



Division of Rehabilitative Service

Employment Service Organization Steering Committee (ESOSC)

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

In-Person Meeting Location: 8004 Franklin Farms Drive Henrico, VA 23229

Minutes

Members Present: Alan Hargraves, Joanne Aceto, Chris Lavach, Chuck McElroy, Chris Martin, Shanna Boutchyard, Stephanie Porter-Lopez, Jason Harper (virtual), Shirley Lyons, Jim Fenerty

Members Absent: Greta Harrison

Committee Vacancies: None

DARS Staff Attending: Commissioner Kathy Hayfield, Dale Batten, Anita Mundy, Donna Bonessi, Dionca Coleman

Full Committee Call to Order and Introductions

Chris Lavach, Committee Chair

Chris Lavach called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m. and welcomed members and guests.

Approve Meeting Minutes from October 8, 2024, and Current Agenda

Chris Lavach

The Committee reviewed a draft of the meeting minutes dated October 8, 2024, and the agenda for today's meeting. A motion was made by Chuck McElroy and seconded by Alan Hargraves to accept the minutes as written. All present voted in favor to accept the minutes as written. A motion was made by Shirley Lyons and seconded by Shanna Boutchyard to accept the agenda as written. All members present voted in favor to accept the agenda as written.

Public Comment

Chris Lavach

The ESOSC offered three opportunities during the meeting for public comment. Public notice was posted prior to the meeting with the opportunity for the public to submit written comment via a variety of means by January 13, 2025. No public comment was submitted prior to the meeting.

Public member, Sharon Harrup, President & CEO of STEPS, made in-person comment and suggested that those organizations that transferred participants from LTESS sponsorship to EES sponsorship be held harmless. This realignment of funds permits other organizations to use LTESS funds for participants that did not meet the EES funding requirements.

Ms. Harrup also suggested that DRS staff ensure the original totals of both LTES and EES allocations be reflected under EES funds and that changes be reflected on monthly requisitions as soon as possible.

Lastly, Ms. Harrup suggested that DRS staff ensure there would be no harm done to those organizations who participated in the transfer of funds between these separate sums if/when reallocations are available.

**Review Of Committee Responsibilities/By-laws/Conflict of Interest/
Mundy**

Anita

Financial Disclosure Requirements

DARS Staff to the Committee

Anita Mundy reviewed the annual responsibilities of the Committee to complete Conflict-of-Interest and Financial Disclosures by February 1, 2025. Ms. Mundy shared a copy of the current Employment Service Organization Steering Committee Bylaws and advised that the Committee update the language in Article I of the Bylaws to mirror changes made to the ESOSC Code of Virginia. The Committee agreed that these changes were necessary. Ms. Mundy will present a revised copy of the Bylaws at the next scheduled ESOSC meeting where the Committee will then vote to accept these changes.

**Review of Committee Term Date Expirations, and Succession Plan
For New Appointments**

Anita Mundy

Anita Mundy shared a document with the Committee that outlined the term dates and timelines for each member's Appointment. Seven of eleven members will be ineligible to reapply to serve on the Committee when their terms end on June 30, 2025. They will, however, be allowed to continue to serve on the Committee until replaced, if they choose to do so.

Joanne Aceto of vaACCSES and Jason Harper of Virginia APSE, noted that their respective organizations are in process of identifying candidates to put forth to the House of Delegates and Senate of Virginia to replace their upcoming vacancies. Anita Mundy advised the Committee and the public who were in attendance that there are two Gubernatorial appointments that will be vacant. Those interested in applying for these appointments should complete the application process listed on the website of the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Status Update on Recommendations Previously Made by the Committee

Anita Mundy

01/10/2023 Recommendation 2 (Approved/Ongoing)

The Committee recommends that DARS create a service specifically for EES services to support activities for individuals transitioning from Group Supported Employment, center-based, or facility-based employment, into community-based employment. (Recommendation made by Stephanie Hoer, seconded by Jason Harper. Members in favor: Lavach, Harper, Hargraves, Fenerty, Aceto, Hoer, and McElroy. Lyons abstained.)

The Committee discussed the E1200 service code initially be set up as an individual service code, set up for reimbursement at an hourly rate. The Committee is recommending that DARS expand on the service

description to allow for the E1200 service to be delivered in a Group Setting of no more than 7 individuals in a group and reimbursed at a Daily Rate. Chris Lavach made a motion for DARS to establish a Group Rate for no more than 7 individuals in a group based off the E1200 service description and reimbursed at a Daily Rate. Joanne Aceto seconded the motion. Lavach, Aceto, McElroy, Hargraves, Harper voted in agreement of the motion. Lyons abstained. DARS will establish a group code for this service. The E1201 service code was created for this purpose.

Update 01/14/2025–

There was no usage for the E1200 service code for Quarter 2 SFY25.

There was minimal usage (< \$500) for services provided under the E1201 service code.

07/11/2023 Recommendation (Approved/Ongoing)

The Committee recommends that DARS conduct a pilot to increase employment services to individuals with Medicaid Waiver funding. This pilot will allow LTESS funding to be utilized to fund staff travel that is over one hour, one way, from the employment staff's starting point. Current LTESS providers who serve Medicaid Waiver participants are eligible. Providers that participate in this pilot will sign an agreement stating that they will continue services if LTESS funds can no longer support staff travel. The pilot will be reviewed quarterly by the ESOSC and DARS. (Motion put forth by Shirley Lyons and seconded by Alan Hargraves. All members present voted in favor. Motion carried and was immediately approved by DARS Commissioner, Kathy Hayfield).

Update 01/14/2025

Six Organizations utilized this code and billed 915 service hours, totaling almost \$67,000. Total reimbursement increased almost \$16,000 more from Quarter 1 SFY25. Total reimbursement for SFY25 Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 combined is \$117,200. Data shows a continued substantial increase in the use of this service since it was implemented in 12/01/2023.

A report for SFY25 Q2 EWISA services shows that service hours have decreased from Quarter1 (315.45 hours billed in Q1 SFY25). Quarter 2 SFY25 data shows that 214 service hours were provided, totaling \$17,000 invoiced in Quarter 2. DARS will continue to track this service and report back to the Committee.

04/02/2024 Recommendation 1 (Approved/Ongoing)

A motion was made by Shirley Lyons and seconded by Chuck McElroy that LTESS-EES funds be made available to all eligible Employment Service Organizations, up to \$10,000, to be used for costs related to Employment Services CARF accreditation. This is for expenses paid to CARF and not to cover internal expenses. Surveys must be completed between June 1, 2023 and May 31, 2026 to be eligible for this reimbursement. This is a one-time reimbursement for the achievement of a 3-Year accreditation. All members present voted in favor of this recommendation. Commissioner Hayfield was present during discussion and approved this recommendation.

Update 01/14/2025- DARS notified organizations in November of a Round 1 Reimbursement of CARF Costs for the first half of SFY25. Twenty organizations are eligible for reimbursement in SFY25. Four organizations that provided LTESS services were reimbursed. Actual survey costs to those organizations was \$66,444.31. DARS reimbursed \$33,772.38, which averages out to a little over half of these organizational CARF Costs. Round 2 for SFY25 will occur in June 2025.

04/02/2024 Recommendation 3 (Approved/Ongoing)

A motion was made by Shirley Lyons and seconded by Chuck McElroy recommending that DARS expand allowable activities under LTESS-EES funds to include brief intervention/time limited services to help an individual maintain job stability resulting from unforeseen circumstances. DARS will determine what the additional allowable activities may include and will update the service description to reflect these changes. All members present at today's meeting voted in favor of this recommendation. DARS Commissioner, Kathy Hayfield, approved this recommendation immediately after the recommendation was made by the Committee.

Update 01/14/2025- This recommendation was approved by Commissioner Hayfield in April 2024. No feedback or suggestions have been provided to DARS from the Committee or Public on what additional allowable activities should be considered for addition to the current allowable activities for this service.

04/02/2024 Recommendation 4 (Approved/Ongoing)

Alan Hargraves made a motion and Shirly Lyons seconded, that DARS investigate capacity building in underserved areas and how LTESS-EES funds may be used to support this. All members present approved this recommendation. DARS Commissioner, Kathy Hayfield, approved this recommendation immediately after the recommendation was made by the Committee.

Update 01/14/2025 – DARS Staff to the Committee has facilitated numerous workshops to recruit new providers. Several of the attendees noted interest in underserved areas. DARS has received one application from this effort, which is currently under review.

LTESS-EES SFY25 Second Quarter Spending Report, Comparisons, *Donna Bonessi, DRS Director ESSP* and Projected Balances

Ms. Bonessi reviewed the LTESS-EES SFY2025 Second Quarter Spending Report, Comparisons, and Projected

Balances. Below is the Quarter 2 SFY25 Report that reflects a Quarter 2 balance of \$589,333.59 The total Year-to Date balance is \$4,818,730.59.

Second Quarter Ending November 30, 2024			
	EES	LTESS	Total
Expected Expenditure	\$ 642,784.00	\$ 1,471,914.50	\$ 2,114,698.50
Actual Expenditure	\$ 356,106.42	\$ 1,482,286.99	\$ 1,838,393.41
2nd QTR Bal on 11/30/24	\$286,677.58	\$ (10,372.49)	\$ 276,305.09
Mid year Balance			\$ 589,333.59
Final Balance after 2nd Qtr			\$ 589,333.59

Commissioner's Updates***Kathy Hayfield, DARS Commissioner***

Commissioner Hayfield participated in the ESOSC meeting and reviewed the proposed budget amendments for LTESS-EES, which recommends combining these funds into one sum. Commissioner Hayfield suggested that if Committee members are in agreement with the proposed budget amendment, they can send a letter of support to the Virginia House Appropriations Committee. The Commissioner shared that DARS has no sponsored Bills in the General Assembly. Commissioner Hayfield reported that there is a proposed SWaM bill that will afford ESO's the same exceptions as other SWaM vendors.

Discussion of Projected Balances & Future Use of Funds, Recommendations to DARS***Chris Lavach***

The Committee agreed that year end discussion should take place at the next meeting in April since many current member's terms will expire in June. Commissioner Hayfield suggested that the Committee review the current ESOSC Code of Virginia prior to April's meeting to determine if changes to the language should be recommended. The Commissioner suggested inviting Catherine Harrison to the next meeting to provide guidance on requesting policy changes. The Commissioner suggested those changes be submitted to the legislature as early as possible to receive pre-approval. Some Committee members suggested that it would be beneficial to extend the invitation to other ESO's so that they may provide input.

SFY25 Future Meeting Dates, Upcoming Agenda Items and other Business, Committee

The next meeting of the Employment Service Organization Steering Committee is scheduled for April 15, 2025. The Committee will meet from 10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. or until all business has been conducted.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:48 p.m.