

**Virginia Employment Commission
Reemployment Services Grant
Program Plan – Part I – PY 2004**

Background & Need For Funds:

Relationship Of PY 2004 Plan To PY 2003 Plan. Virginia's proposed PY 2004 plan reflects the same program background and overall plan intent as in PY 2003. Activities that proved successful last year will be continued and expanded this year. Performance outcome goals are based on last year's actual outcomes. Outcome goals and activities are directly related to our evaluation of program strengths and weaknesses during PY2003.

Virginia's Reemployment Services (RS) program:

- Is designed to increase and enhance targeted services to UI claimants identified as likely to exhaust their benefits, through the use of One-Stop Career Centers. Early intervention is aimed at speeding the return to productive and stable employment.
- Operates under the authority and guidelines of the Wagner-Peyser Act.
- Uses a worker profiling model to identify claimants eligible for RS services.
- Is a cooperative effort between the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and partner service providers within the Virginia Workforce Network (VWN). Our largest partners are those providing services under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act. In most localities, VEC and VWN providers operate out of comprehensive One-Stop facilities. Reemployment services activity continues to be directly related to availability of VEC and WIA resources.
- Provides a Reemployment Services Orientation (RSO), as an initial "gateway" service for eligible claimants. RSOs provide overview-level information on local labor markets; employment trends; locally available VEC, WIA and community services; and managing finances and controlling stress while unemployed. They also provide basic information on job search tools and marketing skills, such as job search plans, self-assessment including career exploration, Internet including the VEC Website, networking, resumes, job applications, letters, interviews. Sessions include VEC resource room tours, and completion of individual reemployment services plans. RSO participant surveys provide quality improvement feedback regarding service quality and services/jobs outcomes information.

The overall intent of Virginia's proposed PY 2004 plan mirrors its previous plan to:

- Build on existing initiatives to improve the quality and quantity of targeted reemployment services to eligible Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants.
- Ensure that claimants, including those using customer contact (call) centers and internet claims, are linked to reemployment services in their local One-Stop Career Center system, that can speed their return to the workforce.
- Provide a full range of reemployment services to claimants in an integrated (UI, ES, TAA, WIA Title I) environment, to enable as many as possible to return to the workforce before exhausting their benefits.
- Use the UI Report 9048 to demonstrate increases in the number of UI claimants participating in customized services (see Exhibit 1).

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PY 2004 Plan Builds On PY 2003 Plan Successes & Corrects Weaknesses.

- **Grant Outcome Goal #1:** In 2003, the average year-long ratio of claimants completing RSO and job placement services, compared to those eligible/put into selection pool rose to 56%. This exceeded the targeted goal of a 55% ratio. It also reflected a 16 point increase over the prior year's 40% year-long ratio. Strategies shown in the "RSO... Activity" item (below) were major contributors to success. In 2004, the goal will be raised to 60%. We will continue to use the same strategies, to support increased RS service levels and narrow the gap between numbers of eligible claimants and those served.
- **Grant Outcome Goal #2:** In 2003, the average year-long ratio of systematically captured post-RSO assessment, counseling, job search workshops and education/training services, compared to claimants completing RSO, was 0.97%. This met the targeted goal of a 01% ratio, which was downsized to incorporate lessons learned from the prior year's pilot. Strategies in the "Post-RSO ... Capture" item (below) greatly contributed to meeting this goal. In 2004, the goal will be raised to 2%. We will continue and expand last year's strategies, to strengthen and systematically confirm the integration of services within One-Stop environments.
- **RSO And Job Placement/Referral Activity:** In 2003, RSO completions increased 12% over the prior year, resulting in 5,355 claimants served through RSOs and a 56% service to eligibility ratio. Selection/Referral letters increased 16%, with 96% of eligible claimants referred to RSO. Successful supporting strategies included weekly referrals to prevent claimants being dropped from the eligibility lists after 4 weeks drop; larger facilities; focus on tighter waive criteria and claimant rescheduling; required job service data reviews during RSO; use of additional local staff for RSO support and direct customer contact; full regional coordinator staffing levels; and cooperation with local Business Resource Unit (BRU) staff, to match RS claimants with employers' targeted recruitment needs. In 2004, all these strategies will be continued, and increased where feasible; for example, in the area of BRU/RS cooperation.
- **Monitoring And Performance Feedback:** In 2003, regional coordinators used office-level monthly and quarterly outcomes reports of RSO and post-RSO services to continuously monitor local RS activity, provide timely performance feedback to local staff and management, and take effective corrective action when needed. Written performance agreements were instituted in some offices. Coordinators built virtual teams with local office managers and ES staff, WIA counselors, BRU staff, and their peer coordinators. They monitored exceptions (e.g. waives and rescheduled RSO referrals), observed local RS staff, provided technical assistance and training, and modeled best practices,. In 2004, all these strategies will be continued, to inform local staff and management, and support them in providing reemployment services to enable earlier return to work for more claimants.

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- **Quality And Consistency Of Program And Materials:** In 2003, the RSO PowerPoint presentation, with integrated presenter notes and participant handouts, was updated and fully standardized. An “overview tutorial” handout to encourage job seeker use of VEC’s website, including LMI data, was developed and included in all RSO participant packages. Outreach actions to target special needs populations (Limited English, hearing impaired) continued, with adaptive RSOs, materials, procedures, and increased availability of Spanish job seeker books and videos. RSO referral letters and post-RSO survey letters were redesigned to clarify information and obtain better feedback. A statewide needs assessment resulted in all offices receiving new job search and career books, videos and skill inventory activities, for direct job seeker use and also in workshops. In 2004, all materials and procedures will continue to be updated and enhanced as needed, to provide current and relevant information to claimants, and adequate guidance to staff. See Program Design section.
- **Post-RSO Services Communication And Capture:** In 2003, communication and integration of reemployment services through the WIA and BRU (ES) programs increased; and claimant reporting through RSO survey letters enabled staff to verify and capture additional jobs and services data. It was not possible to systematically integrate reemployment services activity into the MACC (VWN) system due to implementation schedules and technical resource availability.
WIA: A pilot program to communicate and capture post-RSO services data into the WPRS system was evaluated, fine-tuned, and continued as a permanent feature in five One-Stop Centers (where VEC operates the WIA Adult Services program). Procedures were refined, e.g. to focus on tracking services past the initial “referred and reporting” point, and through to completion. Monthly performance feedback was provided to WIA supervisors and staff, and technical assistance (tracking, WPRS data entry) was provided as needed. WIA counselors received RSO schedules and attendance lists, and were guest speakers in RSOs. BRU: Post-RSO cooperation in selected locations included referral to BRU counselors, individual assessment assistance, job matching and referrals to targeted employers. In 2004, Linkages with BRUs and other ES programs, and WIA programs, will be continued and expanded. Operational integration of services is currently taking place, and will be enhanced. We will increase services capture rates into the WPRS system, using current tracking methods. Development of a MACC (VWN) system interface continues to be dependent on agency resources and core MACC (VWN) system priorities.

Need For Services In 2004 Plan. Much was accomplished in PY 2003. There is a clear need for ongoing and expanded services in PY 2004, and for continued implementation of strategies to drive and support those services. We plan to build on last year’s successes and mitigate identified weaknesses (above) by emphasizing the following initiatives:

1. Increased ratio of service provision to service eligibility.
2. Enhanced quality and standardization of RSO materials and procedures.
3. Increased partner services integration, communication and documentation.

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Program Design:

Funds will be budgeted to provide claimant services through the use of local, regional and central office staff activities; and system-building projects, including equipment and career and assessment tools for use in resource rooms.

Specific activities will include:

1. **Expanded RSO and job placement/referral activity.**
To include: Increased numbers of workshops and/or participants. Focus on rescheduled claimants and tighter waive criteria. Weekly eligibility list review and referral letter generation. Required job service data reviews in RSO. Increased pre and post-RSO direct claimant contact to encourage services. Closer working relationship between RS program and agency Business Resource Units (BRUs), with a focus on expanding best practices to increase job placement opportunities for RSO participants.
As needed: Additional RSO facilities, special needs RSOs, additional staff hours to support RS activities.
2. **Expanded monitoring and performance feedback.**
To include: Monthly and quarterly review of office-level performance indicators, with analysis, feedback to local offices and WIA management, and appropriate further action by coordinators. Team approach toward RS initiatives and issues, to involve coordinators, local staff, local and regional management, appropriate WIA staff, and central office. Coordinator monitoring of RSO activities and exceptions.
As needed: Written performance agreements with local offices. Coordinators to provide technical assistance, staff observation, training and best practices modeling.
3. **Enhanced quality and consistency of program and materials.**
To include: Redesign of LMI handout materials for RSO. Promotion of new job seeker materials, including Spanish items, in local resource rooms. Inclusion of special needs populations in RS activities. Revision of internal program handbook.
As needed: Updates to RSO PowerPoint presentation and handout materials, for both standard and special needs populations. Procedural updates.
4. **Post-RSO Services Communication and Capture:**
To include: Continued RS/WIA cooperation, tracking, data entry, monitoring and technical assistance in current sites. See Background - PY 2004 Plan Builds On PY 2003... section. Expanded RS/BRU (ES) cooperation. See Expanded RSO... Activity section above. Continued verification of claimant-reported services, with appropriate services entered into WPRS system.
As feasible: Limited expansion of efforts to report WIA services into WPRS system, first to offices where VEC is the WIA Adult Services operator, then to offices where VEC and partnered WIA programs are co-housed. Tracking of BRU service provision to RSO participants, and data entry into WPRS system. Continued exploration of feasibility of RS/MACC (VWN) systematic interface, dependent on agency priorities and resource availability.

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Timelines Progress Milestones

3rd QTR
CY 2004

1. Pilot closer BRU/RSO connection, to expand RS claimant job placement opportunities.
2. Draft redesigned LMI handout data & format.
3. 3rd Quarter Grant Progress Report, 9048 & 9049 Reports.

4th QTR
CY 2004

1. Assess lessons learned from BRU (prior QTR) and develop plan to expand best practices.
2. Develop plan to expand WIA data capture into WPRS.
3. PY 2004 Plan due Nov 8.
4. Finalize and distribute new LMI handout.
5. Draft of RS procedures handbook
6. 4th Quarter Grant Progress Report, 9048 & 9049 Reports.

1st QTR
CY 2005

1. Assess need to update RSO PowerPoint. If needed, identify changes.
2. Begin implementation of BRU plan (prior QTR plan).
3. Begin implementation of WIA plan (prior QTR plan).
4. Finalize handbook.
5. 1st Quarter Grant Progress Report, 9048 & 9049 Reports.

2nd QTR
CY 2005

1. Distribute revised handbook and address related training needs.
2. Update RSO PowerPoint if needed.
3. Automated RS/MACC interface activity if feasible.
4. 2nd Quarter Grant Progress Report, 9048 & 9049 Reports.
5. If needed, address training issues and revise procedures related to data tracking, communication & capture into WPRS system.
6. PY 2003 program narrative performance report (Form 9100). Due Sept 30.

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Program Linkages With Involved Partners

This topic is addressed in the Program Design and Performance Outcomes sections. The VEC's primary RS partner linkage will continue to be with WIA organizations, both within and outside of One Stop facilities. We will continue to encourage RSO participants to explore multiple avenues for job search and support services, including both VWN partners and other local organizations. Any system interface projects (see Program Design, item 4) will be solely between VEC and WIA. Communication and cooperation regarding manual tracking and notification of follow-up services will be pursued first with VEC offices who operate WIA Adult Services programs. Expansion may be considered, with external WIA providers co-housed in VEC facilities.

Delivery of Service Through The One Stop

Most VEC offices are in One Stop environments, sharing the facility with various partner organizations. WIA services are provided by VEC staff in some areas, and by Virginia Workforce Network (VWN) partner organizations in others.

The VEC will continue to be the sole provider of RSO workshops. Where possible, VWN representatives will continue to be invited into RSOs, to discuss their services and schedule initial appointments. Delivery of post-RSO job search, skills assessment, career counseling and education/training services will continue to be provided by designated organizations, on an eligibility and funds availability basis.

Cooperative actions to improve RS performance will be continued and expanded, such as team building with VEC and partner program staff and management.

Performance Outcomes & Measurement

Virginia's two performance outcome goals are based on last year's experiences, and support the need for services in PY 2004, as described earlier.

1. **By June 30, 2005, an average year-long ratio of 60%** when comparing number of claimants completing RSOs and job placement/referral services to number of claimants eligible/put into selection pool.

Using DOL Report 9048, Items C2, and also C5, will be 60% of A2.

This goal reflects a 9% increase over PY2003's average 55.8% year-long outcome. Measurement will be accomplished using DOL report 9048 and currently generated volumes. We intend to continue narrowing the gap between total eligible claimants and total claimants served.

2. **By June 30, 2005, an average year-long ratio of 2%** when comparing combined assessment, counseling, job search workshops and education/training services provided to post-RSO participants, to number of claimants completing RSOs.

Using Report 9048, the total of C3 + C4 + C6 + C7 (completed assessment,

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counseling, workshops, training) will be 2% of C2 (RSO completions).

This goal reflects a 100% increase over PY2003's 0.97% year-long outcome.

Measurement will be accomplished using current WPRS volume generation tools , and reported on DOL 9048 Report. Measurement will continue to reflect services captured into the WPRS system, as a result of operational cooperation and communication with other programs and organizations.

Attachments

- Attachment A: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Table
- Attachment B: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Narrative

Exhibit 1 – UI Report 9048

- Exhibit 1: Sample UI Report - ETA 9048

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Program Plan – Part II – PY 2003 Plan Modification**

Use of Funds

Why Funds Have Not Been Spent. Virginia spent or obligated all but \$4289 of its PY 2003 allotment. During the final 2 months, staff and similar expenditures were estimated prior to report generation. A conservative approach was taken regarding spending what was estimated to be remaining available funds, to prevent expenditures from exceeding the allotment amount.

Planned Use Of PY 2003 Funds During 2004. Since the VEC's PY 2004 plan has been designed (see Part I – PY 2004) to expand on PY 2003's successes and address improvements needed, we plan to use the remaining PY 2003 funds in the same way.

Modifications – Plan Design

Changes From PY 2003 Plan Design. Plan implementation during PY 2004 will vary from the original PY 2003 plan primarily in terms of scope. We will continue increasing numbers of claimants being provided with services. We will also continue to:

- Tighten the ratios of service provision to service eligibility (such as completed RSO attendance and job placement/referrals to pool volume).
- Improve the quality of services and materials (such as RSO presentation and materials, and follow-up contact with RSO participants).
- Increase the integration, communication and documentation of partner services provided to RSO participants (such as cooperative actions with WIA and BRU programs).

Need For Changes. Changes from the PY 2003 plan are actually refinements, to focus resources on needs identified, and on strategies that were successful in increasing and improving services, during the past year. During PY 2004, Virginia will continue to:

- Increase both volumes of claimants, and service to eligibility ratios.
- Monitor performance, mentor local RS specialists, and provide more post-RSO one-on-one claimant contact.
- Increase the integration, communication and documentation of partner services.

See Part I (PY 2004) for details.

How Modified Plan Will Assure Funds Expenditure In PY 2004. We do not anticipate any problem in full expenditure of the remaining PY 2003 funds during PY 2004. Program coordinators will continue working with regional and local management regarding the effective use of resources. The past three years' accomplishments and momentum will serve as a base for the continued emphasis, at all levels of the agency, on the provision of high quality reemployment services.

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Modifications – Performance Outcomes & Measurement

Changes From PY 2003 Plan. Performance outcome goals for the coming year, like the plan activities and use of funds (above), mirror those in VEC's PY 2004 plan (see Part I – PY 2004 for details). They are built on, and reflect experience learned, from evaluating 2003 outcomes.

1. PY 2003's first performance outcome goal *was an average, year-long 55 %* ratio of completed RSO attendance and job placement/referral services to eligible (pool) claimants. This has been *revised upward to 60% for PY2004*. Measurement will continue to be based on DOL 9048 report data.

Justification – A 60% goal represents a stretch goal, which will we intend to achieve by using the activities and strategies cited in the Program Design. See Part I – PY 2004. It was determined by the Reemployment Services coordinators; and, was based on an analysis of factors that affected PY 2003 performance in each office, such as staff availability and experience, training-related waivers, and opportunities to expand RSO facility capacity. This goal is backed by realistic plans, on an office-by-office basis, to further narrow the gap between service provision and eligibility.

2. PY 2003's second performance outcome goal *was an average, year-long 01% ratio* of the total volumes of completed assessment, counseling, job search workshops, and education/training services, to the number of claimants completing RSO's. This has been *revised to 2% for PY2004*. Measurement will continue to be based on DOL 9048 report data.

Justification – This goal also represents a stretch goal that was determined by the Reemployment Services coordinators to be realistic in the current data capture environment. We intend to achieve it by using the activities and strategies cited in the Program Design. See Part I – PY 2004. We will continue to promote all VEC and partner services that can benefit RS claimants' reemployment efforts.

Attachments

- Attachment A: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Table
- Attachment B: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Narrative

Exhibits 1 – UI Report 9048

- Exhibit 1: Sample UI Report ETA9048

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Planned Use Of Funds
- PY 2004 And Remaining PY 2003 Funds -**

Category	Remaining PY 2003	PY2004	Total Allocation
PS	\$2,166	\$310,245	\$312,411
PB	\$540	\$77,561	\$78,101
NPS	\$978	\$140,000	\$140,978
AS&T	\$605	\$86,362	\$86,967
Total	\$4,289	\$614,168	\$618,457

STAFF HOURS AVAILABLE:

Combined PY2004 & 2003 Allocation:

- 7.8 Full Time Equivalents @ \$39,877
- Personal Benefit rate of 25%

Note - See Attachment B: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Narrative

**Virginia Employment Commission
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Planned Use Of Funds
- PY 2004 And Remaining PY 2003 Funds -**

Virginia's total Reemployment Services Grant allocation, available for use during PY 2004, is \$618,457. This consists of \$614,168 in new PY 2004 funds, and \$4,289 in unspent PY 2003 funds.

Virginia plans to use \$390,512 of its total allocation to fund approximately 7.8 FTE's in staff resources, to provide reemployment services to eligible individuals. (See RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Table... “PS + PB” under Total Allocation column).

Virginia's planned Nonpersonal Services/NPS category includes items that will directly support the provision of reemployment services, such as RSO facilities rental (for overflow eligible population situations), supplies, and additional contract personnel services.

Note - See Attachment A: RS Grant – Planned Use of Funds – Table

ETA 9048 Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services Activity

Exhibit 1

Quarter ending:

State:

SAMPLE

Profiled Claimants

- A**
1. Total Profiled
 2. Number Put in Selection Pool/Queue
 3. Number Referred to Services
 4. Number Exempted from Mandatory Participation

Profiled Claimants Referred and Reporting to Services

- B**
1. Number Reported to Services
 2. Orientation
 3. Assessment
 4. Counseling
 5. Job Placement Services and Referrals to Employers
 6. Job Search Workshops or Job Clubs
 7. Education and Training
 8. Self-Employed Program

Profiled Claimants Referred and Completing Service

- C**
1. Number Completing Service
 2. Orientation
 3. Assessment
 4. Counseling
 5. Job Placement Services and Referrals to Employers
 6. Job Search Workshops or Job Clubs
 7. Education and Training
 8. Self-Employed Program

D Lower Authority Appeals Filed Resulting From Determinations of Refusal of Referral Issues

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection. If you have any comments regarding this estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden, please send them to the Department of Labor, Office of IRM Policy, Room N-1301 (1205-0353), 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20210.

Signature and Title

Date