

Quick facts

Mission: The mission of VocRehab Vermont is to help Vermonters with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain meaningful employment and to help employers recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. We believe employment is the key to breaking cycles of benefits dependence, Corrections involvement, substance abuse and generational poverty.

Funding: VocRehab Vermont is funded through the Rehabilitation Services Administration under the U.S. Department of Education. Funding is 79% federal and 21% state match.

Population served: Any Vermonter with a qualifying disability who is seeking to obtain or maintain employment

Number of Vermonters served in FFY 2016: 9,254

Customer satisfaction:

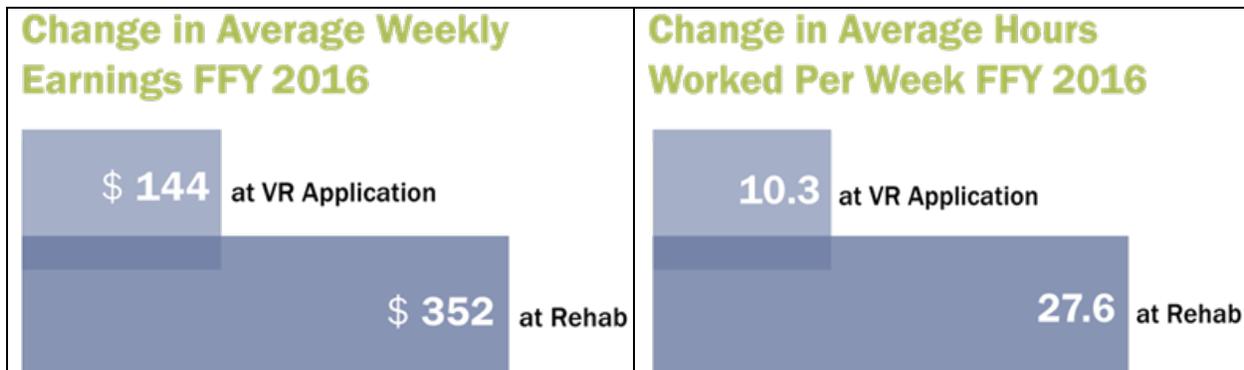
- 97% of customers felt welcome when they went to VR for services;
- 95% of customers would tell their friends with disabilities to go to VR for help with employment;
- 94% of customers indicate it is easy to access vocational rehabilitation services;
- 88% of customers are very satisfied or satisfied with the services provided by DVR.;
- 97% of customers indicate that the DVR staff treated them with dignity and respect;
- 81% of consumers said VR helped them achieve their job goal.

National Rankings:

#1 in the nation for DVR applicants per million population

#1 in the nation for employment outcomes per million population

How our customers are better off:



Program Highlights

Pre-Employment Transition Services: The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires the Vocational Rehabilitation program to devote at least 15% of total federal award to providing Pre-Employment Transition Services to students with disabilities. VocRehab Vermont has developed a model for serving students that includes dedicated Transition Counselors and Youth Employment Specialists who provide services to every high school in Vermont.

The State as a Model Employer: VocRehab Vermont is collaborating with the Governor's Workforce Equity and Diversity Council and the State of Vermont Department of Human Resources to pilot a diversity recruitment model that offers State Hiring Managers a range of options to introduce potential candidates with disabilities to working for state agencies and departments. The pilot has been launched in the Barre-Berlin-Montpelier corridor, with plans to expand statewide this summer.

Mature Worker Program: VocRehab Vermont manages the state's Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in partnership with Vermont Associates for Training and Development. With increasingly more seniors needing employment to supplement retirement, or for those who are looking to find their "encore career", we are committed to increasing awareness in the employer community of the benefits of hiring "seasoned" workers.

Research and Innovation

Progressive Employment: Progressive Employment is an employment strategy that offers employers several options to meet potential candidates. In addition to implementing this strategy here in Vermont, VocRehab Vermont has been working with the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMASS Boston to research the model in four pilot states. Initial data suggests Progressive Employment activities result in increased employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Motivational Interviewing: VocRehab Vermont has invested in comprehensive Motivational Interviewing training for all staff, from administrative staff to Counselors and Employment Consultants. Motivational Interviewing is an evidence-based practice that emphasizes active listening and engagement with customers in order to help them overcome ambivalence and move toward employment or other personal goals.

Linking Learning to Careers: VocRehab Vermont, in partnership with Mathematica, Community College of Vermont and Transcendental, was recently awarded a 5-year research grant to study the impact of enhanced career services to students with disabilities. Career Consultants will provide students guidance on career options, relevant coursework needed and workplace experiences that will better prepare students for the world of work and/or Post-Secondary education. Paid employment is a primary indicator of program performance.

Creative Workforce Solutions:

The Road to Self-Sufficiency for Customers of the Agency of Human Services

Overview

Creative Workforce Solutions (CWS) is an initiative of the Agency of Human Services (AHS) that offers a consolidated and coordinated approach to employment services that provides equal access to meaningful work in the competitive job market for all AHS program participants. CWS offers the business community a simplified staffing service that helps them access qualified candidates to help meet their staffing needs. All services are free to businesses in Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and New York.

CWS Employment Consultants and Business Account Managers are available statewide to review business needs, offer qualified candidates, and develop training plans that help prepare candidates for employment. The goal of CWS is to provide a streamlined recruitment and retention service for Vermont businesses while at the same time offering training and support to the many Vermonters who find entering, or re-entering the workforce challenging. CWS offers many innovative ways to introduce employers to potential workers, and training programs can be designed to meet employers' specific needs and are "customized" according to the skill level of the trainee.

Serving Vermonters with Barriers to Employment

Many Vermonters have difficulty finding work due to a wide range of challenges. CWS works with individuals to identify their career goals, develop new skills and introduce them to employers in their community. Employers face increasing costs of recruitment and retention, and need a way to find good employees. Creative Workforce Solutions acts as a clearinghouse to match qualified candidates with employers while providing ongoing support to both "customers".

As an initiative of the Agency of Human Services, Creative Workforce Solutions works with any Vermonter being served by the agency including:

- Economic Services Division Reach Up participants: Individuals with dependent children who receive public benefits and who need skill building and training to become successfully employed
- Department of Corrections: Ex- Offenders exiting prison or under DOC supervision who need stable employment to successfully reintegrate into their communities
- Department of Mental Health customers: Individuals with chronic mental illness who need supported employment that will reduce symptoms and increase productivity

- Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living customers: Individuals with disabilities, including developmental disabilities, who need assistance and support to find and maintain employment
- Vermont Veterans: Many returning soldiers are looking to re-enter the workforce, yet have difficulty connecting to employers who can benefit from their skills
- New Americans/Refugees: Language and cultural differences present unique challenges for individuals who are newly settled in our communities

By coordinating employment services, CWS reduces duplication of effort and provides quality services to individuals with multiple needs.

Progressive Employment

Creative Workforce Solutions offers innovative ways to introduce candidates to Vermont employers. CWS works closely with employers to identify core skill requirements to help develop the skills and competencies of CWS candidates. For candidates who may have been out of the workforce for an extended period, or for individuals who need to hone their skills, progressive employment can often be the bridge to employment that they need.

For employers, progressive employment offers an opportunity to meet a candidate and assess their skills prior to hiring them. During the training period, worker's compensation and general liability insurances are provided by CWS, and the trainee receives a training offset rather than being on the employer's payroll. Tax credits are also available to employers who hire certain Vermonters, including Veterans.

Some examples of Progressive Employment options include:

- Company tours
- Short-term job shadows
- Time-limited work experiences
- On-the-Job training programs
- Internships
- Temp-to-hire partnerships with local staffing agencies
- Company Tours/Informational Interviews

To learn more visit the CWS website: www.cwsvt.com