



Maine
State
Rehabilitation
Council

2009
Annual Report

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DEDICATION

The 2009 Annual Report of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is dedicated to the outstanding service of three individuals who retired during the year. The Council would like to thank the following three people for their tireless effort of advocating for people with disabilities and employment. The Council would also like to thank these individuals for their participation with the State Rehabilitation Council throughout the years. The council wishes all three the best of luck in their retirement years.

Art Jacobson- Thirty Five Years of Service

*

Louise Sidelinger- Thirty Four Years of Service

*

Penny Plourde- Seven Years of Service



March 19, 2010

To the Citizens of Maine,

On behalf of the members of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), I am pleased to present the 2009 Annual Report for the period October 1, 2008 to September 30, 2009.

This past year was a challenging year but also an extraordinary one. The slow economic times made it more difficult for individuals with disabilities to find work, but on the other hand the federal stimulus funds enabled DVR to redesign their system to serve more individuals in a more timely fashion. They are well on their way to eliminating the waitlist by October 2010. Some of the highlights for the year include:

- A steering committee was created for the elimination of the waitlist project and a member from the Council was on that committee;
- Council members were able to be on interviewing teams for DVR personnel;
- The Council played an active role in the development of DVR's Annual State Plan;
- Numerous speakers were invited to Council meetings to increase members' knowledge of employment/disability issues;
- The SRC was responsible for bringing together four other councils at a Joint Council Retreat in late September 2009- Maine Statewide Independent Living Council; State Rehabilitation Council- Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired; Division for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late Deafened; and the Commission for Employment of People with Disabilities; to participate in a facilitated discussion regarding common themes and challenges for people with disabilities;
- Several new members were added to the Council including the Director of the Section 121 Grant Project; and
- The Council's website was maintained, updated and has grown tremendously.

It is my hope that we will continue to grow and evolve as a Council. We look forward to working with DVR in our mutual efforts to improve and enhance the quality of vocational rehabilitation services for Maine's citizens with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Drew E. Bolduc".

Drew E. Bolduc
SRC-DVR Chairperson, 2009



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
150 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0150

LAURA A. FORTMAN
COMMISSIONER

March 22, 2010

To the Citizens of Maine:

As the newly appointed Director of the State of Maine’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, I am pleased to recognize the contribution of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in their vital role as the Division’s partner and advisor. Over the years the Division has relied on the Council for guidance and support in our efforts to provide vocational services to Maine citizens with disabilities. We are particularly fortunate to have an SRC membership that is made up of individuals who are well versed in issues relating to vocational rehabilitation, and who have demonstrated great leadership.

The citizens of the State of Maine continue to face extraordinary challenges related to the downturn in the economy which has in turn resulted in cuts in state revenues. All state departments have needed to examine how they do business and economize as much as possible in order to continue to provide quality services with fewer resources. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) was fortunate to receive stimulus money from the Federal government, which with the support of the SRC, has allowed us to undertake an ambitious project that includes reassessing how we provide services, and explore creative approaches to enhance support for the people we serve. The end result will be to eliminate our wait list for services by October, 2010.

This project is well under way and DVR will be reaching the first milestone by eliminating a waitlist for all individuals entering VR in Category 1 (people with the most significant disabilities) by April 1st, 2010. The efforts in all our offices have been nothing short of herculean in order to reach this first major milestone. The additional 16 ARRA funded staff throughout the state, using the more streamlined processes, and the support of the SRC have us well on our way to reaching our goal of no waitlist for people in any category by October, 1st, 2010.

I look forward to another year of consultation and collaboration with SRC as DVR moves ahead with meeting our project goals, which will result in providing timely, quality employment support services to people with disabilities in the state of Maine.

Betsy Hopkins
Director
Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

PHONE: 1-800-698-4440

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Mission Statement

The Mission of the State Rehabilitation Council is to partner with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the development of state goals, priorities, policy, and practice, and to review and analyze the Division's results and performance in support of securing and maintaining employment, through a process of informed choice, for individuals with disabilities.

Mutual Expectations

- Attend and actively participate in full council meetings and serve on at least one committee. Active participation is characterized by sharing my ideas and viewpoints with other members, knowing the needs, concerns, and views of any group or individual I represent as a Council member and presenting those views to the Council and committees, and performing a fair share of the work to be done by the full Council and committees upon which I serve. If unable to attend, I will provide advance notification to the chair or administrative assistant.
- Demonstrate my understanding and appreciation of the importance of the diverse viewpoints council members bring to the process by listening actively and attentively to what others' have to say, showing courtesy towards others and their ideas, and looking for opportunities to build our ideas upon other ideas offered. Through these behaviors I commit to participate in making the Council a safe environment for all to, in confidence, share thoughts, feelings, observations, and needs without fear of judgments, ridicule, or censure.
- Put my personal agendas aside when necessary to accomplish Council business; I will both be an active spokesperson for my personal points of view and those of my constituents, and be willing to compromise and collaborate to achieve full Council objectives.
- Come to meetings prepared to participate in the business at hand by having read and become familiar with any materials sent in advance of the meetings. I will respond to any request for input and feedback made by others on the Council orally or in writing, per the wishes of the requestor.
- Act in compliance with the Council's by-laws and adhere to appropriate confidentiality guidelines and policies.
- Provide each other with honest views and feedback, including letting each other know how we believe each of us can be of most value and use to the Council in accomplishing its goals and fulfilling its mission.
- Be accountable for doing my part; do what I say I will do, say no if I cannot or will not do something, and inform the Council of any problems I encounter as early as possible.
- Be an advocate for the Council and for people with disabilities that present barriers to employment by sharing information about the Council and its activities with other groups in which I participate
- Assist in the effort to begin and end meetings on time by arriving on time and staying for the entire meeting.
- Share my knowledge and experiences to orient other Council members to VR and to the State Rehabilitation Council.
- Speak in lay terms and avoid unnecessary jargon and acronyms.
- If I foresee a problem in meeting any of these expectations, I will let the Chair know immediately.

Purpose

In complying with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998 that were contained in Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the Maine State Rehabilitation Council (Council) was established in accordance to Federal Regulations governing the Rehabilitation Act. Under these regulations, (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act), the Council works in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) to review, analyze and evaluate the Maine State Vocational Rehabilitation Program.

Functions of the Maine State Rehabilitation Council include:

- Review, analyze, and advise the designated State unit regarding the performance of the State unit's responsibilities pertaining to:
 - Eligibility, including order of selection.
 - Extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided.
 - Functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment.
 - In partnership with the State agency, the Council is to help develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities related to the evaluation and effectiveness of the rehabilitation program.
 - Advise the State agency and designated State units and assist in the preparation of the state plan, the strategic plan and amendments to the plans, applications, reports, needs assessments and evaluation.
 - Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with the state agency.
 - Prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Governor.
 - Establish interagency cooperation with other Councils within the state.

How to Be Appointed

Members of the Council are appointed by the Governor of the State of Maine after soliciting recommendation from the citizens of the State, representatives of organizations representing a board range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. To the extent possible, the membership shall reflect the cultural diversity of the State of Maine. A member may be reappointed and a vacancy shall be filled by the Governor.

For more information, please contact a Council member.

2009 Council Membership

There is a direct correlation between the expertise and dedication of individual members serving on a council and its collective effectiveness as a group. The SRC for DVR is fortunate to have members who know the vocational rehabilitation system and possess the dedication to helping improve these services for Maine's citizens with disabilities.

During fiscal year 2009, the Council held 10 monthly meetings during the year and our Annual Meeting in September. It's important to note that we had a quorum at every meeting. See members listed below:

Kevin Baack
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The Council wishes to thank members Donna Lee and Frances Day, who left during the year. Special thanks to Art Jacobson, Alice Johnson and Louise Sidelinger for their assistance at Council meetings and to Deb Nichols, Former SRC Administrative Assistant, for all of her help.

Council Meetings

The Council meets the third Thursday of every month at the Commerce Center in Augusta, ME from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The meeting schedule is published in several newspapers and on our website. The meetings are open to the public.

We started each meeting in 2009 with a brief presentation on how vocational rehabilitation services helped improve the life of a person with a disability. These “success stories” have helped remind the Council the real reason we exist: just how important effective vocational rehabilitation services can be in a person’s life.

Gaining knowledge about programs that have an impact on employment for people with disabilities was a priority for the Council during 2009. At our 2008 Annual Meeting and Retreat we developed a work plan for 2009. As part of the work plan we identified people we wanted to come and educate us about their programs and services. Some of the presenters were internal to DVR while others were stakeholders from outside of DVR. We feel the information that was provided to us has made us a more informed and effective Council. What follows is the list of speakers who presented at the Council and the topics they covered:

Presenter:

Karen Frasier
Valerie Oswald
Brian Robinson
Allison Trussell
John Shattuck
David Goddu
Larry Glantz
Steve Beam
Kelly Osborn

Topic:

Ticket to Work Program Updates
In State Process for Community Rehab Providers
Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report
Statewide Councilor Training Update
Department of Deafness
Developmental Services Waiver Update
Choices/CEO Grant Update
Client Assistance Program Report
Section 121 Grant Update

Committee Work in 2009

In addition to our regular meetings the Council has several committees that meet for a specific task, issue or topic. Some of the committees are "Standing" committees, a permanent part of the Council's work. Other committees are "Ad Hoc", or convened as needed. Also, SRC members have been invited to participate on internal DVR Committees such as the CSPD (Comprehensive System of Personnel Development). What follows are the various Council committees, their membership composition and the subcommittee reports for 2009:

Executive Committee Report:

Per our by-laws, the Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Previous Chair and the Director of DVR. The Executive Committee meets as needed now that there is a standing Membership Committee. Membership has been the responsibility of the Executive Committee in the past.

During FY 2009 the Executive Committee met to address three issues. The first issue was to correct the shortfall of dollars in 2008 and ensure that in 2009 there would be a surplus not a deficit. The Executive Committee became more involved in the retreat planning process and was successful in having a surplus of dollars going into 2010, while still accomplishing our goals.

The second issue we discussed was the Draft 2010 DVR State Plan. The Committee solicited comments from Council members and we developed a response with recommendations regarding the State Plan.

The last issue addressed by the Executive Committee was the resignation of Deb Nichols, our Administrative Assistant. We met with her to discuss a transition plan and based on Deb's recommendation, we interviewed and recommended Rebecca Corcoran be hired to replace her.

Note: With council approval, we have hired Rebecca Corcoran as the Administrative Assistant for the SRC and DBVI councils. Any SRC business questions or communications can be sent via email to Rebecca Corcoran at mainesrcdvr@hotmail.com or, in the event of emergency, if you need to contact Rebecca by phone, please contact Drew Bolduc and/or Steve Beam.

Mental Health and Employment Committee Report:

In October 2008 the committee status was changed from Ad Hoc to that of a Standing Committee. The full title of the committee, which also describes its mission, is "Increasing Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Mental Illness" and is referred to as the "Mental Health and Employment" committee.

The Committee has met monthly for the past year. SRC members on the committee are Jim Schmidt, Chair, Drew Bolduc, Jan Avery; Allison Trussell, and Ron Welch (He is the Director of Office of Adult Mental Services) There is one non SRC member: Elaine Ecker, Director of the Community Council System of Maine. Attending the meetings during the year from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation were Karen Fraser, Betsy Hopkins and Art Jacobson; and from the Office of Adult Mental Health Services Christine Robinson, Karen Glew, Lorna Bullard, Marya Faust and Donald Chamberlain. Also attending was Joanie Klayman of the University of Southern Maine.

Art Jacobson, Assistant Director of DVR, retired in August. Art supported the committee's mission from its inception. It is fair to say that without his counsel and active participation the committee would not have survived.

The Committee reviewed data compiled by the OAMHS about individuals who were employed and receiving long-term support services from the. Many of these clients had been served successfully by DVR. The

committee sponsored and helped design a study of the factors that contribute to the successful employment of individuals with a mental illness. Of particular interest will be information that might shed some light on why so few of those employed part time become employed full time. Joanie Klayman of the Muskie School at the University of Southern Maine is currently conducting the interviews. The study is underway with results expected by the end of this year and was by OAMHS.

A continued concern is the failure to utilize opportunities provided by the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program in Maine. Despite revised regulations, usage of the program has not increased. It seems that this is a national issue and we hope that a review of the experience of service providers here in Maine will be helpful in identifying roadblocks and finding ways to access this significant source of funds.

A regular item on the Committee's Agenda has been a report on progress in reducing the waiting list for VR services and we were able to hear about the agency's NoQ4U plan to eliminate the waiting list.

SRC/DVR Policy Committee:

The purpose of this committee is to provide a mechanism for review and comment on important policies and procedures. During the past year Jim Schmidt, John Dunleavy, Stacy Linkel, Fran Day and Steve Beam participated from the Council. Art Jacobson, Alice Johnson, Louise Sidelinger and Betsy Hopkins were the primary staff involved from DVR. During 2009 we discussed or provided input into the following:

- The status of the Draft report from the 107 RSA review.
- The Statewide Comprehensive Assessment
- The FY 2010 Draft State Plan
- The Washington State Initiative (End the Wait List)
- The Due Process Request Form
- Procedural Directives (Trial Work, Case Closure)
- Revision of the Order of Selection

CSPD Committee:

This year the Comprehensive System of Professional Development committee worked on several areas of development including switching the Master's Degree program for VR counselors to Virginia Commonwealth Distance Learning from Wisconsin Stout, the statewide training held at the St. Paul Center for VR counselors and the training for all VR counselors to assist with employing the NOQ4U and The Eliminate the Wait List Project. The committee also focused some of its energies on the transition of hiring Barbara Michaud to replace Peter Diplock as the Training Coordinator for the CSPD.

Membership Committee:

During FY 2009 this committee was comprised of the following Council members: Fran Day, Drew Bolduc, Mike Kasputes and Steve Beam. Deb Nichols and Alice Johnson provided staff support and liaison activities with the Governor's and Secretary of State's Offices.

The membership committee met three times during the year to address new members, pending members who desired to reapply and resignations. We contacted several people who expressed interest in joining the council. Two consumers were not able to join at this time. The following names/categories were forwarded to the Governor's Office:

Members recommended for appointment: Kelly Osborn and Allison Trussell.

Pending Members requesting reappointment: Pauline Lamontagne and Peter Dyer.

Members who resigned during the year: Fran Day and Donna Lee.

The Membership committee wants to thank Fran and Donna for their time and contributions towards the Council's work.

Retreat Committee:

The Retreat Committee- comprised of Drew Bolduc, Stacie Linkel, and Jan Avery- met at the end of August to plan the 5 Council and SRC Annual Meeting. Additionally, this committee needs to recruit and add more members next year.

Website Committee:

In March of 2009 the Maine SRC published its website www.mainesrc.org. The initial website included individual pages on the topics of: Purpose, Membership, and Meeting Location. During the next five months, additional pages were added on the topics of: the 2008 Annual Report, SRC Training, Helpful Links, and the 2009 Annual Meeting.

As of August 19, 2009 the total number of individual page views has been two hundred and one (201). The cost of operating and maintaining the website has been thirty eight dollars and eighty two cents (\$38.82) every three months, with a projected annual cost of one hundred fifty five dollars and twenty eight cents (\$155.28).

The Helpful Links currently provided on the website are to three Divisions of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in the Maine Department of Labor. Those Divisions are: the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired; and the Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and late Deafened. The website committee encourages the SRC to expand the scope of links listed. The committee recommends that the SRC consider the addition of links to other SRC websites around the nation, in hopes that members may find value in reviewing some of these websites from time to time, such as during policy considerations.

Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Federal Fiscal Year 2009 Successful Outcomes

2009

Total Number People served:

Total Successful outcomes: 648

Types of closures

Competitive employment: 487

Self Employment 21

Unpaid family worker 0

Employed w/ support 140

Total 648

Average weekly wages:

At application: \$ 112.27

At closure: \$ 314.27

Increase in weekly earnings: \$ 202 or a 179 % increase in earnings

Distribution of Successful Closures by Age at Closure

Less than 20	44	6.79%
20 – 29	206	31.79%
30 – 39	95	14.66%
40 – 49	120	18.52%
50 – 59	127	19.60%
60 – 69	47	7.25%
70 – 79	6	0.93%
80 and over	3	0.46%
Total	648	100.00%

Full Time /Part Time Employment

Number Hours Worked per week	Number of clients	Percentage of Clients hours/week
1-5	48	7.4%
6-9	39	6.0%
10-19	115	17.7%
20-24	102	15.7%
25-29	37	5.7%
30-34	54	8.3%
35-39	31	4.8%
40	198	30.6%
41-49	8	1.2%
50-59	12	1.9%
60-69	4	0.6%
70-89	0	7.4%
Total	648	100.0%

The average age of an individual served by DVR was 35 years.

The average number of months an individual successfully closed in employment was in VR system equaled 34

months.

The average case cost of a successfully closed individual was \$ 6086.74

The average wait for DVR services is 5.84 months

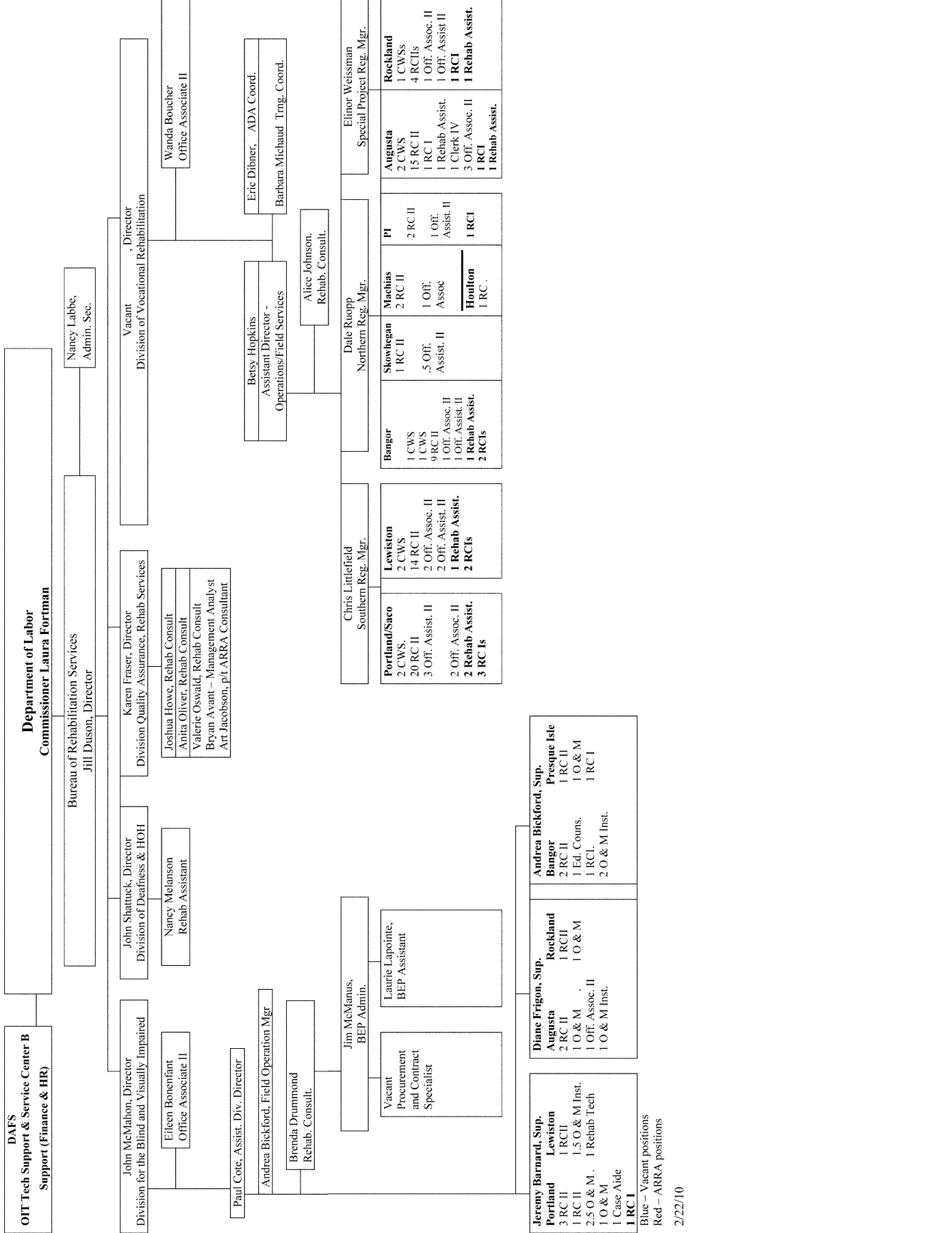
At the end of fiscal year 2009 there were 1144 individuals on the wait list

Disability Distribution of individuals in active case status as a 9/30/09

(not including visual disability*)

Hearing Loss	5.77 %
Orthopedic	12.00%
Mental Illness	31.32 %
Cognitive	36.88 %
Substance Abuse	.19 %
Other	7.90 %

*The Bureau of Rehabilitation has a separate division which serves individuals who are blind or with visual disabilities.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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