adam Robson stated the toolkit would need to offer statewide resources, due to the challenge in listing the resources for each region. Carol Carr stated the toolkit could divide the state by 8 regions and the employer could click on the link for the information. Adam Robson inquired who would be responsible for updating the information by county or region. Susan Voirol stated her understanding that the resources would be entities such as ARIZONA@ WORK and Arizona Job Connection, which were statewide. Carol Carr stated the employer would be directed to a website and could then narrow down their search by a geographical area. Tim Stump stated that employers were able to locate agencies on their own, although the toolkit could include the providers that worked with a specific disability population. Carol Carr inquired whether the toolkit should address how to actively engage the employer and to encourage the employment of individuals with disabilities. Adam Robson stated that if an employer had already hired individuals with disabilities, that employer would likely return to the agency that assisted in that process. Judith Castro stated the toolkit could include a link where employers could post their jobs. Susan Voirol stated the toolkit could include success stories from employers highlighting their success in hiring individuals with disabilities, which could engage employers. Carol Carr inquired whether the Resources section should include a discussion of accommodations. Tim Stump stated the Resources section could include information regarding accommodations. Carol Carr stated the dispelling the myth section could include information regarding the average cost of accommodations. Tim Stump suggested including the

least costly accommodations to the most costly, including the low number of individuals that requested accommodations. Adam Robson inquired whether the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) would have statistics regarding the AT used. Judith Castro stated that AzTAP would allow clients to test out equipment prior to purchasing to ensure the technology was the best fit for a client.

Judith Castro inquired whether the Miscellaneous section at the end could be renamed or include the incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities. Carol Carr stated the committee would continue to discuss the Table of Contents at the next committee meeting and noted her hope that she would be able to present a draft or update at the upcoming SRC Full Council meeting. Carol Carr inquired whether the toolkit should reference "individuals with disabilities" or use different language. Susan Voirol stated that the self-advocate agencies used the term, "individuals who has a disability", although all agencies used different terminology. Tim Stump stated that most entities used the language, individuals or persons with disabilities. Tim Stump suggested using the same language that employers were familiar with to reduce confusion. He noted that many employers were scared of using the wrong terminology. Adam Robson inquired whether the document would be electronic only and not a printed version. Carol Carr stated the document would be a living document, although an individual could print the resources as well. Adam Robson suggested the toolkit be posted on a resource, such as the Employment First website, which would allow the information to be easily updated if it was only available in one place. Mr. Robson stated the toolkit would only need to be updated if there was a major change. Carol Carr agreed that the information would be easy to maintain if it was located on one resource.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee will be TBD. Agenda items are as follows:

- VR Toolkit Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no response forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.