**Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

**July 13, 2020**

**Executive**

June 9 – Director served on the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth Finance Committee to review the budget work plan.

June 17 – Director, Tracy Brigham, and Fatos Floyd were interviewed on a 20 minute national radio program - Speaking out for the Blind, the show is called “Vocational Rehabilitation’s Past, Present, and Future”.

June 18 – An Executive Directive Communication was issued on the DRS Return to Worksite Preparedness Plan, effective July 6, 2020. The primary purpose of the plan is to develop, coordinate and maintain the safest working environment possible for staff and guests as the agency gradually transitions from working remotely to working onsite. The plan document will be reviewed quarterly and is expected to evolve and change as the COVID-19 situation changes and new guidance is published.

June 18 - Director and staff participated in the quarterly meeting of the Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC) Executive Committee.

June 26 - Director participated in the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth meeting.

June 29-July1 – Director and staff participated in the National Association of Workforce Boards Summit via teleconference.

July 6 - Director participated in the monthly Cabinet meeting.

July 7 - Director and staff participated in the VR/SBVI performance team meeting.

July 9 – Director, Tonya Garman, and Kevin Statham participated in IL Network meeting with SILC members and CIL directors.

Director and Executive Team members are focused on updating the Telecommuting policy and developing a new set of guidelines for staff remaining on telework.

United We Ride Council - Per Executive Order 2015-11, the Department of Rehabilitation Services maintained responsibility of the Council.  DRS recently asked for the existing Executive Order to be rescinded, with the expectation that Oklahoma Department of Transportation and the new Office of Mobility and Public Transit (OMPT) will develop an advisory group, comparable to the United We Ride Council, to represent the best interest of the transportation disadvantaged populations and serve as the voice for social service agencies. The Council, including DRS, received notification on June 3, 2020, from Ernie Mbroh the Division Manager of the OMPT, that Executive Order 2015-11 has been rescinded, thus ending the work of the Council.

**Executive Projects – Stephanie Roe**

**Unified State Plan**

On June 3, 2020, Oklahoma’s four-year WIOA Unified State Plan, submitted on March 4, 2020 was approved.  The Unified State Plan will take effect July 1, 2020, and cover program years 2020 through 2023 (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024). The Vocational Rehabilitation section of the State Plan was reviewed and approved by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education.

**Administrative Rules – Tina Calloway**

On June 25th, Governor Stitt has signed the declaration approving the proposed permanent Administrative rules for FY 20.  With the rules adopted, the next deadline to submit the permanent rule documents is July 27th.  Rules will be published in the September 1st issue of the Register and will become effective on September 11th.

**Process Improvement – Lyuda Polyun**

**AWARE**

The AWARE team continues testing the new version of AWARE, hope to have installed before the end of June. Developed training materials to send out to staff when the new version is available.

Been working on identifying cases needing attention that have possible data quality issues prior to the next RSA-911 submission due in August. Lists of cases have been circulated among the programs managers to delegate to their staff to review, and if necessary, correct.

**Case Reviews**

The QA team reviewed approximately 90 cases that were closed both successfully and unsuccessfully between 4.16.20 and 5.15.20. The cases were selected from a random statewide pull to determine DRS compliance with Federal standards.

Staff QA teleconference held. The team continues to note trending concerns to be addressed with the Field Coordinators representing VR and SVBI via quarterly meetings.

Case Review Specialist Victoria Drake is actively participating on the DRS Policy Development Committee and is reviewing all policy to ensure compliance with Federal Standards.

**Program Standards, Statistical Research**

The research staff are continuing to work on the staff Covid-19 telework survey and the economic recession project.

The staff are also assisting the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Transition Council with surveys as part of a Needs Assessment for their group.

The research staff also attended the TechAccess Oklahoma virtual conference.

***Respectfully submitted by***

***Melinda Fruendt, Executive Director***