

January - March 2024 Consent Decree Quarterly Report for submission May 15, 2024

(II) The Court orders that the following actions will be complete by June 30, 2024.

The focus of 2023-2024 is on (a) full implementation of the plans submitted in the State's June 26, 2023, court filing, (b) the development and promotion of effective models for providing service and support and (c) assessing progress towards the benchmarks of the Consent Decree.

1	The State will fully implement all plans and activities included in the June 26, 2023, court filing.
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All plans and activities are completed or currently in different stages of implementation as outlined in the June 2023 court filing.

2	The new rates and rate structure will be fully implemented (Consent Decree, Section XIV). SUMMARY OF WHAT HAS OCCURRED
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- New rates and rate structure have been implemented with a few exceptions.
- New services, minus remote supports, are being targeted to be implemented by July 1st, 2024. With support from Gainwell, BHDDH identified the needed codes for the new services and meetings are taking place with Gainwell/OHHS to discuss finalization.
- BHDDH staff is working on finalizing certification standards and billing codes.
 - Remote Supports – Medicaid received CMS approval for the use of remote supports in March. Certification standards are needed.
 - Peer and Family-to-Family Supports – codes are needed as well as Certification Standards.
 - Companion Room and Board and Supportive Living will not be ready as the programs are not yet in place.
 - Personal support in the workplace is in place, however, a new billing code is still pending.
- Professional Services:
 - Providers received a notification on 4/03/24 that Nursing Professional Services could be billed as of 4/05/24. This was also discussed during the 4/16/24 DD/Provider monthly meeting.
 - Medicaid received approval from CMS regarding the remaining Professional Services on April 26th. The rates for these Professional Services will date back to 1/01/24. Through Caseload Estimating Conference (CEC), General Revenue was requested to be able to fund retro payments to 7/01/23.
 - Medicaid has also assured timely filing can be turned off when Professional Service codes are in place in July to allow for billing after the 365-day mark, if necessary.
 - The rates for RN, LPN, and BCBA will go back to 07/01/23.
- Discovery:
 - Discovery that is assisting someone with soft skills has been done under community-based supports and can be termed as “exploration.”
 - Discovery is a billable Medicaid service. DD agrees this service needs to be implemented, so has been working to get a billing code. DD has now identified and has been approved to reuse a code for the Discovery service. Once finalized, communication will be sent to providers and billing can start. Providers will be able to bill by May 20th and claims can date back to July 2023.

- The Division is looking for more flexible options to span through FY 26 to expand upon how Discovery support services are provided.
- The billing manual will also be updated accordingly to expand upon employment definitions.
- A document will be provided to the Court Monitor by end of May as requested explaining in more detail Professional Services and how they should be billed.
- Job Coaching and job retention
 - The only limit on both job coaching and job retention services is that they are limited to the number of hours an individual is working. However, it is expected that this service fades, as appropriate. Additionally, fading allows for continued capacity. It is recognized that there will be instances where individuals may need job coaching for an extended period, and many of these requests have been approved.
 - Approvals for extended job coaching is occurring with guidance/discussion about fade plans when appropriate and looking at natural supports and technology as part of process to help with gaining more independence.
 - SE Associate Administrator providing technical assistance to SE providers.

3	All adults will have experienced the new three-step assessment process (December 2022 Court Order). (A) REPORT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING THAT ACTION AND (B) AN UPDATE ON ANY STATE ACTIVITIES
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As of 5/07/2024, a total of 846 individuals have experienced the three-step assessment process.

Technical Assistance and Training:

- The SIS Supervisor at BHDDH has completed training regarding the three-step assessment process to five out of six Fiscal Intermediaries (FI). The final training will be scheduled in June 2024. In addition to the FI specific trainings, the SIS Supervisor continues to provide trainings to various stakeholder groups to include youth agencies. During this quarter, there was a training session scheduled for the Perspectives Youth and Family Services Program to be held 4/24/2024.
- A comprehensive training of the three-step assessment process has been scheduled for the BHDDH DD team to include the social case worker units on 5-07-2024. This overview was previously provided to each of the BHDDH DD social case worker units in November 2023.
- All SIS unit staff attended the Person-Centered Training provided by Mary Madden.

Three-Step Assessment Process:

- The three-step process is occurring for all individuals who have a scheduled SIS-A. Data is provided monthly to the Court Monitor to report on the number of individuals who experienced the three-step process and whether additional funding was granted. For the individuals who do not receive additional funding, the Additional Needs and Support Questionnaire Committee request the BHDDH DD social case workers provide follow-up case management as needed. The cases in which follow-up case management is required are tracked within the questionnaire database.
- The BHDDH DD team continues to work with Health Management Associates and Health Services Research Institute to develop a new algorithm, determine tier levels, and develop an automated funding mechanism for the Additional Needs and Support Questionnaire (ANSQ). The normalization of the algorithm includes a comprehensive record review to be conducted April 2024.

Two-Step Assessment Process:

- The Two-Step Assessment Process consists of the ANSQ and the Individual Follow-Up. The two-step assessment process is intended to be administered annually by the BHDDH SIS social case worker (SCW) prior to the Individual Support Plan (ISP) meeting. If a SIS is conducted within that year, the annual meeting will be conducted 120 days prior to the following year's ISP.
- This process was delayed due to the capacity issue for staff to do this work. However, a plan has been developed where three identified DD staff will receive needed training and focus on this work until additional staff may be assigned to the SIS unit prior to the full implementation of CFCM.

4	All adults will have an individual budget based on the three-step process (Consent Decree, Section XIV; December 2022 Court Order).
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- Monthly reports are provided to the Court Monitor. It is important to note that some individuals already had additional funding via the existing S109 process in place that continued; some individuals had needs that were captured through the SIS-A, 2nd edition; and some of these individuals were newly eligible and need time to be connected to a provider to determine scope of service needs.
- Revisions to the current "Notice of Assessment Results" letter have occurred and this new itemized letter rolled out the week of 2/26/24. The revised letter itemizes the individual budget to include additional funding determined by the three-step process within one correspondence. Currently, both the "Notice of Assessment Results" letter (individual notification) and the supplemental funding request response letter (S110) (provider notification) are utilized.

5	All adults will have an independent facilitator who will (a) provide information about employment and community activity, (b) facilitate the development of a person-centered plan, (c) explain the resources and opportunities available through the new rate structure, (d) assist the individual to use their individual budget to access employment and community services (December 2022 Court Order). (A) REPORT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING THAT ACTION AND (B) AN UPDATE ON ANY STATE ACTIVITIES
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Facilitating Success

- BHDDH caseworkers are continuing with Facilitating Success, which was initially rolled out in November 2023. 79 participants and their support teams have engaged in Facilitating Success with their assigned DD social caseworker as part of their ISP planning and development process from 2/1/24-3/31/24 (numbers reported in last Quarterly Report were through end of January).
- Facilitating Success has included inquiries and discussions regarding participants' receipt of and satisfaction with current services, community involvement, and employment. Up-to-date resources are being shared and reviewed to ensure awareness and understanding of opportunities and resources available. Barriers and interventions are discussed, and follow-ups have begun to ensure they are being addressed.
- Several internal trainings, facilitated by the DD Training Team, and professional development sessions facilitated by Mary Madden have occurred. (see attached *DD Training & Outreach Tracker*)

Independent Facilitation (IF)

- A high-level draft of a User Experience was presented to the Court Monitor and DOJ on 2-8-24. It outlined how IF intersects with the different touchpoints an individual has when in the Adult DD system.
- IF will begin next quarter. IF will align closely with and be a bridge to Conflict Free Case Management (CFCM).
- A training curriculum for IFs is being developed in partnership with the Sherlock Center. The DD Training unit will provide Therap and other onboarding training.
- A Communications Plan for further informing all stakeholders about Independent Facilitation is being developed.
- Introductory information on IF has been added to the DD website and shared in the DD Newsletter.
- As outlined in the IF Monthly Status Report, activities for March included:
 - IF census sequence strategy – As IF capacity grows, Target Population members who have never been employed will be prioritized for IF first followed by other Target Population members.
 - Information on IF was sent to Self-Directed Plan Writers on March 15, 2024, and two Information Sessions were held on March 27, 2024. Their questions and feedback are helping inform the Division's next steps. Some SD Plan Writers have already expressed interest and the Division will request all SD Plan Writers let us know if they plan to participate.
 - The Division developed an anticipated average number of hours SD Plan Writers will work annually per person.
 - The Division continues to work with the Governor's Office, Office of Management and Budget, and General Assembly to advance the hiring of the SCWs and SCW Supervisors who will be assigned to IF.
 - The Division shared a brief update with Community Providers on March 19th at the most recent meeting with CPNRI and discussed IF with FIs during an FI meeting on March 28th. There will be more detailed presentations to a wider stakeholder group as the hiring of the SCWs advances and as Independent Plan Writers sign up to do the IF work.
 - The Division has met internally multiple times to review the different intersections and collaboration points (e.g., addressing crisis, referrals, etc.) for SCWs and IF-SCWs to ensure a positive user experience.
 - The Division has met multiple times with the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College who will be our training partner and will support the facilitation of the Community of Practice. Development of the training curriculum has begun, and training facilitators have been secured.
 - The Division has developed a draft "check-in" guide with key questions to support the facilitation of IFs check-in meetings.
 - The Division has been developing communication materials that have started to be posted on the DDD website.

6	<p>The majority of adults in the target populations will be using the add-on employment funds to obtain or maintain employment in integrated settings (Consent Decree, Sections IV, V, XIV, December 2022 Court Order).</p> <p>(A) REPORT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EXPERIENCING THAT ACTION AND</p> <p>(B) AN UPDATE ON ANY STATE ACTIVITIES</p>
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The add-on employment funding is being utilized. The requests have come in on a rolling basis. Purchase orders (PO) are being submitted when an individual goes through their annual ISP process and when people want to amend their ISPs to include the add on employment supports.

Report on the Add-On Employment Budget requests

- As of April 1st, there were 348 individuals who have accessed the employment add-on budget. This number reflects individuals who have submitted and were approved for the add on funding for employment services. All other individuals utilizing employment services are utilizing the funding for these supports as part of their flexible budget.
- The numbers previously reported for the Employment Add On budget were much lower. During discussions and data analysis for the Caseload Estimating Conference, it was determined that there is a way to extract the number of individuals using the Add-On Employment budget from the system. Finance enters the funding into the system under employment as a service, whereas previously it could not be coded that way.
- During meetings with providers, they stated other reasons for the delay in accessing the employment add-on budgets, outlined below with DD's response following each:
 - Need to forecast hours to be broken down for the PO if there are separate authorizations. (DD's response: this does not need to be separate – can be in one PO)
 - Multiple codes should be hitting against one bucket of money. If employment is allowed to be a program specific code, then dollar authorizations would take care of this issue. (Employment codes are service-specific, so cannot be one bucket of money.)
 - Capacity issues with SE Providers. (DD is asking SEPs about capacity and using the information to engage in targeted referrals for individuals.)
 - Training their own staff on process. (DD can provide TA if requested).
 - Self-Direct need to go through an agency, which can be difficult to navigate. (DD has been providing FIs and Plan Writers with information on accessing SE services. DD is also ensuring SCW can access TA from the SE Associate Administrator).
 - Inability for those who self-direct to use own staff unless they have the required training. (Sherlock Center provides free training).
- A variety of outreach methods has occurred to ensure individuals and families are aware of the employment add-on funding availability. These efforts include, but are not limited to, the Facilitating Success process that began in November 2023, a mailing that was sent to all individuals, information included in the DD Newsletters, DD Communications team trainings and community outreach, technical assistance with providers, RIPIN outreach and webinars, DD Community Forums, DD employment team outreach, guidance posted on the DD website, and weekly meetings with the FI's.

January 1 through March 31 Employment and Earnings Report Form (EERF) Report

- 187 EERFs submitted and processed.
- 36 individuals accepted Benefits Planning
- 151 denied Benefits Planning
- 27 new jobs reported

January 1 through March 31 Add-On Supported Employment PO Requests SE Associate Administrator Received (this number does not account for all – see disclaimer above)

- 108 requests submitted and reviewed.
 - 98 Approved
 - 10 denied.
 - 54 identified as Consent Decree Population
- Flexible spending within the core budget:
 - New POs are not required for every new service code. One PO can be submitted for employment add-on budget.
 - The PO needs to be tied to the services an individual will be receiving. If there are significant changes to the services/supports an individual is receiving, the PO needs to reflect that. This is a CMS requirement.
 - Once IF is implemented, they will write the plans and will submit the POs, so the providers will not need to do this.
 - Communication with providers on how to fill out services on the PO that maximize flexibility.
 - This should exist in the space of individual's goals and should be the first steps toward overall employment path.

7	Supported Employment Services will be provided at a sufficient quantity so that all members of the Consent Decree populations should have access to jobs that meet the criteria defined (Consent Decree, Section V, A-C).
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BHDDH

Target Population - Never Employed

- There will also be an increased focus on the target population of those never employed. These individuals may need significant supports to determine what it is they want to do and to gain necessary skills to do the work. The Employment Team is taking a data driven approach to this work. Data will assist in determining the strategies used to introduce employment options and assist with getting individuals in this population employed. The Employment Team will look at demographics, employment service utilization, and people's goals to determine if employment is one of them, and work with providers to deliver the appropriate supports to increase employment opportunities for these individuals.
- The Division started pulling together the needed data to assist in understanding where Consent Decree Target Population members who have never been employed are at on their employment path. This information will allow us to build preliminary profiles of this population to be shared with the Court Monitor.
- The Division will use the data and build off the key pre-employment indicators, including current barriers to employment, which will be based on the Court Monitor's Interim Settlement Agreement Review, February 2020, to then engage Community Providers and Individuals who Self-Direct their services in data collection on these indicators.
- Division priorities for this population include connecting to an Independent Facilitator (IF) and Supported Employment (SE) provider to develop highly individualized employment plans with targeted strategies to ensure individuals are engaging in discovery, customized employment, and job development/matching.

- The Division is currently engaged in discussions with providers who have submitted proposals to help facilitate needed peer-to-peer and family-to-family outreach. Sherlock Center will be hosting a Family and Employment Awareness Training (FEAT) dedicated to this specific population.
- Concurrently, the Division is organizing strategies, based on the Court Monitor's February 2020 ISA Review, specific to where a Target Population member is on their employment path. Strategies can include but are not limited to Employment Add-On budget, increasing the overall capacity of our Supported Employment providers, expanding employer engagement, and increased focus on training for job development and job matching to assist individuals with more complex needs and when a variance is appropriate to assist the individual in completing one.
- The Division is reviewing applications to its Targeted Employment Funds to ensure they are funding and supporting strategies that are aligned with the strategies outlined above and will increase employment outcomes for the Target Population.

Increase Employment

- Outreach by DD Business and Community Engagement Administrator.
 - Partnering with SE providers who have identified individuals who are actively seeking employment.
 - This collaboration is beneficial to each individual as most are allowed to complete work trials to ensure it is a position they are interested in, and have the appropriate skills set for, which will assist in longer retention rates and higher job satisfaction.
- The DD Associate Administrator for Supported Employment will continue to provide technical assistance to the providers in areas including, but not limited to:
 - Add-On Purchase Order requests; blending and braiding of SE funds through BHDDH, ORS, and DLT grant projects; job development/coaching/retention services guidance and billing; employment related transportation; benefits planning, and variances; referral/SE services coordination with the BHDDH Social Caseworkers, ISP employment goals; sharing of resources and skills training opportunities; Supported Employment certification/training; Therap training/support around entering employment data and case notes; quarterly capacity questionnaire; coordination of providers and employment engagement job leads; sharing of best practices; sharing of BHDDH SE services updates; and Q&A.
 - Completing and submitting a PO is part of the ongoing Technical Assistance that is offered to providers.
 - Obtaining updated info, including Employment and Earnings Forms (EERF) and responses to the provider questionnaire.
- Monthly Supported Employment providers' meetings are held for open discussions, dialogue, and information transfer.
- Sherlock Center SE trainings are free to participants (State funds the training) and is one of a mini-certificate series offered to earn ACRE certification.
 - The next training series for Supporting Meaningful Employment: Job Retention and Coaching is starting on May 9. These trainings are ongoing.
- RIPIN has held webinars regarding employment for those who self-direct. Held this quarter:
 - 1/30/24- Community Information Session: Benefits Planning and Work Incentives presented by Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities.
- RIPIN is doing targeted outreach to all those self-directing their services. As part of the outreach, they will ask individuals if they are employed or would like to be employed.
 - If employed, will ask if they are filling out EERF.

- If not employed, will ask if they are interested in employment.
 - If yes, refer to SE Administrator and SCW.
 - If no, refer to SCW to discuss employment opportunities.
- BHDDH meets weekly with the Fiscal Intermediaries (FIs), which is another venue to provide answers regarding SE services.
- Working to build capacity by encouraging agencies that provide supports to individuals who SD their services to become a DDO.
- DD Newsletter will highlight employers that have provided job opportunities to individuals with I/DD.
- The DD Employment Team Administrator and Associate Administrator held a series of meetings with licensed providers to update them about the employment goals of the Consent Decree Addendum, to provide Technical Assistance, and to address the following:
 - Supported Employment Activities
 - Jobs since July 1, 2023, towards the 125 individuals employed benchmark and identifying 5 job seekers who will be employed by June 30, 2024.
 - Employment Add-On Budget
 - Employment Earnings Reporting Form (EERF)
 - Capacity Questionnaire
 - SE Provider Feedback
 - Technology Check-In
- These meetings were held as follows:
 - 1/2/24: Planning meeting for this series with Employment Team including Andrew McQuaide
 - 1/3/24: Goodwill Industries (Christine Yankee)
 - 1/4/24: The Arc of Blackstone Valley/ORS (Dale Kennedy)
 - 1/4/24: Easter Seals RI/ORS (Mary Moran)
 - 2/12/24: Work, Inc. (Courtney DiDonato, Lasbat Waheed)
 - 2/12/24: Action Based Enterprises, Inc. (Mike Purcell)
 - 2/12/24: Work Opportunities, Inc. (Trisha Wagner)
 - 2/12/24: RI Cross Disability Coalition (Tanja Blicher-Ucran)
 - 2/16/24: Community Residences, Inc. (Pam Paisley)
 - 2/16/24: Avatar, Inc. (Raymond Memery, Erika Middletown)
 - 2/16/24: Town of Coventry Project Friends (Robert Robillard, Jr, Brenda Donovan)

See attached Business and Community Outreach Activities, SE Activities, and March Employment Needs Tracker documents for an outline of additional DD Employment Team activities.

Discussions with the Court Monitor have taken place regarding non-competitive employment. For some of these jobs, individuals are working in integrated settings and making competitive wages. The Court has agreed to review them further to see if they would qualify for competitive employment.

ORS

- ORS continues to provide fee for service Supported Employment Services to participants and reviews and updates Supported Employment Services due to employment trends and the need of population. ORS meets with Providers on a monthly and/or quarterly basis to review supported employment services. ORS continues to reinforce braiding and sequencing of funding with BHDDH. ORS is currently working with BHDDH on updating Braiding and Sequencing information with BHDDH's new rate structure as well providing examples for Providers.

8	The number of adults currently employed in integrated settings will increase. Specifically, by June 30, 2024, 125 individuals seeking employment will be employed in new individual jobs in integrated settings (Consent Decree, Section IV, 9; V, D). These numbers do not include transition-aged youth who gain employment prior to school exit.
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- See the attached Census Data and the CD Data Report for the quarter. These reports show the number of new jobs for this quarter is 67 (27 for the CD population and 40 for non-CD population). This would bring the total number since the start of the addendum to 130 (46 CD population and 84 non-CD population).
- Independent Facilitation process will further these efforts by incorporating more robust discussion around employment. Additionally, IFs will work with the individual and monitor progress to determine if their employment goals are being met.
- Currently, Facilitating Success is being done by the DD Social Caseworkers and through these discussion questions are asked about employment.
- The DD Supported Employment Associate Administrator has been working with RICLAS to provide technical assistance for employment and community participation. There is a new Program Administrator position being hired to support this work within RICLAS.
- Outreach continues to occur to provider agencies. A New Jobs form is being sent quarterly to the Providers to collect a list of all individuals they support who have started a new job between July 1st and March 31st. That data is below:

March 2024 Quarterly Provider Employment Services Capacity Questionnaire

29 BHDDH Licensed Supported Employment Providers responded

- 15 reported having capacity
- 25 are ORS vendors
- 32 new jobs were reported (this needs to be verified)
- 287 SE staff reported (ranging from job coach to CESP certified)

Update on Business and Community Engagement Employment Hiring

- DD Business and Community Engagement Administrator has attended numerous meetings during this quarter to engage businesses and the community for purposes of employment opportunities. Please see attached *Business and Community Outreach Activities document*.
 - One person was hired this quarter, and job leads were found for several others. In addition, a job trials were agreed upon for 3 additional individuals although 1 person did drop from the program. The job trials assist in making better job matches for individuals. The potential employee gets to see if it is a position that matches their skill set and interests.
- Supported Employment Associate Administrator Activity for Quarter is summarized on the attached document, *SE Activities*.

9	By June 30, 2024, the average number of weekly hours of employment (using the Sherlock Survey as the metric) will increase to 12 (Consent Decree, Section V, K).
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- This will be included in the next Quarterly Report.

10	All adults covered by the Consent Decree will participate in community activities in integrated settings such that community activities and services will meet the criteria defined in the Consent Decree. Requests to be exempt from community participation
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	must be documented by the State and approved by the Monitor. (Consent Decree VI, B 1-10)
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- Independent Facilitators will work with individuals to help assess and choose desired community activities, and the bi-monthly check-in's will help facilitate meeting their goals. In the meantime, during this quarter.
- Currently, Facilitating Success process has continued and through this process the state Social Caseworkers are engaging individuals in questions about community activity.
- The Coordinator of Integrated Community Services is speaking with community-based services providers about their capacity, which is then shared with the DD Transition Coordinator and SCWs.
- A Plan for supporting RICLAS in ensuring community participation was provided to the Court Monitor on 2/29/24.
- Capacity is still an issue, but in recent months there has been an increase in agencies acceptance rates due to increased staffing. In July of 2022, 63% of agencies reported having to turn away referrals compared to 35% July-January 2023 reporting cycle.

Transformation Fund Grant

- The targeted supported employment funds will be used in furtherance of transformation activities.
- Providers can access targeted employment funds for the continuation of new and innovative models of service or continuation of these support models.
- To date 4 providers have submitted proposals to access this funding.
- The estimated funding for these requests in FY24 is \$608,300.00.
- To-date, \$5,748,648.74 has been distributed to 31 agencies. One agency that has not become a RI Medicaid provider, so there is \$248,740.65 in funding that has not been disbursed. There are plans to allow agencies who were granted funding through Transformation Phase II to apply for a small amount of funding to be used on organizational development/change. Providers will need to submit proposal on how they plan to use the funding to achieve this and there will be perimeters around the activities they are able to engage in. This is in line with the directives in the in the Recommendations from the Court Monitor.
- Providers are still working towards completing the activities in their proposals from Transformation Fund Phase I and II. The deadline to use existing funding has been extended to December 2024 for Phase I grantees, and to June 2025 for Phase II grantees, thus allowing more time to spend down their allocated funding.
- Progress in meaningful activities and community integration of settings is demonstrated through the data and narratives collected in Transformation II reports and meetings (so far, the Coordinator of Integrated Community Services has met with grantee agencies for 21 of the 31 grants awarded).
- Some of the effective practices in Phase II:
 - Stipends for participants doing Community-Based Work Experience (10-40 hours per week of trial work in an integrated community work setting) - participants were paid minimum wage for 40 or less hours per week; some are now employed by the business in which they had the CBWE.
 - Same Thing Project – songwriting and singing group that meets regularly at Outsider Collective in Pawtucket; led by a well-known musician and former band member in the local RI music scene; about 30 participants plus others from the community participate weekly (roughly 175 unique participants as of Nov. 2023); two albums have been recorded and a sing-along book is planned.

- Family Leadership Network – based on Starfire Council in Ohio; families are supported to build community in their neighborhoods by sharing their lives with neighbors in a way that breaks down the “disabled” identity.
- Tours of businesses – participants are supported to tour local businesses to show them what the business is all about and to expose the business to the benefits of employing participants when it’s a “good fit.” Support persons arrange the tours and accompany participants on them.
- Mobile technology provided to supported employment staff – laptops and mobile hotspots were purchased, allowing for much easier and more immediate data collection; has saved time and mileage costs and improved documentation quality since staff persons don’t need to travel back to office to document; information is more readily accessible to managers, and therefore, they are more informed about participants’ activities and progress toward goals.
- Focus on underserved, primarily or exclusively Spanish-speaking participants and families who self-direct – includes regular social gatherings for those served by the agency to promote informal learning and support, as opposed to formal learning, which is less effective; basic training for DSPs in their own language and learning styles; charla/chats (informal group conversations for YIT and their families)
- Intensive Discovery process offered to small cohorts of participants by Employment and Inclusion Director – focused on “product” delivery (e.g., “silly films,” self-advocacy films, video resumes); all members of first cohort are now employed in their chosen line of work; sustainability after Transformation grants would be achieved by increasing number of participants in each cohort to 10 (would allow for a new staff hire to work with cohorts but not the continuation of the Employment and Inclusion Director)
- Path to Independence – transforms a 24-hour group home into a residence with only two participants; the residential support is based solely on the Tech First SHIFT curriculum and, more broadly, on the Technology First initiative; the support staff are exclusively focused on skill-building for independent living using assistive technology to maximum benefit.
- Adult Service Trainer – focuses on training in computer skills and core competencies for DSPs, person-centered planning, and using Jotforms for case documentation that is completed with the input of the participant; effectiveness is measured through comparison of pre-training and post-training data.
- Advisor – focuses on a smaller number of participants than typical staffing ratios; support is more intensively focused on person-centered plans through training and consultation by CPNRI Leadership Conference, Neighbors, Inc. Consulting, Innovative Person-Driven Tools, Discovery Gateway Training, SE 101, and SME Series; service is provided through a hybrid of agency-based services and self-direction (participant hires staff persons, but they are employed by the agency)
- Project Coordinator, employment program expansion, community supports program hub, employment support workshops, Navigator Program, Marketing Coordinator – Project Coordinator leads these projects, all of which aim toward employment of participants, though some are not designed as direct employment support - employment program expansion consists of addition of five Employment Support Professionals (title is more aligned with new approach than general DSP title); community supports program hub is a physical space that allows participants to connect briefly during the day with peers who are also on the journey toward employment; employment support workshops for any participant and their support persons, whether they use the agency-based model or self-direct their services; the Navigator Program empowers established direct support professionals through training in administrative and practical skills, mentoring of newer direct support professionals, leadership of community integration of support, and opportunities for professional growth within the agency; Marketing Coordinator is a shared position with another agency and is designed to expand the agencies’

visibility in the area of employment through networking, attending local events, using social media platforms, and conducting community mapping with participants.

- Specialized training for staff - “Person-Centered Thinking and Employment” (provided in a cohort model); “Everyone Can Work – You Make It Happen” (four modules that include weekly check-ins with Doug Crandell); Tech First SHIFT (maximizing assistive technology support for independent living), which includes incentive gift cards for staff and using Technology Fund to purchase devices for participants.
- Ready, Set, workABILITY! training for participants, Employer Engagement training for supported employment provider staff, Dedicated FTE Client Services staff, Building Community of Practice, Employer DEI Education/Commitment to Hire – RSWA is a two-week, 40-hour training program for candidates focused on identifying unique strengths and developing foundational skills geared toward entry-level customer service roles; other activities include on-site tours; informational interviews; employer onboarding; candidate matching; coordination of hiring process; establishment of an employer community of practice; ongoing support to employment staff of provider agencies; coordination with participants until employment is secured. These activities yielded 11 hires during the grant period (Transformation II disbursement through Dec. 2023).
- Person-centered skill-building classes – participants are being supported to complete classes open to the general community that teach specific skills for independent living (driving, cooking, etc.). Class settings are fully integrated in the general community. Funds are used for class enrollment and transportation to the classes.

Technology Fund

DD continues to accept and review requests through the Technology initiative. For the quarter reported, Round 1-8 had been completed.

DD Technology Fund Initiative through Round 8 (deadline: Feb. 29, 2024)

Round	# of Total Requests in Round	Total # of approvals	# not approved	# of duplicate requests, not eligible, passed away, or withdrew
1	266	247	10	9
2	241	205	19	17
3	182	144	27	11
4	148	132	3	13
5	256	224	17	15
6	77	59	1	17
7	86	76	1	9
8	81	70	2	9
Total	1337	1157	80	100

Round 9's deadline is May 31. As of 5/1/24, 78 requests have been received for that Round.

- The Technology Fund as of March 31 has a total of \$569,979.81 in encumbered funds.
- Development of training materials are in progress to provide materials for a resource library that individuals can access to obtain information on how to use the technology they have and on how

it can be integrated into their everyday lives. Trainings on how to use commonly requested technology, both virtual and in person, are scheduled for April and May.

- A survey has been sent to those who received technology for rounds 1-4 and will be sent moving forward on a rolling basis. This survey is to determine how individuals have utilized this technology to assist in their everyday lives. The survey will remain open until to capture high response rate.

11	The revised Career Development Plan for transition youth will be implemented in all LEAs and with all transition-aged students (Consent Decree Section VIII, December 2022 Court Order).
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RIDE

Samples of the new Career Development Plans (CDPs) were collected and reviewed from the following districts/schools:

- Woonsocket
- Providence
- Newport
- West Warwick
- Warwick
- Middletown
- Pathways Strategic Teaching Center
- Coventry
- Ponaganset
- North Kingstown

Total reviewed: 14-16 CDP- 10; 17-19 CDP- 11; 20+ CDP- 13

RTCs reviewed plans to finalize the “Tips for Completing the CDP” drafts for each aged document. A list of the areas on each document that frequently needed clarification and additional instructions was compiled and then updated in the drafts. The drafts were reviewed and the finalized “[Tips for Completing the 14-16 CDP](#); [Tips for Completing the 17-19 CDP](#); and the [Tips for Completing the 20+ CDP](#)” were distributed statewide during the first week of April, 2024.

Additionally, RTCs continue to provide targeted technical assistance to districts upon district request (*see below*)

- 1/4/24 RTC- CDP TA to 4 Exeter West Greenwich middle school educators
- 1/9/24 RTC- CDP TA Toll Gate high school educators (6 attendees)
- 1/24/24 RTC- CDP TA Ocean Tides School (4 attendees)
- 3/5: RTC provided CDP TA to Portsmouth HS educator.
- 3/14/24 RTC- CDP TA Cranston Project Search at BCBS (1 attendee)
- 3/27/24 Full day RTC- CDP TA Scituate high school (5 attendees)

12	The State will document outreach to transition youth with IDD to facilitate application for services as early as possible. By age 20 80% of transition youth with IDD will have applied for adult developmental disability services. All who are eligible will be receiving DD funding and services sufficient to allow them a meaningful choice of integrated community activities and integrated employment (Consent Decree Section VIII, December 2022 Court Order).
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DDD will calculate the average number of applications received for YIT (age 16 – 21) annually. DDD will determine if 80% of that average are found eligible.

Thus far for this school year, the number of DDD applicants aged 16 – 21 who applied between 7/1/23 and 3/31/24 was 179; the number found eligible was 143, or 80%. (29 people were not eligible, and 7 were pending status).

RIDE

RTC Training and Technical Assistance Provided:

- 1/17/24 RTC facilitated PATH East Greenwich high school
- 2/28/24 Introduction to Adult Services Parent Night- Warwick Veterans middle school (Warwick, West Warwick, Cranston) (42 family members)
- 2/28/24: Introduction to Adult Services and Secondary Transition Presentation at Barrington SEAC meeting (10 attendees)
- 3/13/24: RTC presented transition updates to adult agencies during BHDDH Transition Community of Practice meeting

Introduction to State Services:

- Central Falls: 1/17
- Lincoln: 2/7
- Achievement First: 2/26

13	<p>The State will document outreach to transition youth with IDD to apply for services as early as possible.</p> <p>By age 20 80% of transition youth with IDD will be connected to an ORS or a BHDDH vendor and will be involved in specific job development (Consent Decree Section VIII; December 2022 Court Order).</p>
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BHDDH

Information about choosing to use funding upon age 18 when eligible through DDD is provided to all Youth in Transition (YIT) through DDD staff participation in any of the following:

- IEP meetings
- individual meetings with student/family
- information packets provided to family
- information on the Transition page of the website
- RIPIN contact with family through DDD contract
- school district transition fairs
- parent presentations within districts
- state service presentations to educators in public, non-public and charter schools statewide

ORS

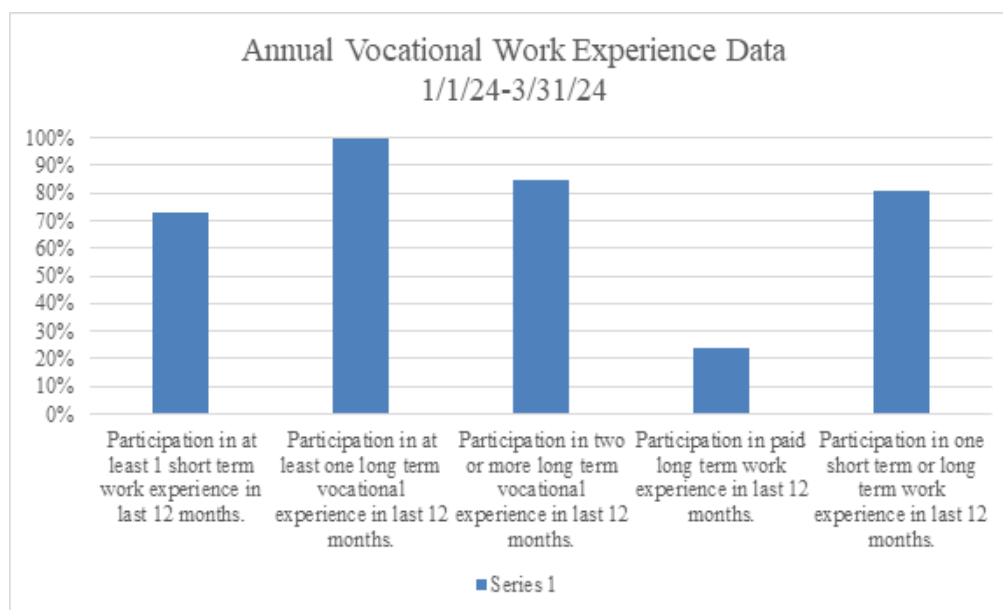
As reported, ORS has a current census of 1606 students in Pre-ETS, 973 of these students are 18+ years of age. This does not mean all these students are on a CDP but if they are open with ORS, they are receiving or in process of receiving a Pre-ETS service and moving towards employment. ORS has a VR Counselor assigned to each of the public high schools as well as most/majority of identified private and alternative schools. Once a student is identified to us by the school district and referred, ORS begins the process of registering and or applying the student for ORS services and beginning employment services.

14	The number of transition-aged youth who participate in CTE will increase (Consent Decree Section VIII, December; 2022 Court Order).
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RIDE

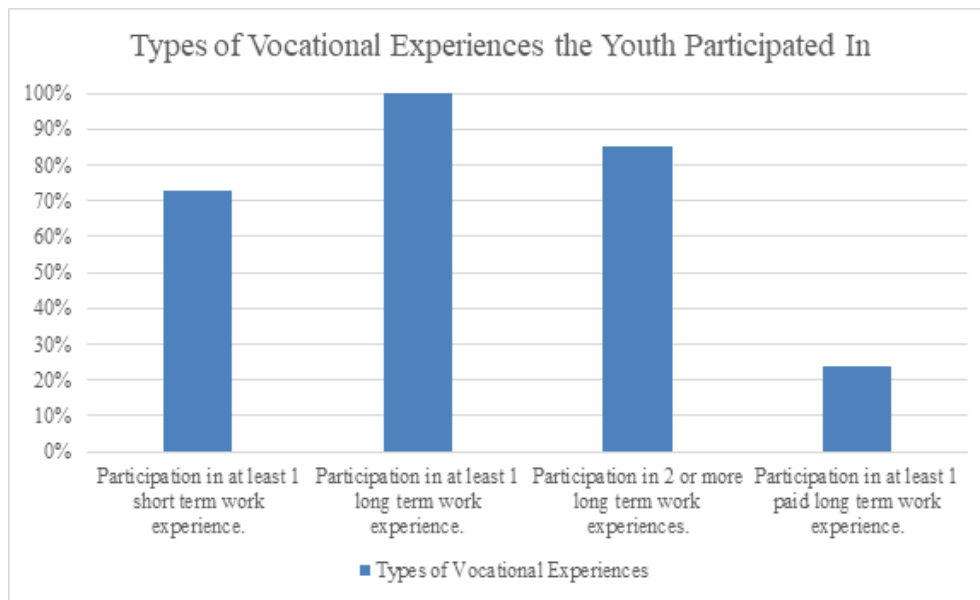
Vocational Experiences

At the Monitor's request RIDE continues to collect specific information regarding vocational experiences within the current school year targeting students in their last two years prior to exit. RIDE utilizes a data tool analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Please see the graph and information below.



This quarter, 8 school districts/33 students on Career Development Plans were randomly selected and surveyed: 24 students participated in at least one short-term work experience (defined as any experience less than two weeks in length), 33 students participated in at least one long term work experience (defined as more than two weeks in length and the student regularly attended), and 8 students participated in a paid long term work experience. Of the 33 students participating in a long-term work experience, 85% or 28 students participated in 2 or more long-term experiences. Please note that students could simultaneously be counted in any of the above categories (i.e., one student could have participated in a short-term and long-term experience and thus be counted in each of the categories).

Out of 33 students surveyed, all participated in at least one short or long-term work experience or paid work experience within the last 12 months. This means that 100% of students surveyed participated in at least one type of vocational experience in the community during the last 12 months. The graph below further breaks down the different experiences that these students participated in. 73% or 24 participated in at least one short-term vocational experience (within the last 12 months). 100% or 33 participated in at least one long-term vocational experience (within the last 12 months). Of the 33 that participated in a long-term vocational experience, 28 or 85% participated in 2 or more long-term vocational experiences within the last 12 months. 8 or 24% had paid experience in the past 12 months.



This data indicates that long term work experiences are continuing to be prioritized for students who are in their last two years of school. 100% of students surveyed participated in at least one type of vocational experience in the community during the last 12 months.

At the Monitor’s request, RIDE continues to collect specific information regarding student participation rates in CTE, Integrated Trial Work Experience (ITWE) completion, and the number of students who exited with paid employment. RIDE utilized a data tool to collect and analyze quantitative data. *Please see the graph and information below.*

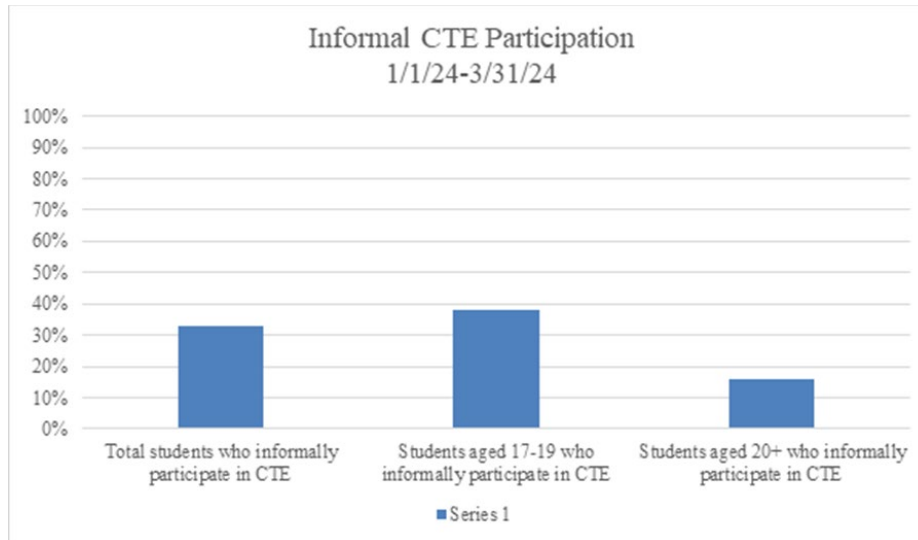
This quarter, 8 school districts/129 students on Career Development Plans were randomly selected and surveyed. Please note that this number is inclusive of students surveyed in the Vocational Experiences data. Of the students sampled:

- 97 of these students are ages 17-19
- 32 of these students are ages 20+

CTE Participation:

In response to the Consent Decree Addendum items, RIDE and RTCs continue to collect specific information regarding CTE participation rates in effort to establish a baseline of how many students access CTE programming as a means of Discovery.

- Of the total 129 students sampled, 33% or 42 students informally participate in or access to CTE programming during their school day.
 - 38% or 37 of the students aged 17-19 informally participate in or access to CTE programming.
 - 16% or 5 of the students aged 20+ informally participate in or access to CTE programming.



These numbers reflect increased CTE participation rates as a means of discovery since last quarter, specifically for students aged 17-19. Students 20+ have often moved into a Transition Academy. These numbers indicate districts are continuing to make efforts to ensure students have access to participation in CTE programming.

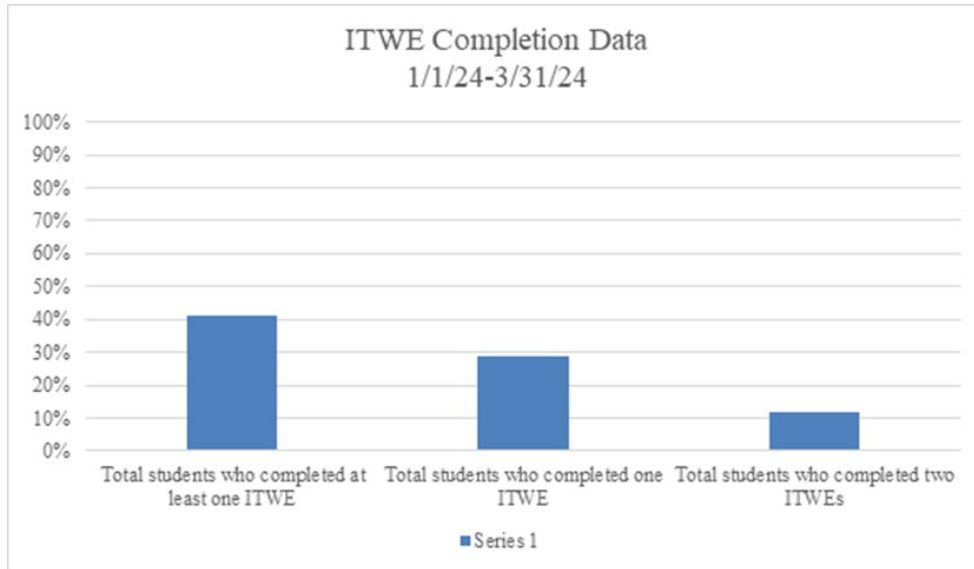
Integrated Trial Work Experience (ITWE) Completion:

With the roll out of the new CDP, RTCs are providing technical assistance and support to districts to complete ITWE's earlier to better prepare students to move towards paid employment. RIDE and RTCs are working to collect specific information regarding ITWE completion rates in order to get a snapshot of completion by age group, with the knowledge that ITWE completion is not required until the student exits from program.

As stated, this quarter 8 school districts/129 students on Career Development Plans were randomly selected and surveyed. Of these sampled students, 41% or 53 have completed *at least* one ITWE. Some of these students have completed two ITWEs (*see below*).

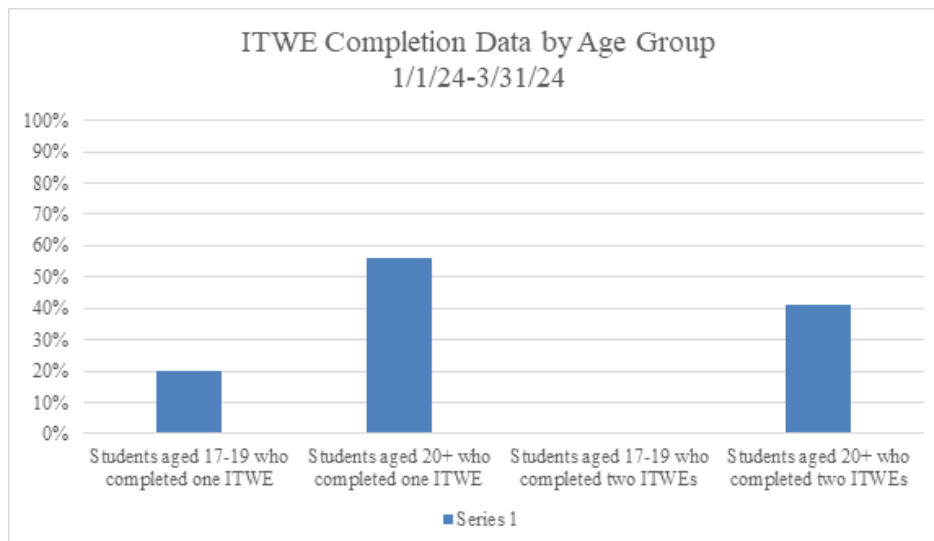
- 12% or 15 students have completed two ITWEs.

- 29% or 38 students have completed one ITWE.



ITWE Completion by age group:

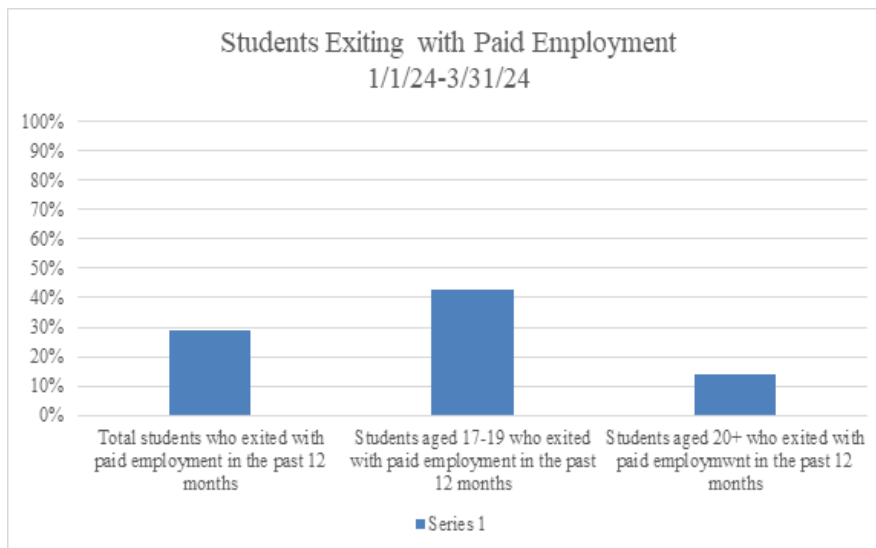
- Age 17-19 ITWE completion
 - 21% or 20 students have completed one ITWE.
 - .02% or 2 students have completed two ITWEs.
- Age 20+ ITWE completion
 - 56% or 18 students have completed one ITWE.
 - 41% or 13 students have completed two ITWEs.



Students exiting with Paid Employment

To gain a more accurate understanding of the number of students who have exited with paid employment, the teachers of the 8 districts surveyed were asked to report how many students exited their school program in the past 12 months, by age range. They were also asked to report how many of these students exited with paid employment (*see below*).

- Of the surveyed districts, in the past 12 months 14 students exited their school programs.
 - 7 of these exiting students were aged 17-19
 - 7 of these exiting students were aged 20+
- Of the 14 students who exited, 28.5% exited with paid employment
 - 43% or 3 of these students aged 17-19 exited with paid employment
 - 14% or 1 of these students aged 20+ exited with paid employment



15	An individual contact person for all transition youth and their families will be specified (Consent Decree Section VIII, December 2022 Court Order).
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BHDDH

- For youth aged 14 – 19, the Transition Coordinator is the primary contact person. The eligibility determination letter sent to eligible applicants in this age range includes the name and contact information for the Transition Coordinator. The Transition Administrator is backup for the Transition Coordinator and communicates frequently with families.
- RIPIN is a contact for transitioning youth aged 17/18 who have not yet applied for service, through contract overseen by DDD. RIPIN is also an identified contact for families through this contract.
- For youth aged 20 through adulthood, the DDD Social Caseworker is the contact. Should they apply at age 20, the eligibility letter contains their name and contact information.

ORS

- ORS continues to have a presence at public high schools, most/majority of identified private and alternative schools with assigned liaison (VR Counselor and/or Supervisor). Once a student is identified to ORS by the school district and referred, ORS begins the process of registering and or applying the student for ORS services and beginning employment services.
- ORS also utilizes LAZO similarly to RIDE and BHDDH for brokerage purposes, assisting families one on one who may have cultural or language barriers and may need additional support in making the connections with available resources.

RIDE: See Charlas Info in next section.

16	A network of family-to-family support and mentorship will be developed and fully implemented (Consent Decree Section VIII, December 2022 Court Order).
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RIDE

Charlas

- RIDE and the RTCs continue to partner with Lazo in order to expand Charlas. The service agreement remains active, and expansion of programs across the state is in process.
- This past quarter, Charlas occurred in 7 districts (Central Falls, Johnston, Lincoln, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Newport, and Providence).
- Lazo reports that they are picking up additional individual referrals from these districts after Charlas occur through parent-to-parent word of mouth.
- Planning meetings are in process to bring Charlas to Cranston in the Spring of 2024.
- Lazo provides biannual reports for Charlas to RIDE and the Regional Transition Centers (January and June). More detailed outcomes and themes of Charlas sessions and follow-up meetings will be provided in the Quarter 4 report.

17	As specified in the Monitor's July 2023 report, the organizational development, technical assistance to provider organizations and trainings for targeted audiences on specific topics will continue (Consent Decree, Section IX).
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BHDDH

- See attached *DD Training and Outreach Tracker* and the *SE Activities* for Training and Technical Assistance activities.
- The Coordinator of Integrated Community Services has been working with the Transformation Funds grantees – See also Items #10 and #23.
- RIPIN continues their work with those who self-direct their services. See items # 18 and 19.
- The RI State Workforce Initiative (RISWI), is information gathering and creating content for work with those who self-direct and with the Fiscal Intermediaries – see Item # 21
- Sherlock Center is helping to facilitate the work of RISWI. Mary Madden, through her work with the Sherlock Center, is assisting with provider technical assistance regarding person-centered thinking and community navigation.
- Technical assistance occurred to providers on community participation during Transformation II meetings and through policy review related to HCBS Final Rule requirement that settings are integrated in and support full access to the greater community. The policies and procedures for all 40 licensed DDOs in the state have been reviewed.

ORS

- ORS is providing school districts with training in job development and job coaching. Information below reflects the date of training, type of training and participant number. Sign in sheets for all and evaluations for most were completed.
 - February 14, 2024, Job Coaching- 9 participants, February 15, 2024, Job Development- 8 participants
 - March 27, 2024, Job Coaching- 8 participants, March 28, 2024, Job Development- 3 participants
 - April 2, 2024, Job Development- 29 participants

- These trainings will continue to be offered to school districts into SY 2024-25 with dates for both Job Coaching and Job Development. Upcoming training dates still to take place for FY 2023-2024 are 5/8/2024 and 5/9/2024.
- ORS oversees the Supported Employment Council (SEC) with BHDDH. The Sherlock Center helps with facilitation of these meetings. On 2/26/2024, TechACCESS of RI presented *Accessibility features of Android & iOS to Support Employment* which was presented due to provider responses on ORS' Innovation Survey circulated in June 2023 to Providers. There were 56 attendees from 27 Agencies and the following data was obtained:
 - Poll Satisfaction Total: very satisfied 23, satisfied 6, somewhat satisfied 1, Dissatisfied 0.
 - Implementation Total: 13 Expect 1 or more of the practices to be used routinely, 9 will share information with others, 20 try 1 or more of the practices, and 0 not applicable.
- From the Innovation Survey that was distributed by ORS in June 2024, three Providers are working on Job Preparation Service Pilots. This service will be beneficial with reinforcing core work behaviors, preparedness for job interviews and identifying methods to assist with executive functioning needs.
- ORS Assistant Administrators for Transition and Supported Employment participated in FEAT informational sessions facilitated by The Sherlock Center on 1/30/2024, 2/1/2024, 2/6/2024, 2/8/2024.

RIDE

Highlights of Training:

TLS Events:

January 22, 2024, 12:00pm-2:00pm The West Bay Collaborative (also offered as a virtual option) Hour one- ***Flipping the Employment Outcome Data from Positive to Negative***. (Robin Fields and Melissa Freyre, Northside Side Independent School District San Antonio, TX) Hour two- ***18+ Connections to Post Sec Ed/Training Programs and Supports to Improve Employment Outcomes***. (Dr. Vickie Mitchell) (37 attendees). Supports Court Action.

2/15/24 8:00-1:30 pm Integrating Transportation Education in Transition Planning for Youth with Disabilities (This was offered for 18+ and all TLS) The ability of youth with disabilities to navigate in their community and to access education, employment, and community settings is in part influenced by their ability to “get around”. Access to inclusive community settings creates opportunities for youth, particularly as they transition from high school to post school settings (Bascom & Christensen, 2017). This interactive workshop for educators and transition professionals introduced resources to implement transportation related practices and skill-building in youth transition plans. Termed transportation education by Easterseals, these strategies can prepare youth to travel independently to access inclusive school, work, health, and community settings. (44 attendees)
(Dr. Judy Shanley, the AVP of Education and Youth Transition at the national office of Easterseals, and local experts, Joelle Kantor, and Peter Michaud, from the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA).) Supports Court Action.

***4/3/2024 Radisson Airport Hotel, Warwick**

Full Day ***Competitive Employment and a Meaningful Life: Using Person-Centered Practices to Facilitate Successful Transitions*** (8:00 to 2:30PM)

Secondary Transition Partners- Educators, ORS, DD, Employment Providers were invited for a full day workshop promoting the use of person-centered practices in transition planning. The interactive training session provided a foundation of person-centered thinking, planning, and practice models that can be

integrated into every aspect of a transition planning process. Hands-on practice in using tools that facilitate person-centered practices for transition planning, with a focus on competitive employment and establishing community connections, were introduced. (58 attendees) Supports Court Action

***4/3/24 Evening Session Parent Workshop: Using the School Years to Plan for a Good Life** (5:30 to 8:00 PM)

It is important that families receive positive messages about using the secondary transition planning process to establish a vision for and goals towards a “good life” for their student. This session targeted families whose students are likely to receive developmental disabilities services. The workshop was highly interactive and included activities to help families:

- establish a vision for a good life
- explore existing and needed supports, including those outside of eligibility-based services
- expand transition thinking to include all life domains
- understand the importance of a real job and a meaningful place in the community
- provide strategies on incorporating person-centered thinking into the IEP process (47 attendees)

**The day was co-created and co-facilitated by Sean Roy from TransCen and Jenny Turner Wilson. Jennifer is a nationally recognized subject matter expert on Charting the Life Course and person-centered thinking as it relates to life planning for individuals with disabilities.*

Transition Tuesdays- 2:00-3:30 at WBC and offered virtually

- January 16, 2024, **Building a Person-Centered 18+ Transition Program: Do's and Don'ts from a Veteran Transition Geek “Let them eat cake!”** (interactive) With Trecia Pimer (13 participants)
- March 19, 2024, **Making Meaningful Connections in the Community Sue Raposo-Best Life RI** (17 participants) Supports Court Action

Upcoming: September 2024 Career Development for 18+ and program site visits Dr. Vickie Mitchell returns to RI.

Middle School Cohort:

2/9/24: Supporting Students to Lead the Transition Process

When students have opportunities to direct the transition planning process, they experience better quality of life, employment, and community participation outcomes. This session addressed the four key components of transition leadership: self-determination, dignity of risk, supported decision-making, and circles of support. Attendees learned how these components are interconnected, what they look like in practice, and simple activities to support students to lead their own transition planning. (49 Attendees) *Guest Speaker: Dr. Jennifer Bumble, Ph.D., Principal Researcher at the American Institutes for Research (AIR).*

Job Coaching Training Supports Court Action

RIDE and the RTCs continue to encourage school districts to provide Job Coach training as needed to their education staff. In collaboration with ORS, RTC's offered three training sessions this past quarter. Session details are below.

- 2/14/24: 5 districts participated (9 attendees)
- 2/21/24: Pathways Strategic Teaching Center (44 attendees)
- 3/27/24: 7 districts participated (8 attendees)
- 1 additional training is scheduled in May.

Job Development Training Supports Court Action

RIDE and RTCs in collaboration with ORS offered three Job Development training sessions for educators and school personnel in order to prepare educators to focus on assisting students with obtaining paid employment prior to exit. Session details are below.

- 2/15/24: 2 districts attended (6 attendees)
- 3/28/24: 3 districts attended (3 attendees)
- 4/2/24: Pathways Strategic Teaching Center (29 attendees)
- 1 additional training is scheduled in May.

18	<p>The State will develop and provide competency-based and value-based training to all providers who support individuals who self-direct their own employment and/or community services (Consent Decree, Section IX, 2-3).</p> <p>SUBMIT UPDATED TRAINING TRACKER WITH # OF PARTICIPANTS IN APPENDIX</p>
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- Direct Support Workforce Solutions out of UMN has engaged in discussions with FIs and other stakeholders regarding SWIs.
- DDD continues to hold weekly meetings with FI's to work on guidance documents for self-direction and addressing concerns/questions that FI's have regarding billing, parents/guardians as staff, overtime, respite, and other topics as needed.

19	<p>Plans to outreach to individuals who self-direct and individuals in segregated settings will be fully implemented (Consent Decree, Section X). Adults in segregated settings will use employment resources to obtain integrated employment in addition to their current day activities.</p>
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Self-Direction

- Sherlock Center facilitated the Self-Direct Support Network Meeting: Panel Discussion with Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals and Stakeholders: *Learn about utilizing Goods & Services including updates and changes*. This meeting was held virtually on February 28, 2024. Presenter's – Jackie Camilloni, Coordinator, Community Planning & Development (BHDDH), Robin Gannon, Clinical Training Specialist (BHDDH), Stakeholder Workgroup: Sue Babin, Susan Donovan, Crystal Cerullo, and John Susa
 - Number Registered: 121
 - Number Attended: 61
 - Family Members (35)
 - Professional/Educators (7)
 - Employer/Business Professional (1)
 - Individual with a disability (2)
 - Other (5)
- Sherlock Center produces a podcast "Disability News you can Use", which provides information on a variety of topics related to self-direction.
- RIPIN Webinars:
 - Self-Direction Connection was held on February 27, 2024, virtually from 6:00pm-7:00pm
 - Number of Registrants: 96
 - Number Attendee's: 22 (4 participants/1 with parent support, 14 parent's/caregivers, 4 professionals)

- Why I chose Self-Direction was held on March 26, 2024
 - Number of Registrants: 59
 - Number Attendee's: 29 (8 participants, 12 parents', 9 professionals)
 - Surveys Completed: 5
 - Recommended including the below for future panel presentations:
 - Spanish speaking consumer on the Panel.
 - Participant with specialized support needs
- RIPIN Outreach Calls:
 - February:
 - Contact Made – (32)
 - Unable to contact after (3) attempts (17)
 - Total February Outreach Calls (49)
 - Call Topics:
 - Staffing- Finding, Hiring, Keeping
 - Housing
 - March:
 - Contact Made- (26)
 - Unable to contact after (3) attempts (18)
 - No longer using Self-Direction (1)
 - Total March Outreach Calls (45)
 - Call Topics:
 - Staffing- Finding, Hiring, Keeping
 - Housing
 - Social Groups
- DDD Community Forum: March 19, 2024
 Susan Donovan, RIPIN's Senior Program Director, provided an update on RIPIN's Self-Direction Program, including a recap of 2023 and 2024 Training webinars, upcoming Webinars, and information on RIPIN's Calling Campaign. (*See attached RIPIN's 6-Month Report PowerPoint*)

DDD Outreach/Technical Assistance/Meetings with Providers:

- Jackie Camilloni, Coordinator, Community Planning & Development (for Self-Direct) attended the Applied Self Direct-2024 National Self Direction Conference from March 13th-15th in Baltimore, Maryland. Staff from RIPIN and the Sherlock Center also attended.
- DDD met with the FI's weekly. Continued work on Requirements to Employment as a DSP in Self-Direction and on the Parent/Guardians as Staff form.
- DDD provided assistance with billing questions relating to Professional Services, Respite, Goods & Services, Holiday/Overtime pay in Self-Direction.
- 2/1/24-DDD met with Autism Project to discuss support services/programs.
- 2/23/24-DDD met with Holistic Development Center to review support services and provide information on HDC becoming a licensed DDO.
- 3/12/24- SD Coordinator completed an Internal Review/training with CWS/SCW's on the process to review/approve/deny Goods & Services.
- DDD facilitated (2) virtual meetings with Independent Plan Writers on 3/27/24 to discuss Independent Facilitation and gather interest level of IPW's becoming IF's.
- 3/28/24, DDD met with FI's to review Independent Facilitation and Add-On Employment Budget.

Those in segregated settings:

- Outreach to participants in segregated settings includes collection of information about participants' employment in integrated settings and need for referral to employment service(s).
- Outreach at 10 of the 11 ADH centers in the state has been completed. One center, which serves a large number of participants, would not allow in-person outreach. Alternative approaches are being considered.
- Spreadsheets detailing each participant's life situation regarding employment and community participation, as well as potential for service enrollment, are almost complete. Spreadsheets will be used to coordinate follow-up contact by respective Social Case Workers.

20	The State's Communication Plan, as filed with the Court, will be fully implemented (Consent Decree, Section X). SUBMIT THE UPDATED COMMUNICATIONS TRACKER IN APPENDIX
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- A DD Community Quarterly Forum was held virtually on March 19, 2024, hosted by Advocates in Action. A recording of the event can be found here: [Advocates in Action Rhode Island: Rhode Island's Statewide Self-Advocacy Organization](#)
- See the attached *Task Tracker-Communications Team* for an updated list of the DD Communications team activities.
- Communication to providers on the Independent Facilitation Process is being further developed.

21	The State will fully implement the activities of the statewide workforce initiative (Consent Decree, Section XL 1-2, May 2022 Court Order; December 2022 Court Order).
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RI State Workforce Initiative (RISWI) and University of Minnesota (UMN) Key Activities:

Key Activities:

Annual Summit:

The 2024 Annual Summit was held on 1/24/24 from 10 am – 3 pm at Rhode Island College and on Zoom. 76 stakeholders from RI attended, including 11 virtual attendees and 65 in-person attendees. Overall response to the summit has been positive with attendees sharing that they learned about statewide work and had the chance to provide feedback on workgroup plans for 2024. Topics for the day included: RISWI updates from BHDDH, CPNRI, and Sherlock Center; Connecting Workforce Data to Solutions presentation; an employer panel where they shared the work they have done in the discovery phase; sharing of RISWI workgroup progress and time to gather feedback; and a viewing of the RI Realistic Job Preview with time to give feedback. Table notes for each workgroup presentations have been transcribed and are being summarized to be shared with RISWI workgroup co-leads. A post summit email to participants was sent on 2/1 and included link to post-summit survey. UMN & Sherlock are preparing a summary of the event survey results and roster of participants that will be shared in a separate report. Concluding and Summarizing Annual Summit activities: UMN consultants gathered feedback from the annual summit and organized it into common themes across respondents. These themes and feedback were shared with relevant stakeholders.

January Meetings:

- Coordinating Council meeting was held on 1/10/24. Topics included planning for the 2024 Annual Summit and celebrating successes of the workgroups.
- Selection and Retention Workgroup
 - 1/9: Planning for the Annual Summit, reviewing successes of 2023, and planning for 2024.
 - 1/23: Discussing the competency-based retention toolkit the group reviewed in 2023 and how employers who self-direct and other employers will be included in development and technical assistance.
- Policy Guidance and Worker Voice
 - 1/26/24 meeting topics included: how to connect with and get information from DSPs about what they want out of their jobs.
- Training and Professional Development Workgroup
 - 1/16/24 meeting topics included: Reviewing the Training & Onboarding checklist and planning for next steps. Encouraging group members to sign up for Annual Summit.
- Marketing and Recruitment Workgroup
 - Co-leads prepared for the Annual Summit in January.
- Data and Reporting Workgroup
 - The workgroup is in the process of recruiting new members.

February Meetings:

- The Coordinating Council meeting was held on 2/14/24. UMN consultants shared themes from the 2024 Annual Summit.
- Selection and Retention Workgroup
 - 2/6/24 & 2/20/24 Meeting topics included: Discussing feedback from the annual summit, discussing the Structured Behavioral Interview tools and giving feedback, and discussed rollout plan for selection and retention tools.
- Policy Guidance and Worker Voice
 - 2/23/24 meeting topics included: Reviewing feedback from the summit and engaging in discussion around activities of the workgroup, sharing an update about the NADSP Advocacy Day, and discussing recruitment of more workgroup members.
- Training and Professional Development Workgroup
 - 1/16/24 meeting topics included: Planning for next steps for the Onboarding & Orientation document. Introducing next topic: FLS competency sets.
 - Posted RI Orientation and Onboarding plan and distributed to various workgroups and Advisory Committee.
- Marketing and Recruitment Workgroup
 - The workgroup has been adding new members and scheduling meetings for the rest of 2024.
- Data and Reporting Workgroup
 - The workgroup is in the process of recruiting new members. In February, a list of potential members was pulled together, and new members will be invited in March.

March Meetings:

- The Coordinating Council meeting was held on 3/13/24. UMN consultants facilitated discussion around the RISWI SupportWise Workforce Data summary report and long-term planning for the Coordinating Council.
- Selection and Retention Workgroup

- 3/19/2024 Meeting topics included: Discussion competency-based skills checklists and performance evaluations and plan for rollout of the tools to statewide use.
- Policy Guidance and Worker Voice
 - 3/22/24 meeting topics included: Planning for coordination and invitation of NADSP Advocacy Day and how to use it to connect with DSPs.
- Training and Professional Development Workgroup
 - 3/12/24 meeting was cancelled. April meeting topic will be discussion around Frontline Supervisor competencies for the state.
- Marketing and Recruitment Workgroup
 - The workgroup regrouped for a March meeting, with new members and will be meeting monthly.
- Data and Reporting Workgroup
 - The current workgroup is in the process of recruiting new members and will meet in April to determine which potential members to invite to join the workgroup.

ICI Deliverable Updates:

- Discovery Process for a Second cohort of Provider Organizations: Continued Discovery phase with 3 provider organizations (Refocus Inc., Seven Hills RI and AccessPoint RI) and two Sherlock Center workforce coaches. Additional focus groups and stakeholder interviews were conducted for all three organizations in the month of January and document collection was conducted. 3 additional providers will begin Discovery phase in March 2024.
 - Each organization is finalizing the data collection phase of Discovery and consultants begin to write Discovery reports with recommendations and schedule final presentations to the organization for June.
 - Continued to recruit additional providers for the February kickoff date in partnership with the Sherlock Center.
 - Three additional providers (Olean Center, Cove Center/Groden Network, Gateways to Change) launched Discovery in March with three Sherlock Center workforce coaches. Launch meetings are being facilitated in March and the beginning of April.
- Continued Action Planning and Implementation with 3 of the first cohort of provider organizations: Providers are working closely with UMN workforce consultants to implement workforce strategies recommended during the Discovery process include West Bay RI, LIFE Inc and The Fogarty Center. All providers began this phase in September 2023 and continue to meet monthly with workforce consultants and two Sherlock Center Workforce Coaches.
- Workforce Webinars: As a part of Action Planning, UMN developed a series of webinars for all providers in RI and sent invitations to provider list provided by BHDDH.
 - January 12, 10am – 12 pm: Credentialing and Career Pathways - 26 attended from 8 providers. Of the 7 anonymous survey responses, 100% said that their knowledge of the topic increased because of this webinar and that the webinar helped them identify changes needed in their organization.
 - January 19, 10 am – 11 am: Follow-Up Friday (7 participants attended from 4 providers): Offered only to the providers engaged in Discovery or Action Planning. During Follow-Up Friday, providers can meet with UMN workforce consultants, ask questions, and discuss what they are each doing in their organization to collaborate with one another.
 - Friday, February 9, 10am – 12 pm: Realistic Job Previews - 26 attended from 13 providers and 4 Sherlock coaches attended. Of the 5 anonymous survey responses, 100% said that their knowledge of the topic increased because of this webinar and that the webinar helped them identify changes needed in their organization.

- Friday, February 16, 10 am – 11 am: Follow-Up Friday – 3 attended 3 providers: Offered only to the providers engaged in Discovery or Action Planning. During Follow-Up Friday, providers can meet with UMN workforce consultants, ask questions, and discuss what they are each doing in their organization to collaborate with one another.
- Friday, March 8, 10am – 12 pm: Competency-based Job Descriptions & Job Analysis - 12 attended from 8 providers and 3 Sherlock coaches attended. Of the 1 anonymous survey responses, 100% said that their knowledge of the topic increased as a result of this webinar and that the webinar helped them identify changes needed in their organization.
- Friday, March 15, 10 am – 11 am: Follow-Up Friday – 4 attended from 3 providers. 4 Sherlock coaches also attended. Offered only to the providers engaged in Discovery or Action Planning. During Follow-Up Friday, providers can meet with UMN workforce consultants, ask questions, and discuss what they are each doing in their organization to collaborate with one another.
- RI Specific Realistic Job Preview, Marketing Materials and Public Service Announcements: Realistic Job Preview clips had been shown to participating providers and at the Annual Summit on 1/24 and at the Advisory Committee on 2/21 for feedback. In the following months, feedback is being reviewed, the videos will be captioned, and final edits and narration will be made. UMN hosted a webinar for employers about realistic job previews and how to use them to select DSPs on February 9. The Marketing and Recruitment workgroup is developing messaging to inform marketing materials and public service announcements.
- Create a Modified Comprehensive Workforce Consultation Model for Self-Direction Employers: UMN workforce consultants continue to develop a model to build, incorporate, and collect self-directed workforce data. Consultants met with self-direction stakeholders to better understand how self-direction works in RI, what data are collected, how they collect data, and get their input and suggestions for what is needed and wanted to develop a systematic approach to data collection and reporting (from December through January). The next step is to bring these key stakeholders together to work in collaboration to establish a self-directed data model. Once consultants have developed the model, UMN will begin to determine a plan for what data to collect, how to collect it, and then implement it. Next step is for UMN to set up a meeting with all of the self-direction parties that were met with to discuss the developed approach to data collection and data elements of interest.
- Expansion of a state-specific workforce portal to include intervention data collection and monitoring:
 - UMN workforce consultants conducted 3 in-person data boot camps and 1 virtual data boot camp. There were 68 people from 31 of the 33 organizations. Participants had good questions and insightful suggestions. The feedback was very positive with attendees feeling the data portal was easy to use and will be useful for organizations.
 - All 33 provider organizations are in the data portal and entering their data from the time period 7/1/23-12/31/23 which will be submitted to the court monitor in early February 2024.
 - Data management was completed, and analyses were conducted for 7/1/23-12/31/23 RI NCI State of the Workforce Survey data collected in SupportWise in January 2024. A data report for the RI court monitor was written summarizing the results from the 7/1/23-12/31/23 data collection of RI National Core Indicators State of the Workforce Survey. It was submitted to the court monitor 2/13/24. A report for RI stakeholders was written summarizing the results from the 7/1/23-12/31/23 data collection of RI National Core Indicators State of the Workforce Survey and was sent to leaders in RI to send to other stakeholders in the state.
 - The longitudinal component of SupportWise is being developed and built.

- The View/Edit tab in SupportWise underwent upgrades to items on Tab B (Demographics), Tabs C & D (DSP Tenure & Vacancy), and Tab H (TLF Tenure & Vacancy). Previously, items included only counts of staff. There are now percentages to go with the counts of staff. UMN hosted a RI Data Community of Practice on March 26. 19 attended and engaged in discussion around the portal and how to use the data to support their organization. In the post-event survey, participants reported liking the opportunity to collaborate with others who focus on workforce data.
- Develop Sherlock Center Workforce Coaches Train the Trainer Model:
 - Implementation of workforce coaches training model continued in this quarter with two current Sherlock Center workforce coaches. Two additional Sherlock Center coaches were selected and matched with UMN workforce consultants and current Sherlock Center workforce coaches.
 - The two new workforce coaches and one older coach were assigned to discovery provider organizations in March. The new coaches will be shadowing the UMN consultants as they move through the Discovery phase with their assigned providers. In April, all four Sherlock Center workforce coaches will be completing training to provide ongoing training and support to organizations participating in the comprehensive workforce solutions consultation process.
- Implementation and Administration of Rhode Island Direct Support Professional (DSP) I, II, and III certification through National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) e-badging program:
 - UMN consultants continued planning for this deliverable. Consultants will engage the Training & Professional Development and the Selection and Retention statewide workforce initiative workgroups to explore a credential or certification program in RI and understand what credentialing and certification programs are already being implemented for DSPs and similar professionals.
- Additional Items of Note:
 - UMN and CPNRI launched a new contract for the data portal and the supervisor training series. This contract will initiate a train-the-trainer model to train RI-based trainers to conduct the Foundational Skills of Supervision training series. This will allow for sustainability of the training.
 - UMN and CPNRI have continued recruitment for a third cohort of supervisors to participate in Foundational Skills of Supervision, for a second cohort of supervisors to participate in the Developing the Direct Support Workforce training series, and for two trainers to be trained to deliver the Foundational Skills of Supervision training. (Note: this work is funded through a partnership between CPNRI & RI DLT).
 - UMN and CPNRI recruited 63 supervisors for a third cohort to participate in Foundational Skills of Supervision and 27 supervisors for a second cohort of supervisors to participate in the Developing the Direct Support Workforce training series. Both cohorts will have their first training session in April.

Other RISWI Activities:

- Beginning in March: Launch Discovery with 3 new providers
- Continuing in March: Continue focus groups and stakeholder interviews with Discovery providers.
- Continuing in March: Monthly meetings with Action Planning & Implementation providers
- 3/8 10 am – 12 pm Job Analysis and Competency-based Job Descriptions workforce webinar
- 3/15 10 am – 11 am: Follow-Up Friday with Action Planning & Discovery Providers only on Job Analysis and Competency-based Job Descriptions

22	Direct Support Staff vacancies will decrease (Consent Decree, Section XI, May 2022 Court Order, December 2022 Court Order). SUBMIT THE UMN DATA PORTAL SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT IN APPENDIX
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Providers are submitting their staff stability/workforce data via the data portal. The dashboard from this data portal will be provided to the State and to the Court Monitor every 6 months. The next time will be in July and cover the period of Jan-June 2024; data will be available in Aug 2024.

The data from UMN shows there has been a decrease in provider vacancies.

23	The State will continue to provide technical assistance and oversight to agencies re: use of evidence-based employment practices, staffing capacity, business models that align with the goals of the Consent Decree (Consent Decree, Section XL 5).
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BHDDH

- Information regarding technical assistance and oversight regarding staffing capacity provided in context of Transformation II activities and more generally through the RISWI can be found in other report sections, specifically items #10 and 21.
- A total number of 287 Supported Employment staff were reported by Providers ranging from Job Coaches and Employment Specialists to CESP credentialed.
- Sherlock Center continues to offer the SME training at no cost.
- Additional funding through Targeted Employment/Transformation has provided agencies the ability to continue innovative practices.
- Providers continue to spend down the funding received through Transformation Phase I and II to support the TA they need.
- Technical Assistance has been provided to Providers on the process for completion and submission of requests for Add-On Employment budgets.
- Associate SE Administrator has been available and offers his assistance for any questions that a provider may have on these services and the add-on budget. To be approved, however, the employment goals must match the ISP and case notes must be entered for review.
- Youth in Transition Administrator continues to provide support and a CoP to providers and LEAs working with youth. Many of these discussions have a focus on employment.
- Meetings have been held with FI's, Supported Employment Providers, and with the full Provider group to provide information and receive feedback on where their challenges are.
- Technical assistance was provided to providers who submitted Targeted Employment proposal.

ORS

- ORS is providing school districts with training in job development and job coaching. Information reflects date of training, type of training and participant number. Sign in sheets for all and evaluations for most were completed.
 - February 14, 2024, Job Coaching- 9 participants, February 15, 2024, Job Development- 8 participants
 - March 27, 2024, Job Coaching- 8 participants, March 28, 2024, Job Development- 3 participants
 - April 2, 2024, Job Development- 29 participants
 - Still to take place this year 5/8/2024 and 5/9/2024
 - These trainings will continue to be offered to school districts into SY 2024-25 with dates for both Job Coaching and Job Development.

- ORS continues to meet with Providers on a regular basis. From 1/1/2024-3/31/2024, ORS met with 25 Providers (some more than once) to assist and offer technical assistance regarding employment practices and continuing to reinforce braiding and sequencing of funds and business practice flow when providing supports to job seekers on their path to employment.
- Disability Rights Rhode Island continues to support individuals utilizing Vocational Rehabilitation Program with making an informed choice and assistance with oversight of ORS. Web site: <https://drri.org/client-assistance-program-cap/>

24	The State will develop a contract(s) with organizations that have credibility and capacity to assist providers and others to effectively use the new rates and rate structures to develop program models that promote the goals of the Consent Decree (Consent Decree, Section Xii).
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BHDDH

- A contract is in place with Direct Support Workforce Solutions (DSWS) to do the work of the RISWI to work with cohorts of providers and individuals who self-direct. See item #21.
- Work continues with HMA/HSRI for the rate structures and for development of the SIS algorithm. See also Item #3.
- RIPIN facilitated a quarterly Self-Direct Support Program Advisory Meeting on January 18, 2024. Topics included: updates from Sherlock Center and Advocates in Action, review of RIPIN's 2024 training schedule, Self-Direction connection, review of survey data from fall webinars. Next meeting scheduled 4/11/2024.

ORS

- ORS continues to assist providers by offering technical assistance on Braiding and Sequencing BHDDH and ORS Funding. ORS is working with BHDDH on another presentation and clear documentation with examples regarding Braiding and Sequencing of BHDDH and ORS Funding.
- ORS circulated an Innovative Practices Survey (June 2023) with Providers on Innovative Strategies that they were currently doing at their agencies or ideas they had regarding strategies that would benefit the job seeker. The results were 15 Providers responded (1 agency twice). ORS Administration met with those provider agencies and out of those discussions, two SEC trainings are specific to Innovation Practices Survey results and 4 Providers on the process of Job Preparation Services in Pilot status working with their ORS liaisons, ORS Assistant Administrator for SE and ORS Assistant Administrator for CRP.

25	By January 1, 2024, the State will develop a methodology for annual assessment of life outcomes for each/every individual member of the Consent Decree population (December 2022 Court Order).
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The annual Qualitative Review of Life Domains plan has been provided. This review will be conducted during the Independent Facilitation process.

26	Although the State has developed a Quality Improvement System, these activities should continue throughout the duration of this Addendum with specific focus on translation of
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	the new rates and services into program models that increase employment and community activity in integrated settings (Consent Decree, Section XV).
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- There are Service definitions for every service in the new service structure. Changes will be made to account for increased flexibility.
- Certification standards draft is complete. Next step will likely be review by service providers. The Office of Quality Improvement is also finalizing its review procedures, including the quality metrics. Input from providers on the quality metrics will be facilitated.

27	The state will provide data and reporting as detailed in (111) below (Consent Decree, Section XVI).
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The State has provided a Data Plan, Annual Assessment of Life Domains, Independent Facilitation Plan, and monthly lists of those who have had their ISPs completed and those who have participated in the SIS three-step process.

28	By January 1, 2024, the State (in collaboration with the Monitor, the Department of Justice, others) will develop a comprehensive methodology for data collection and reporting (Consent Decree, Section XVI).
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The Consent Decree Data Plan has been submitted to the Court Monitor. Data points have been provided throughout this report in the degree available for this quarter.

Section 3 – Any appendices (per examples above).

- CD Employment Report
- Census Data
- DD Training and Outreach Tracker
- Business and Community Outreach Activities
- SE Activities
- Employment Add-On Information
- March Employment Needs Tracker
- Task Tracker-Comms Team (Communications tracker)
- RIPIN's 6-Month Report PowerPoint

Section IV (optional) – Summaries from BHDDH, RIDE, ORS, DLT of key accomplishments and/or activities you would like to report not included in Section 2.

BHDDH Summary

Transition

- In collaboration with ORS and the Transition Advisory Coordinators, the DDD Transition Coordinator has presented information about adult services to staff at public, non-public and charter schools across the state. 59 presentations have taken place since September. 13 of those took place this

quarter with one of those presentations being to the ARIASE Special Education Directors, provided by the Transition Administrator and Eligibility Supervisor.

- Family Transition nights in school districts provide a way for students and families to learn about the transition process and plan for adult life. The Transition Coordinator and Transition Administrator participated in 10 family events this quarter.
- The philosophy and practice of family empowerment through community activities has been developed with consult from Starfire Ohio and is being rolled out in RI. The Transition Administrator attended several sessions with Starfire Ohio as well as staff from Best Life RI and the RI DD Council, to plan for rollout and attend information sessions. Opportunity to participate in family sessions re: community building was widely promoted at regional Transition Advisory Council meetings by the Transition Administrator.
- In preparation for the rollout of Conflict Free Case Management, brainstorming sessions with the Transition Coordinator have been held and a draft of social casework tasks and district assignments has been prepared. A framework for training social workers increasing their involvement with Transition age youth has been reviewed with the DDD Communications Team.
- A draft of statewide social connection links and regional opportunities to connect with peers was reviewed with RIPIN. This task is part of the DDD contract with RIPIN overseen by the Transition Administrator. The access to links and information about regional social opportunities is expected to expand the likelihood of involvement for individuals with I/DD to social activities in their communities.
- The DDD Transition Coordinator and Transition Administrator participated in an open house at the Providence School District STAR and Transition Academy Programs. Both programs provide support to students with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) who are likely to be eligible for adult services. This collaboration is part of an on-going effort to educate students and their families about adult services.
- The quarterly Transition Community of Practice meeting, attended by Transition Coordinators within the adult service provider agencies, was held in March. Members were updated as to Transition work resulting from the most recent Court order. A presentation re: response to the Court Order within school districts across the state was provided by the statewide Transition Advisory Coordinators. Invitation to an upcoming training event with a national speaker (Sean Roy) was offered to adult service providers. Information about the new ORS Futures Pathways Academy was also provided.
- The Transition Administrator continues to meet with the Miriam Hospital Project Search and Blue Cross Blue Shield Project Search Steering Committees to plan for current and prospective students. Following consult with the DDD Communications Team, the Timeline created for Blue Cross Blue Shield will be updated with logos of all partners.
- The Transition Administrator presented information re: the Transition process to the public via the Community Forum, to parents interested in employment through the Family Employment Awareness Training (FEAT) facilitated by the Sherlock Center and to educators through participation in the Teachers of Life Skills training facilitated by the Transition Advisory Coordinators. Each of these information sharing sessions is part of comprehensive outreach to families, students, educators, and the general public re: the process of transition and developing a whole life plan of support in adulthood.
- The Transition Administrator participated in a planning session with special educators in the Providence school district re: student selection for various transition programs. This collaboration is expected to improve communication amongst educators and adult transition partners.

- Numerous planning meetings have been held with Wellsky, the Project Manager and Transition staff as to the new software system being developed. It is anticipated the Transition team will now be able to electronically track youth for whom the Division is invited to an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting.

The following resources were shared with social service within DDD:

- Supported Decision making resources with Jack Pierpoint and Lynda Kahn
- Angela Amado making friends and engaging in community presentation
- OSCIL Scholarship for post-secondary school
- RIDOH listening sessions on adolescent health for Spanish speaking families
- Starfire.BestLife RI kick off and RI learning series
- Pawtucket Housing Auth apt openings
- OSCIL wheelchair tennis event
- DOH Spanish Caregiver listening session re: Adol health
- Maximizing Transition years/planning with Sean Roy Family workshop and Professional session on employment
- Dental safety net providers

The following resources were shared with Transition Community of Practice this quarter:

- Starfire.BestLife RI kick off and RI learning series
- Sean Roy/TAC Transitions and Employment
- OSCIL wheelchair tennis clinic
- Dental safety net providers

ORS Summary

- ORS continues to conduct monthly or quarterly meetings with the SE Providers to discuss issues, offer technical assistance, review files, provide training on braiding and sequencing of funding, and discuss quality improvement and best practices. Below are the SE Providers that ORS met with from January 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024.

1/8/2024	Blackstone	1/9/2024	Proability
1/9/2024	Trudeau	1/11/2024	Perspectives
1/16/2024	Perspectives	1/17/2024	Seven Hills
1/22/2024	Maher	1/23/2024	Looking Upwards
1/25/2024	WOU	2/6/2024	HDC
2/7/2024	Seven Hills	2/8/2024	West Bay RI
2/8/2024	Community Living	2/8/2024	WOU
2/13/2024	Proability	2/14/2024	Blackstone
2/21/2024	GWl	2/28/2024	Proability
2/29/2024	Trudeau	3/11/2024	Perspectives
3/12/2024	Olean	3/13/2024	Perspectives
3/18/2024	Maher	3/26/2024	Work, Inc
3/27/2024	HDC		

- ORS, BHDDH, and DLT have been working with Bally's Casino Lincoln on an Adult Project Search Program. This provides a training opportunity to Adult Interns to gain skills for employment. The first cohort completed with six interns entering their second cohort. There is a heavy focus on job

placement during third cohort and not waiting for individual to graduate in July 2024. ORS also provided a benefits planning presentation to the interns during their classroom time. The participants will meet with a benefits planner 1:1 for person-centered benefits planning. An assistive technology practitioner was authorized to work with interns on the use of Smart Watches to utilize for supports on the job and a decrease of cell phones use during internships.

- ORS Assistant Administrator for Supported Employment was asked to partner with BHDDH during their Provider meetings. This allows an opportunity for Providers to ask questions and discuss employment specific funding. Below are the SE Providers that ORS met with BHDDH from January 1, 2024, to March 31, 2024:

1/2/2024	Goodwill	1/4/2024	Blackstone
2/6/2024	Avatar	2/6/2024	RI Disab Coal Inc
2/8/2024	Community Living	2/12/2024	Easter Seals
2/12/2024	Work Inc	2/12/2024	ABE
2/12/2024	WOU	2/16/2024	Town or Coventry
2/12/2024	Community Res Inc.		

- The Innovative Survey and Continuing Provider Meetings that are facilitated by the ORS Assistant Administrators provided information for SEC trainings for FY 2024 including training in October on Job Trials, and Access Features in Android and IOS for Supported Employment and Executive Functioning on 2/26/2024. Four Job Preparation Pilots came out of Innovation Survey meetings and are presently being reviewed as a fee for service for ORS to better prepare individuals in applying and retaining employment.
- ORS Assistant Administrator for Supported Employment, ORS Assistant Administrator for Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, ORS ATAP/ATEL Manager attended the Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) national and international conference in January 2024 which provided contacts and information regarding assistive technology that would benefits supported employment job seekers in an employment setting.
- ORS currently has a census of 1606 students in Pre-ETS, 973 of these students are 18+ years of age. This does not mean all of these students are on a CDP but if they are open with ORS, they are receiving or in process of receiving a Pre-ETS service and moving towards an employment goal.
- ORS has a VR Counselor assigned to each of the public HS's as well as most/majority of identified private and alternative schools. Once a student is identified to us by the school district and referred, ORS begins the process of registering and or applying the student for ORS services and beginning employment services.
- ORS has developed in collaboration with Work Opportunities Unlimited, new Pre-Employment Transition programming designed to meet the needs of our students who require additional support needs to reach meaningful competitive integrated employment goals. This service is designed to be a partnership between Office of Rehabilitation Services, the Local School District, and a Community Rehab Program/Adult Provider. The sessions will take place over three consecutive school years, preparing the student to move into supported employment job development, placement, and retention. It is meant to be an ongoing partnership with students continuously entering and exiting through employment services. ORS has met with long term provider partners to be the primary facilitators of this program with the scope of building the bridge and exposure for families to the provider agencies.

Department of Labor and Training Summary

Workplace Accessibility Grant Program

- The Governor's Workforce Board (a division of the Department of Labor and Training) continues to fund the Workplace Accessibility Grant (WAG) Program. Board staff continues to make themselves available to employers, Chambers of Commerce, direct support service staff and any other interested parties who wish to learn about the program, its goals, its administrative and fiscal requirements, and how to apply.
- As of 3/31/2024 and since the 2022 start of the grant program, the Board has awarded \$64,182.23 in grants over seventeen (17) contracts across fourteen (14) unique employers.

Industry and Community Workforce Partnerships

- The Department of Labor and Training's industry and community workforce partnership program (Real Jobs RI) is currently funding nine activities that either directly or indirectly addresses the challenges of the Consent Decree as of March 2024:
 - **Activity:** 'The Rhode Map' – The CY 2024 programming began on January 1 through December 31. AccessPoint prepares Rhode Islanders, including Rhode Islanders with disabilities and other significant barriers to employment, for full or part-time employment in retail careers. The Rhode Map aims to serve 40 participants in up to 10 weeks of classroom instruction that includes hands-on experience in a mock store environment complete with real retail products and technology (i.e., registers and scanners). Program participants develop other employment-related skills, including how to communicate with customers, and co-workers, dress for success, transportation/travel training, benefits planning, and how to interview and complete hiring-related paperwork. Applicable classroom experiences are applied in a two-week externship at a local retail store. For the CY2024, The Rhode Map aims to have 40 participants enrolled, 38 to complete the program, and 36 participants placed into employment.
 - **Activity:** Project SEARCH at Bally's/Twin River – began on September 1, 2023, through October 1, 2024. AccessPoint has been selected by ORS to implement an adult Project SEARCH in Rhode Island. Project SEARCH is a nationally, and internationally, recognized program that prepares young people and adults with significant disabilities for success in competitive integrated employment. Project SEARCH is a unique business-led, one-year employment preparation program that takes place entirely at the host business. The program provides total workplace immersion and facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. The program culminates in individualized job development. APRI uses the Project SEARCH proprietary curriculum. The program staff includes an instructor, teacher assistant, job coach, and part-time job developer. Bally's/Twin River identifies employees from each department who can supervise interns during work rotations. There are four tracks available: Hotel/Housekeeping, Food/Beverage, Office/Administration, and Retail/Warehouse. Each of the interns is mentored by a Twin River employee in one of these tracks. Upon completion of the program, worksite rotations are identified, and job descriptions are reviewed. Bally's/Twin River is committed to employing graduating individuals, realizing this as a direct pipeline to filling many vacant positions. Project SEARCH has seven participants enrolled, and aims to have five complete the program, and five participants placed into employment by the end of the program in October 2024.

- **Activity: Self-Employment Business Incubator** – The CY 2024 programming will begin in February through November. The RI Developmental Disabilities Council aims to serve 42 aspiring entrepreneurs with developmental disabilities and others with opportunities to develop their business idea, launch or grow their small businesses, and contribute to RI's growing economy. In this program, participants have access to a Business Development Series of eight key business classes, individualized ongoing support, and mentorship from project staff and experienced RI business professionals, learn about upcoming vendor marketplace locations to have direct experiences in selling their products or services to the public, and practical information to be successfully employed. Each participant will develop a Personalized Business Planning Portfolio including a detailed Business Plan to assist them with a roadmap for successful business ownership. For the CY2024, The RI Developmental Disabilities Council aims to have 42 participants enrolled, and 36 individuals to complete the program.
- **Activity: Skills RI/workAbility** – The current program began on January 1 and through December 31, 2024. Education and Awareness: This program provides training and education on hiring and working with people with disabilities. Skills RI/workAbility offers consultative services for employer partners and prospective new businesses who have hiring needs and are looking to meet their goals for diversity, equity, and inclusion and collaborate on customized hiring initiatives. CPNRI provider agencies' employment staff provide direct support to their candidates and consult with WorkAbility team members throughout the process to ensure customized hiring strategies and training meet the specific needs of the individual and employer to ensure overall success on the job. Skills RI recruits local employers to participate and CPNRI's 36 member agencies provide employment services that recruit individuals with disabilities who are seeking employment and may be interested in the positions the employer partners are hiring for. For the CY2024, Skills RI/workAbility aims to have 20 participants enrolled, 13 to complete the program, and 10 participants placed into employment.
- **Activity (sector investment/incumbent worker): University of Minnesota (ICI) Supervisor Training & Data Portal Access & TA** – The ICI Training begins on January 22 and provides a year-long training series for frontline supervisors and managers on workforce recruitment and retention strategies and practices. CPNRI partners with the Institute on Community Integration (ICI) at the University of Minnesota to provide incumbent worker training webinars for network building within Direct Support Providers. This partnership seeks to safeguard the integrity of the DDO employer network workforce by offering programming that includes providing training, career pipelines/pathways for direct support professionals (DSPs), and health and human service workers for advancement within their agencies that provide services for people with disabilities. Additionally, CPNRI and Direct Support Workforce Solutions at the UMN ICI collaborate to finalize the data collection and reporting database that can be used to examine staffing, recruitment, retention, and critical workforce indicators across organizations at specific time points as well as track them over time. The program aims to have a functional customized data collection system for external data entry and indicator reporting by the end of the project and to launch the data collection system to the CPNRI member organizations. For the CY2024, ICI Training aims to have 123 participants enrolled, and 71 individuals to complete the program.
- **Activity: Looking Upwards Inclusive PCA Training** - The current program began on January 1 through December 31, 2024. Looking Upwards developed a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) training program that provides education to unemployed and underserved Rhode Islanders. This program not only offers training and employment opportunities it also offers support to individuals who are hiring PCAs. Looking Upwards focuses on continuing the PCA training program for 32 participants with at least 60% of the individuals diagnosed with I/DD and 40% composed of other underemployed populations this year. For the CY2024, Looking Upwards aims

to have 32 participants enrolled, 24 to complete the program, and 16 participants placed into employment.

- **Activity: The Opportunity Zone at the Maher Learning Center** - The CY 2024 programming began on January 1 through December 31. The Maher Center facilitates a dual-track inclusive career exploration and vocational launchpad designed to provide intensive, industry-specific preparation that yields a new source of capable, reliable, well-trained, and highly motivated workers for horticulture and culinary. The training consists of 1) a full month of classroom instruction and practicum training in the kitchen and garden center; 2) a two-week on-site internship in one of the above facilities, and 3) a one-week externship with an external employer. The Maher Center's in-house employment team also teaches interview skills, workplace etiquette, and other essential content areas, in close collaboration with industry partners who would offer industry-specific coaching. The Center dedicates classroom space at its Middletown Facility, a fully licensed commercial kitchen, and a garden center encompassing both greenhouse and retail sales operations – as well as five decades of experience in horticultural training for people with I/DD. The Center's content knowledge and support services help participants develop valuable skills, acclimate to the workforce, and address barriers (from anxiety to transportation to quality-of-life issues and more) that may create challenges to productive employment. For the CY2024, The Maher Center aims to have 25 participants enrolled, 15 to complete the program, and 10 participants placed into employment.
 - **Activity (sector investment/incumbent worker): CPNRI Training Conferences: Upskilling Workers in the Disability Service Sector** – The program begins on January 22 through December 31. CPNRI coordinates, plans, and executes two full-day conferences to upskill workers in the disability service sector to advance upward career mobility and continued program quality improvement. The Training Conferences program aims to train up to 300 employees (entry-level, mid-level, and senior-level) in RI's DDO network. For the CY2024, the Training Conferences program aims to have 300 participants enrolled, and 250 individuals to complete the program.
 - **Activity: Direct Support Professional Career - Crossroads Rhode Island** CY 2024 programming began on January 1 through December 31. Crossroads partners with five RI provider agencies to connect clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with career exploration, job preparation, support services, job training, and employment opportunities as a Direct Support Professional (DSP.) This opportunity supports the participants by developing the tools they will need for long-term stability and success. This program is intended to primarily address the needs of home-based care and community care service providers. The majority of employer partners and/or the primary benefiting employers are Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) providers. The program aims to improve access and quality of services of those service providers. Crossroads RI completes an on-ramp process that includes career exploration, job readiness, barrier assessment with support, and case management for placement into DSPs. For the CY2024, Crossroads aims to have 35 participants enrolled, 30 to complete the program, and 23 participants placed into employment.
- In preparation of this Quarterly Report, the DLT Data and Performance Team queried job placement data for the I/DD-focused partnerships as of 3/31/2024.
[NOTE: While the referenced workforce partnerships were formed to serve the needs of job seekers with I/DD, the integrated program design means not all job placements were individuals with I/DD – although we are confident that a sizeable majority are].
 - The new/updated numbers as of 4/1/24 (and since the beginning of the program in 2017) are:
 - 282 Job Placements (increase from 273 in January)

- 20.25 Average Hours per Week (slight decrease from 20.4 in January)
- \$13.88 Average Hourly wage (slight increase from \$13.68 in January)

A breakdown of job placements by year is provided below:

Job Placement Year	Estimated Number Placed
2017	<5
2018	25
2019	48
2020	21
2021	71
2022	27
2023	53
2024 (to date)	32