



Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Meeting Session #3

November 17, 2022

Maryland State Department of Education
Division of Rehabilitation Services



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. Overview of Commission Responsibilities
2. Discussion and Review of Recommendations from Sessions #1 and #2
3. Developmental Disabilities Administration and the Division of Rehabilitation Services Collaboration (Topic #2)
4. Accountability and Transparency of DORS Programs and Services (Topic #5)



Overview of Commission Responsibilities

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2. Discussion and Review of Recommendations from Sessions #1 and #2
3. DDA and DORS Collaboration (Topic #2)
4. Accountability and Transparency of DORS Programs and Services (Topic #5)

The important role of Commission members, discussions, and recommendations.

Legislative Context

- The Maryland General Assembly has set the following expectations:
 - The Maryland General Assembly passed HB 660 in Spring 2022.
 - HB 660 requires that a “Commission to Study the Division of Rehabilitation Services” be established.
 - The new Commission is to meet at least 5 times and discuss a set of 10 different topics.
 - After the Commission evaluates and makes recommendation on each topic, the Commission is to submit a report to the General Assembly and Governor.
 - An interim report is due by December 15, 2022.
 - The final report is due by March 15, 2023.

Required Topics for Discussion for the Commission

1. Methods for improving stakeholder input on the Division of Rehabilitation Services' programs and services
2. Methods for improving the relationship and communication between transition professionals working at the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Developmental Disabilities Administration
3. Methods for improving the amount of time it takes to provide vocational rehabilitation and transitional services
4. Methods for improving public-private partnerships to assist more Division of Rehabilitation Services' clients
5. Methods for improving accountability and transparency of the Division of Rehabilitation Services' programs and services
6. Whether the eligibility criteria for the Division of Rehabilitation Services' programs and services should be altered
7. Whether the Division of Rehabilitation Services should continue to be a division of the State Department of Education or should be transferred to another State agency
8. If the Commission determines that the Division of Rehabilitation Services should continue to be a division of the State Department of Education, whether the Division of Rehabilitation Services should have a governing board separate from the State Board of Education
9. Whether there are specific budgetary requests that could support the job training programs provided by the Division of Rehabilitation Services
10. Any other improvements to the Division of Rehabilitation Services' programs and services the Commission considers appropriate

Today's Focus Topics

2. Methods for improving the relationship and communication between transition professionals working at the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Developmental Disability Administration.
5. Methods for improving the accountability and transparency of the Division of Rehabilitation Services programs and services.



Discussion and Review of Recommendations from Sessions #1 and #2

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Opportunities to revisit topics of discussion from previous meetings and provide recommendations.

Review of Discussion on Order of Selection

- The history of Maryland's Order of Selection was reviewed.
- A national perspective was provided about Order of Selection as well as the criteria from other States and Maryland was reviewed.
- Eligibility criteria for VR services is in statute and the ability to recommend alterations was discussed.
- Maryland's criteria for placement of individuals into one of three categories, Most Significant, Significant, and Non-Severe.



Commission Topic: #6

**Should the eligibility
criteria for the Division
of Rehabilitation
Services' programs and
services be altered?**

Commission Recommendations

Topic #6: Eligibility Criteria

- The eligibility criteria is set in federal law; therefore, it cannot be changed.
- For the DORS waitlist, create an understanding within the disability community that the VR program is for individuals who are seeking employment in a competitive integrated setting.
 - Individuals can be determined eligible for VR services but can only receive immediate services if they are determined to be the Most Significantly disabled.

What other recommendations should DORS consider regarding the waitlist?



Commission Topic: #9

How should Maryland
be investing to better
support DORS job
training programs?

Review of Discussion on Budgetary Requests


- The VR grant requires the State to provide a Match of 21.3% in order for the State to receive its full allotment of federal funding.
- DORS General Fund appropriations have remained at a fairly consistent level for a number of years, which enable DORS to meet its Match and Maintenance of Effort requirements.
- The VR grant is a mandatory grant and is automatically subject to an increase based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- The CPI increased at a low rate prior thus there was a nominal increase in DORS VR grant allotment prior to Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 22.
- In FFY 22, Maryland's VR grant increased by about 1.8 million and by 3.4 million in FFY 23.
- **Based on the CPI increase from FFY 22, Maryland's VR grant allotment will exceed DORS current State General Fund appropriations, thus resulting in Maryland not meeting the Match requirements to obtain its full VR grant allotment.**

Commission Recommendations

Topic #9: Budgetary Requests

- The State should increase the amount of General Funds appropriations for DORS.
 - MSDE should advocate for funding so that DORS can meet the federal VR grant Match requirements each year.
 - **For fiscal year 2024, DORS is forecast that its VR grant will be approximately \$56,570,000. For DORS to meet its Match, DORS will need an increase in General Funds appropriations of \$690,000.**

What other budgetary recommendations should DORS consider to support services and training programs?



Developmental Disabilities Administration and the Division of Rehabilitation Services Collaboration (Topic #2)

1. Overview of Commission Responsibilities
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Collaboration between the Developmental Disabilities Administration and the Division of Rehabilitation Services is key to having a successful employment outcome for individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities.



Commission Topic: #2

How can the
Developmental Disabilities
Administration and
the Division of
Rehabilitation Services
improve their working
relationship?

A National Perspective

John Butterworth

Director for Employment Systems Change and Evaluation,
Institute for Community Inclusion, University of Massachusetts

Maryland's Collaboration between DDA and DORS

Stephanie Jones, MDH – **D**evelopmental **D**isabilities **A**dministration

Toni Cobb-Cannon, MSDE – **D**ivision **O**f **R**ehabilitation **S**ervices

DDA and DORS have partnered with each other for many years with the single goal of helping people with disabilities who want to work.

Objectives

- Discuss individual agency practices.
- Review current collaboration efforts.
- Discuss opportunities for improvement moving forward.

DDA/DORS Memorandum of Understanding

- Definitions (common and agency specific definitions)
- Roles and responsibilities of each agency
- Collaborative practices including mutual referrals
- Joint training
- Collaborative periodic review and renewal
- Goal: Support improved employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities

Current Collaboration Efforts

- **Elimination of subminimum wages**
 - DDA and DORS collaborated to provide information to families and Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP).
- **Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)**
 - Joint training of DDA and DORS staff to discuss CIE.
- **Flow of DDA and DORS funded services**
 - Established funding path for DDA consumers to access DORS funding for employment.
- **DDA - Employment services to support the goal of CIE**
 - Established the specific services that will be supported by DDA to obtain CIE.
- **DORS - Employment services to support the goal of CIE**
 - The use of Pre-Employment Transitioning Services and VR trainings and supported services to obtain CIE.

DDA Provider Agency Approval Requirements

- Currently, there are 175 DDA providers of Employment Services. To be approved by DDA, the providers must:
 - Demonstrate compliance with general and business/agency provider requirements as noted in [COMAR 10.22.20](#).
 - Have a minimum of 5 years of demonstrated experience and capacity providing quality services that are similar.
 - Demonstrate the capability to provide or arrange for the Care Delivery System (CDS) required in the submitted:
 - Program service plan that details the agencies service delivery model
 - Business plan
 - Quality assurance plan to be approved by DDA
 - Have documentation that all vehicles used in the provision of services are insured.
 - Ensure all service locations must meet the federal Home and Community settings rule.
 - Be accredited by Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) or Council On Quality And Leadership.

DORS Community Rehabilitation Providers Requirements

The approval process for Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) includes:

- 3rd party accreditation/license/certificate from DDA, BHA, or CARF approved to provide Supported Employment or Employment Services
- Interview
 - Service provision
 - Organization chart
 - Results of service provision
- Site Visit (facility-based services)
- Draft Cooperative Agreement
- Training
- Introduction of DORS local and CRP staff to discuss services

DORS CRP Initial Approval

DORS evaluates the Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) in the following areas:

- The CRP's capacity to provide specific services for the disability population that they intend to serve.
- Assure that the services being provided meet the consumers' needs and agree on how services will be delivered based on the individual's Individual Plan for Employment.
- Evaluate the CRP's facility to ensure that the location meets accessibility requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Review staff credentials and training to ensure that they are qualified to deliver the required services.

Primary CRP Services

Primary CRP services are Job Development Preparation, Job Development, and Job Coaching.

- **Job Development Preparation:** The CRP is responsible for creating the resume and cover letter and providing interview practice/preparation.
- **Job Development:** The CRP is responsible for assisting the individual in their job search and placement.
- **Job Coaching:** The CRP is responsible for providing ongoing support to help the individual maintain employment.

DORS CRP Approval for Secondary Services

- Secondary services that may be provided by a CRP include:
 - **Pre-Employment Transitioning Services (Pre-ETS)**
 - Must provide at least one of the five required Pre-ETS.
 - **Training Services**
 - Employment Development Skills and/or Employee Skills
 - **Career Assessment Services**
 - Itemized, Investigative, Focused, Exploratory, Comprehensive, and Community-Based
- Approval for CRPs to provide secondary services includes:
 - **Review of program cost (proposal, budget, and syllabus provided)**
 - To make sure cost are reasonable and allowable for the program.
 - **Record of success**
 - Review of CRP record in providing Job Development, Placement, and Coaching services.

Pre-Employment Services (DDA)

- **Community Development Services:** Community based habilitative services to provide a person with development and maintain skills related to community membership through engagement in community-based activities with people without disabilities.
- **Day Habilitation:** Facility or community- based services to provide training of skills in the areas of Activities of Daily Living, Vocational, and socialization.
- **Career Exploration:** Time-limited service to help people work toward skills for CIE.
- **Supported Employment:** Community-based support to help a person obtain and maintain CIE (legacy service).
- **Discovery Milestones:** Time-limited, comprehensive person-centered, and community-based employment planning.
- **Job Development:** Support to obtain competitive employment in the general workforce.

DDA Employment Services

- **Supported Employment:** Community-based support to help a person obtain and maintain CIE (legacy service).
- **Ongoing Job Supports:** Supports in learning and completing job tasks to successfully maintain a job.
- **Follow-Along Job Supports:** Direct and Indirect supports that occur after the person has transitioned in their job.
- **Co-Worker Employment Supports:** Time-limited support provided by the employer to assist the person with extended orientation and training.
- **Transportation:** A service designed to improve the person's and family caregiver's ability to independently access community activities within their own community in response to needs identified through the Person-Centered Plan.

DORS Pre-Employment Transition Services for students

- Pre-ETS services provided by 62 CRPs:
 - Counseling, job exploration
 - Work-Based Learning Experiences
 - Counseling, post-secondary education programs
 - Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living
 - Self-advocacy skills

DORS Employment and Supported Employment Services

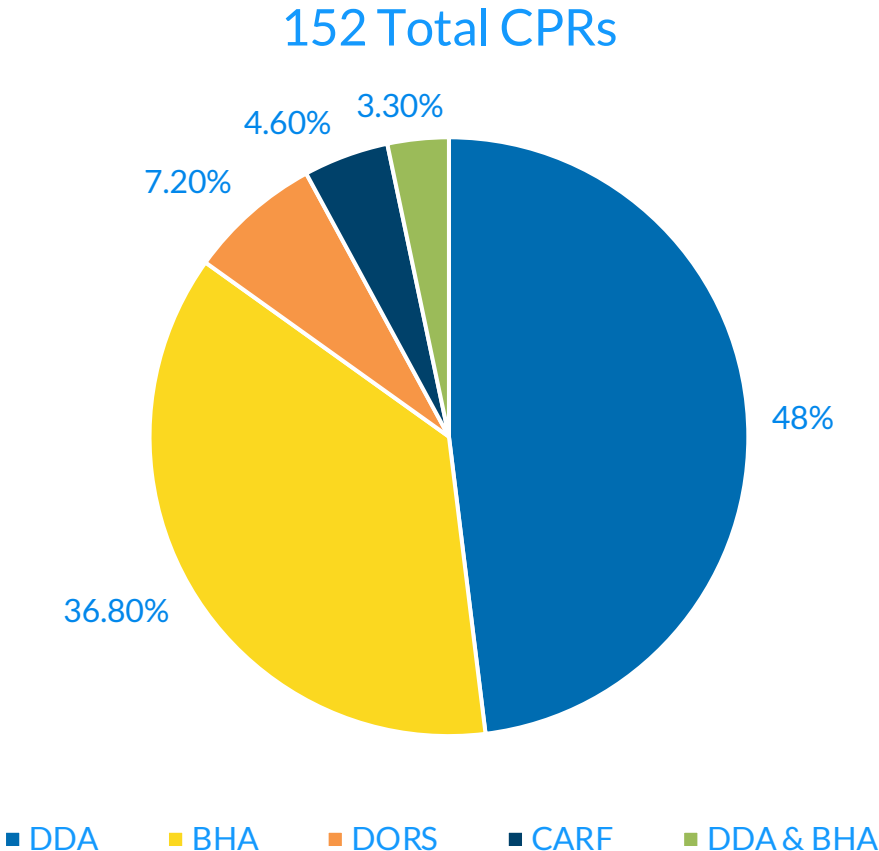
- **Job Development/Placement** to assist individuals in obtaining competitive integrative employment (CIE) or short-term employment which leads to CIE.
- **Short-Term Job Coaching** to assist individuals with learning job duties and adjusting to employment. Coaching is reduced in accordance with the individual's needs until the employment is stable.
- **Supported Employment** services are provided to individuals who are approved to receive Long-Term Supported Employment Funding from DDA or BHA once the individual is stable in their employment.
- **Supported Employment Youth Extended Services** are available for individuals who are at least 18 years old and less than 25 years old, who are not currently eligible for Long-Term Supported Employment funding but who require Support Employment Services to be successful in their employment.
- **Natural Supports** may be provided by coworkers, mentors, management, family members or friends to foster an individual's independence and integration into employment. Natural supports are especially important for individuals who are not approved for Long-Term Supported Employment.
- There are many **other employment services** offered to consumers, such as: benefits counseling, internships, On-the-Job Training, and assistance with reasonable accommodation requests.

DORS Placement Incentives Available to CRPs

- **Specialized Population - \$250**
 - For individuals who are Blind, Deaf, Deaf/Blind, or have Acquired Brain Injury.
- **Rapid Placement - \$300**
 - CRPs place individual into CIE within 60 days of receiving the DORS Job Development authorization.
- **25% Above Minimum Wage - \$400**
 - For the State's current minimum wage of \$12.50 per hour, the individual would earn \$15.63 per hour.
- **Ticket to Work Substantial Gainful Activity - \$400**
 - Assisting in obtaining employment for an individual who is either on SSDI or SSI and is earning above Substantial Gainful Activity, for Non-Blind that amount would be \$1,470 per month.
- **Supported Employment Natural Supports - \$450**
 - Proof of maintaining stability of an individual who needed Natural Supports in order to maintain employment in a Support Employment situation.

DORS CRP Approval Type

DDA providers represent over half of DORS approved CRPs.



DDA Developmentally Disabled Eligibility

- A developmental disability is a severe chronic disability other than a sole diagnosis of mental illness. A person may have a developmental disability and also have a mental illness. There are many kinds of developmental disabilities. Some examples are intellectual disability, autism and cerebral palsy.
- Additionally, eligibility requires:
 - Supports are expected to be needed throughout the individual's life
 - Impairment started before the person turned 22
 - Needed supports or assistance to live independently
 - Needed supports of a team to help with services and treatment

Referral Sources to DORS

- Self-referred
- Family
- DDA (prior to or after long-term funding has been approved)
- BHA
- Local education agencies (LEAs)
- Other 3rd parties (e.g. hospital, physician)

DORS Participant Eligibility Determination

- **To be eligible**, the applicant must have a physical or mental impairment that constitutes a substantial impediment to employment; the applicant requires VR services to prepare for, secure, retain, or regain employment that is consistent with the applicant's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice; and the individual can benefit from provision of VR service by achieving competitive integrated employment.
- **Timeline process:**
 - Referral – 10 days for DORS to make contact
 - Application must be submitted to DORS
 - Eligibility Determination – due within 60 days from the receipt of the application
 - Written Individualized Plan for Employment – due within 90 days from Eligibility Determination
- **Presumed eligibility:** if the individual receives SSI or SSDI related to their own disability (significant disability)
- **Expedited eligibility:** if all required documents are provided at the time of the application
- **All other determinations:** takes an average of 51 days (waiting on medical documents, assessment, school records, psychological evaluations, etc.)

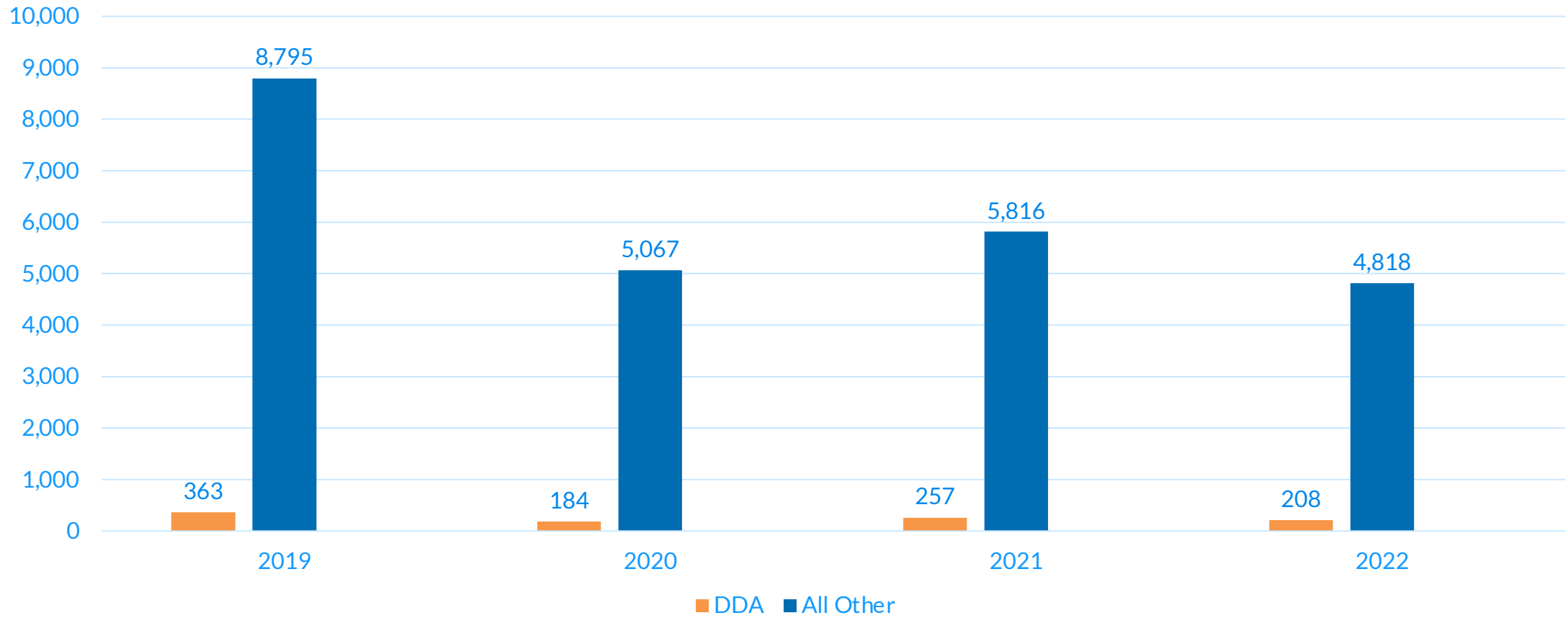
Documents Which May be Required for Eligibility Determination by DORS

- Award letter from Social Security Administration (SSI/SSDI)
- Medical records
- Psychological/psychiatric evaluation
- School records (e.g. IEP or 504 Plan)
- Award letter from DDA or DDA proof of eligibility

DORS Applications

Calendar Years 2019 – 2022 YTD

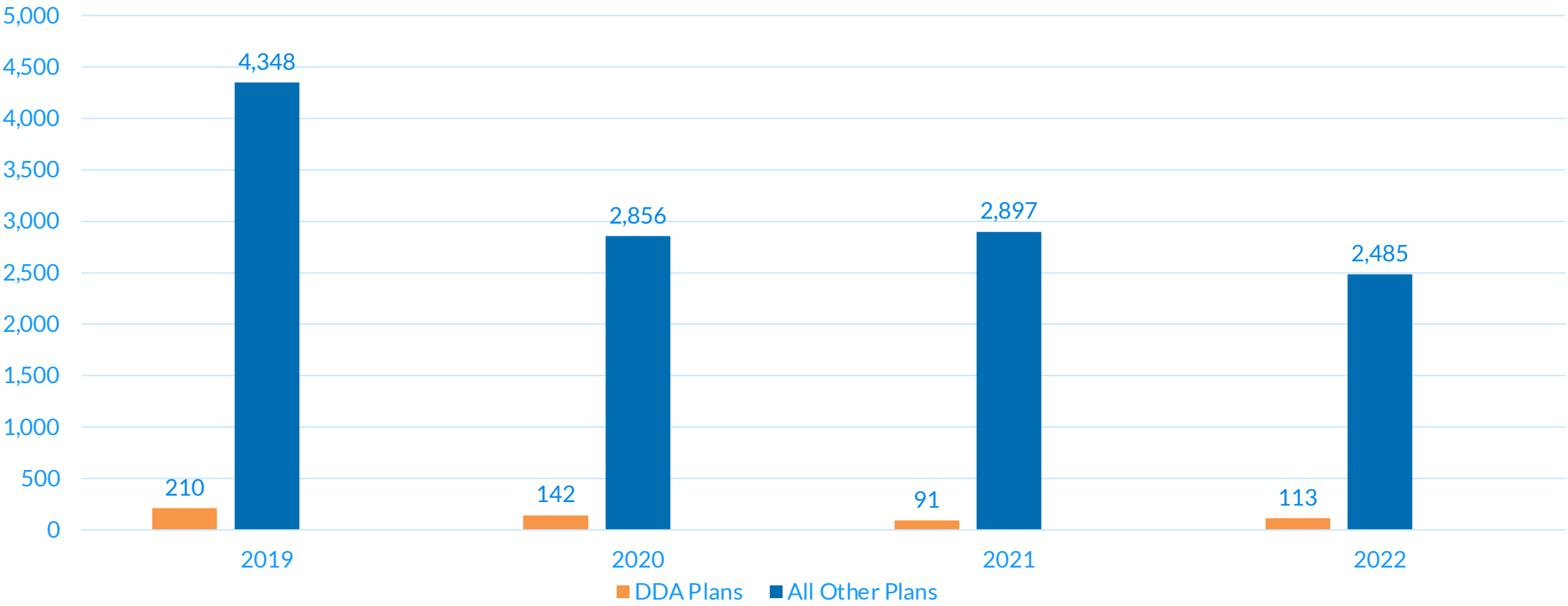
The total number of VR applications for DORS services is increasing from 2020.



DORS Individualized Plans of Employment

Calendar Years 2019–2022 YTD

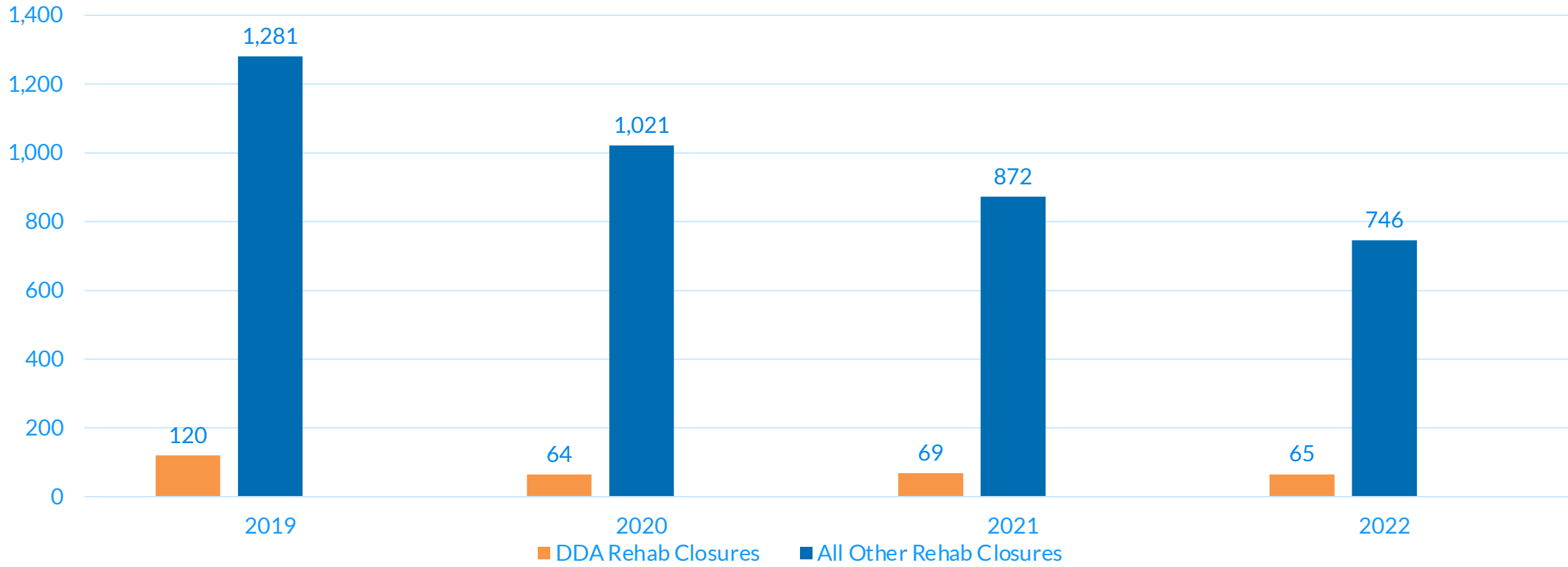
DDA consumers saw a significant drop in Individual Plans for Employment as a result of the pandemic.



DORS Rehabilitated Closures

Calendar Years 2019 – 2022 YTD

Successful employment outcomes for DDA consumers remained fairly consistent from 2020 to 2022 YTD.




Opportunities for Improvement

- Increase DORS partnership with DDA-approved employment CRPs.
- Increase the number of referrals from DDA providers leading to an increase in the number of individuals who are employed in a competitive integrated environment.
- The submission of current documentation, such as medical, psychological, or school records, along with the Application may lead to an increase in expedited eligibilities by DORS, which then leads to a more rapid engagement with DORS.
- With the turnover in staff both at DDA and DORS there is a need to increase joint training for staff.

QUESTIONS?

How should DORS and DDA strengthen their working relationship?

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 4. **Accountability and Transparency of DORS Programs and Services (Topic #5)**

Accountability and Transparency of DORS Programs and Services (Topic #5)

Accountability and transparency of the programs and services that the Division of Rehabilitation Services provides are important to improving the performance of the vocational rehabilitation program.

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Kathleen Biebel

Deputy Commissioner,

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Amanda Baczko

Director, Office of Individual and Family Engagement,

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

DORS Accountability

- DORS reports on a **quarterly basis** to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on all clients and the activity that occurred for the quarter. DORS data is then compiled into an annual report that is posted on the RSA website.
- DORS reports on a **quarterly basis** to the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council on DORS quarterly performance, which includes the results of the consumer satisfaction survey. Every Rehabilitation Council meeting allows time for public comments and input.
- DORS is subject to **single state audit**, which audits various aspects of DORS' two major programs. In the most recent audit, **there were no major findings**
- DORS is subject to **Office of Legislative Audits (OLA)** every three years. OLA audits various aspects of the VR program. The most recent OLA audit **had no major audit findings**.
- DORS is subject to monitoring reviews by RSA who reviews all aspects of the DORS program. **There were no financial findings and only policy update recommendations from the last RSA monitoring review.**

DORS Transparency

- **All audit** and monitoring reports are public documents, thus available to the public.
- DORS, as with all State agencies, provides information concerning agency performance with the Governor's Office and the General Assembly under the **Managing for Results requirements**.
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment is posted on the DORS website.
- DORS holds **annual public meetings** to allow for the public to hear about programs and services offered through DORS and to provide input into those services.
- DORS **meets three times a year** with the Community Rehabilitation Provider Advisory Committee, which is open to all providers to attend to learn what is happening within DORS and to discuss issues with the leadership of DORS.
- DORS staff attend numerous transitioning fairs, job fairs, and conferences around the State to discuss DORS services.

DORS Accountability and Transparency: Current and Future Initiatives

- DORS will be posting on its website the results of its quarterly consumer satisfaction survey results. In 2022, DORS consumers rated DORS services or programs either **satisfactory or neutral 83% of the time.**
- DORS is working with San Diego State University on a data analytic tool which will enable DORS to analyze data from the last five years and identify trends of **services that are provided and the outcomes that were produced.** This will include data presented by **disability, race, and gender, both statewide and by county.**
- DORS is partnering with Parents Place on listening sessions with parents, including those in the Hispanic/Latino community. **DORS will be sharing the recommendations with the State Rehabilitation Council.**

What recommendations should DORS consider to increase accountability and transparency?

Next Meeting

- December 8, 2022
 - Review of draft Commission interim recommendations
 - Commission Topic #3: Methods for improving the amount of time to provide vocational rehabilitation and transitional services
 - 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm. All future meetings are being extended by 30 minutes
- January/February/ March meeting dates will be announced soon