### ivrs_RGB

### Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services

### Disability Determination Services Bureau

### 2015-2018 Strategic Plan

Revised 11/14

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#### Guiding Statements

**Our Mission**

We provide expert, individualized services to Iowans with disabilities to achieve their independence through successful employment and economic support.

**Our Motto**

Finding Solutions. Generating Success.

**Our Vision**

Best Decision, Every Claimant, Every Time

**Our Guiding Principles**

We are responsive to the unique needs and goals identified by individuals with disabilities.

We demonstrate teamwork and cooperation among staff, customers and partners.

We operate with trust and integrity.

We demonstrate compassion and respect for all people.

We value continued improvement and learning.

We openly communicate with clarity and consideration.

We are results driven.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan is done with consideration of the DDS strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

**Strengths**: The Iowa Disability Determination Services Bureau (DDSB) is comprised of a highly trained professional staff that invests in quality decisions and outcomes. The DDSB has historically met or exceeded all operational goals set by the Social Security Administration (SSA). DDSB staff has long tenure, with one of the highest rates of staff retention of all DDSB’s. Excellent working relationships exist with our key partners in IVRS and SSA (local, Regional and National). We focus on program integrity and apply policy and procedures in services to claimants, SSA and the citizens of Iowa. Business process review and improvement is ongoing and ingrained in the culture of the DDSB. Technology usage is advanced and continuously improved. Leadership and staff focus on employee health and well-being. Opportunities exist to advance learning and improve job satisfaction. Staff are encouraged and solicited to be part of decision-making. Managers have an open door policy. Regularly scheduled meetings are held to discuss trends and emerging issues. Internal communication is increasingly transparent. DDSB has an excellent relationship with the medical community with a large and experienced consultative examiner panel. Sound financial, workload and project planning & oversight exist with experienced staff dedicated to these tasks.

**Weaknesses:** Career level staff can demonstrate content with the status quo. With tenure comes a familiarity and entrenched positions and this contributes to communication difficulties. Due to constant changes in technology, medicine, policy and fiscal uncertainty from both Federal and State levels, stressors exist that can affect individual and agency performance. When hiring is authorized, it is routinely done in one fell swoop, which drains the DDS resources and puts us at risk for improper or incomplete new employee development. Not all technology applications are utilized to the fullest. It is difficult to stay current with technology and to keep staff current. There is a focus on how the staff wants to communicate with our citizens rather than a focus on how the citizen wants to communicate with us. The DDSB is unable to move forward with some desired business process improvements due to SSA hiring freeze and budget restrictions. Individualized staff development plans are not consistently utilized. HR needs are increasing, but no staffing dedicated to this in the DDS despite increased complexity.

**Opportunities:** Flexible Video Service options for service will become more readily available. We can leverage the energy, positivity and engagement of the new hires from 2014 (10 % of our staff). SSA is providing more national training, thus the DDS has more opportunity to utilize staff formerly dedicated to training in the new ways. Self-directed learning opportunities are more readily available. DDSB’s relationship with IVRS & SSA is excellent. Policy and Project managers at the DDSB allow for increased administrative capacity. The newly created Flexible Lead Worker positions allow opportunity to innovate. Additional new approaches to staff development are in process (job rotations, shadowing etc.). Technology exists to move to a more automated assignment of work to many task areas.

**Threats:** Federal Hiring freezes and extremely tight funding situations put staff and staffing at risk with increased stress and potential impact on retention. SSA’s focus on fraud detection and prevention and increased Continuing Disability Reviews are expected to continue with resultant increased workloads, higher pending caseloads, increased processing time and negative impacts on service delivery are expected. Increases in work demands can negatively affect capacity for succession planning, learning, growth and service. Higher-level expectations have been placed on DDSB and IVRS administrative staff regarding budget and workload planning. Increased pressure for performance and clearances threatens quality and integrity. Negative public opinion about the Social Security Disability program creates stress on claimants and employees. Planned and unplanned loss of staff with no hiring will result in backlogs of work. The Iowa Communications System video service option has announced a sunset date in 2016. Increased oversight and responsibilities are being placed on the DDS regarding security (both physical and systems). Ongoing security risks and threats exist. DDSB is experiencing the inability to hire critical positions (IT team lead, & support staff) due to Federal hiring freeze. SSA has expressed that despite the focus on CDR’s we must maintain a balance to our workload clearances and meet the initial claims clearance goal. The loss of experienced IVRS Budget Analyst puts us at risk for budget, planning, audits.

**Goal 1 – SERVICES**

**Develop and deliver innovative, quality services**

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| **Outcomes** | **Actions** | **Measures** | **Due By** |
| * Citizen’s business is completed at the first or earliest point of contact with enhanced customer experience | 1. Implement improvements to citizen (claimant and vendor) interaction – both incoming and outgoing. 2. Engage vendor and internal staff participation in CE oversight and business process improvement & capture baseline claimant & vendor satisfaction. Be mindful of potential self-service option for vendors and claimants. 3. Cross train all support staff on all functions & investigate merge and call center functionality. 4. Disability Case Processing System project preparation and planning. | 50% increase of use of state mail room for outbound paper mailings, 20% increase in HIT and/or ERE usage  Baseline Internal QA statistics, CE vendor satisfaction, then improvement. Zero instances of fraud.  Baseline customer CE satisfaction, then improvement  SSA Performance Indicators exceeded.  Measurable standards for service will be developed.  Develop structure for Project Team and proceed with activities as directed by SSA | End of FFY16 and ongoing  End of FFY15 & Ongoing  End of FFY15 &  Ongoing  Ongoing  As directed by SSA |

**Goal 2 – PEOPLE**

**Build a model workforce to deliver quality service**

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| **Outcomes** | **Actions** | **Measures** | **Due By** |
| * Establish DDS programs to encourage employee development * Ensure effective use of the State’s performance management system to manage employee performance * Improve supervisory competencies and develop talent for future leadership opportunities. * Foster and inclusive culture that promotes employee well-being, innovation, and engagement. | 1. Implement a strong succession plan to prepare for employee retirements. 2. Reduce skill gaps in targeted mission critical occupations to support talent development of employees. 3. Offer ongoing access to training and development resources to support continual learning. 4. Create knowledge management tools and processes to ensure the capture of institutional knowledge (ex. Establish training/learning liaison in all work units, update Intranet site) 5. Hold individuals & supervisors accountable for employee development plans. 6. Supervisors engage in leadership and skill development activities. 7. Promote work-life balance and employ available workplace flexibilities 8. Promote safety of employees through ongoing safety training. | 10% of staff will be involved in a formal development program  Maintenance of excellent employee retention  Quarterly Learning Coordinator reports  Quarterly Learning Coordinator reports  Employee Development plans on the IPPE will be implemented and monitored regularly by individuals and supervisors  At least two activities per year  Annual review of State rules and collective bargaining agreements and audit of existing employee engagement activities  Security audit results | Ongoing  Ongoing  Begin in FY15 and ongoing  Begin in FY15 and ongoing  Yearly  Yearly  Ongoing and yearly  Yearly & Ongoing |

**Goal 3 – PEOPLE**

**Serve the Public through stronger, more responsive disability adjudication services**

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| **Outcomes** | **Actions** | **Measures** | **Due By** |
| * Strengthen the competency, agility and performance of our workforce to align with the needs of the public | 1. Assess technology resources that we can use to communicate. Upgrade DDS Intranet site and other services (Autodialer, Secure Messaging, social media, email). 2. Assess technology resources and models (ex. Help Desk) that we can use to provide top level service to reduce systems down time. Consider online support, click to talk and instant messaging, Flexible Video technology. 3. Expand the use of management information and data analytics to draw conclusions in making business decisions to reduce inefficiencies and to identify training needs. 4. HSPD 12 Implementation ensuring suitability and credentialing of DDS staff. | New site design and content and usage  Reduced system and individual down time.  SSA Performance Indicators exceeded  100% Implementation & staff compliance | Ongoing  Ongoing  Ongoing  Begin process in 2015 as per SSA |
|  |  |  |  |

**Goal** **4 – SERVICES**

**Serve the public through stronger, more responsive disability adjudication services**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcomes** | **Actions** |  | **Due By** |
| * Increase the speed and quality of disability process * Create a performance culture * Financial resources are accurately predicted, managed and reported with no major SSA or State of Iowa audit issues (Admin/ASB/PDT/DDS responsibility) | 1. Ongoing business process and technology capability reviews and implementation of improvements.   .   1. Test automated and self-assignment initiatives. This could be work task or case related. (Ex. Auto assignment of cases/Fiscal tasks/CE scheduling tasks, MC self-assign, DE case cap) 2. Hold all staff accountable to maintain acceptable performance standards. 3. Assess internal quality assurance (PI) staffing, unit design, and processes to optimize outcomes. 4. Test collaboration initiatives – both face to face and using technology (ex. Work Queue for MCPC’s, PI staff rounds, DQB return & RPC staffings) 5. Management teams communicate financial status and recommend revisions in operations, as appropriate. 6. Financial planning tools are utilized for predictive ability. 7. Information is reviewed across bureaus to identify effectiveness. | Reduce processing time by 5%.  Task completion time standards are met  Increase quality by persisting at a level above 97%  Increase Disability  Examiner assisted assessments to 45% of total referrals  Increase MCPC productivity to 1 case per hour.  Per Admin/ASB/PDT/DDS | Ongoing  Ongoing  July FY17  July FY17  Per Admin/ASB/PDT/DDS |

Our Assumptions

* Increased demand for disability adjudication services
* SSA push to expand online service options
* Technology continues to advance
* Expectation to use technology
* Language and cultural differences will impact services
* 25% of DDS workforce eligible to retire in next 5 years
* Changing employee expectations for younger/new/different/aging workforce
* Budget and Hiring continues to be a challenge
* Increased security expectations and oversight
* Increased program integrity workloads from SSA
* Expansion of ways to detect and combat fraud
* Expectation to use more data & data analytics

**NOTES:**