



Meeting Minutes

Disability Committee

January 4, 2012 at Morris County Library

Attendees

Members: Christina Brino, Rachael DiCioccio, Ann Marie Flake, Carmela Slivinski, Lucie Nering, Kim Mele (for Anne Portine-Kudlac), Maddie Sink, Qadriyyah Sakhu

Guests: Danielle Pera (Mental Health Association of Morris County)

Staff: Jack Patten, Donna Buchanan

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) Update

Scott McGill submitted a report, which was given by Jack Patten:

- 25 new Vocational Rehabilitation Services Counselors have been hired and assigned to DVRS offices throughout New Jersey
- The Morristown DVRS office has a new Vocational Rehabilitation Services Counselor, Michael Hessler. Scott and Michael will attend the next WIB Disability Committee meeting.
- DVRS promoted two additional Chiefs to oversee the local field office.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator Report

ADA Coordinator Donna Buchanan reported on:

- **White House Monthly Disability Calls**
The monthly calls dealing with disabilities and disability issues will resume on January 18 at 2:00 PM. The calls are open to everyone; however, they are off-the-record and not for press purposes. The dial-in information will be provided during the first or second week of January. For more information, visit: www.disability.gov.
- **January 2012 Health Observances**
 - National Glaucoma Awareness Month (Prevent Blindness America), www.preventblindness.org
 - Thyroid Awareness Month (AA of Clinical Endocrinologists), www.aace.com
 - Cervical Health Awareness Month (National Cervical Cancer Coalition), www.nccc-online.org
 - National Birth Defects Prevention Month (National Birth Defects Prevention Network), www.nbdpn.org
- **Upcoming Events – Free Disability Webinars**
(To register, visit www.adacourse.org and click on the “Events” tab.)
 - Accommodating Individuals with Limited Dexterity: Common Workplace Situations and Solutions (January 10, 2-3pm EST)
 - Current Events in Accommodation (February 14, 2-3pm EST)

- Best Practices (March 13, 2-3pm EST)
- Understanding and Accommodating Mobility Impairment in the Workplace (April 10, 2-3pm EST)

Agency Updates

- **Employment Horizons** – Rachael DiCioccio reported that Employment Horizons has added new staff. She also reported that Employment Horizons is a member of the Parsippany Area Chamber of Commerce (PACC), which has a workforce development committee offering free workshops on various employment topics such as networking skills, communication skills and social media, and has an annual job fair in April. Rachael said the Employment Horizons kitchen is now serving meals three days per week.
- **Saint Clare’s Health System** – Ann Marie Flake reported that effective January 19, 2012, Saint Clare’s Behavioral Health Center is moving from Cedar Knolls to 2 Sylvan Way in Parsippany. The main phone number will be (973) 298-8600.
- **Morris Hills Regional District** - Lucie Schmidt-Nering reported that, in addition to her duties working with the multiply-disabled and mildly cognitively-impaired students, she now teaches four classes a day. She conducts student visits to employers and service providers to orient the students to opportunities in preparation for post-graduate employment.
- **Mental Health Association of Morris County** – Kim Mele reported that she and Danielle Pera place discharged hospitalized clients into subsidized housing. MHA provides life coaches from the disability community who act as mentors to assist in client transition to independent living. The residential placements have been very successful.
- **Morris County Office of the Disabled** - Christina Brino requested that members notify her of events for persons with disabilities. She asked they be e-mailed to her at cbrino@co.morris.nj.us.
- **Arc of NJ/Project HIRE** - Maddie Sink reported on the availability of Phil Hutchins for motivational speeches. Phil is a person with a disability who currently works at WalMart. His presentation provides real-life, real-time strategies for coping with disabilities and succeeding in the workplace and the community.
- **People Helping People** – Qadriyyah Sakhu emphasized the ongoing difficulty in attempting to place ex-offenders into employment. She noted that People Helping People has been designated as an SSI advocate and has applied for a contract to provide specialized services for clients with suspended driver’s licenses.
- **DAWN Center for Independent Living** – Carmela Slivinski reported that DAWN’s new office in Hackettstown has recently added adaptive equipment for the blind and visually impaired to the resource room. She also informed the group that DAWN has received approval from DVRS for school-based programs.

Disability Employment Statistics

As of November 2011, the Disability Employment statistics were as follows:

- Labor Force participation for people with disabilities - 20.8%
- Labor Force participation for people without disabilities - 69.5%
- The unemployment rate for people with disabilities - 13%
- The unemployment rate for people without disabilities - 8%

Additional information can be found at www.dol.gov/odep.

Improving Job Opportunities for Americans with Disabilities

The US Department of Labor is proposing a new rule that would require federal contractors and subcontractors to set a hiring goal of having 7% of their workforce be people with disabilities, among other requirements. Public comment on the proposal is encouraged and must be received on or before February 7, 2012. For more information, visit:

www.dol.gov/ofccp/regs/compliance/sec503/Sec503_Media_Release_2011-12-07.htm.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2012.