PARTNERING WITH VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
BEST PRACTICES FOR PARTNERING

- Develop and maintain good working relationships. Avoid “poisoning the well” but also develop polite persistence.
BEST PRACTICES FOR PARTNERING

- Offer to help with things they need!
BEST PRACTICES FOR PARTNERING

- If you are working with a new VRC or VR office who is unfamiliar with IPS, you don’t have to go it alone.
- OSECE can present at a VR staff meeting or join a joint meeting with the VRC and IPS program to provide training.
- IPS Employment Center has online training for VRCs!
  - [https://ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/](https://ipsworks.org/index.php/training-courses/)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Discussion Group video
  - [https://ipsworks.org/index.php/video-library/](https://ipsworks.org/index.php/video-library/)
BEST PRACTICES FOR PARTNERING

- How do you best partner with your VR office? What is working well?
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROCESS

Intake & Application

Eligibility Determination

Individualized Plan for Employment

Employment Offer Accepted

Job Stabilization/Closure of the VR file
Problem: People don’t want to add more to their plate than they absolutely need to.

- Employment Specialist
- Therapist
- Case Manager
- Peer Specialist
- Therapy Groups
- Prescriber/Doctor
- Refill/Pick up meds
- Food Stamp Worker
- Housing Worker
- Probation Officer
- Public Assistance Worker
- A&D Support Groups
- Social Security deadlines and visits
HESITANCY AROUND VR SERVICES

- Solution: Offer to do what you can to make it easier to partner with VR.
Problem: Some people have had negative experiences with VR in the past.
HESITANCY AROUND VR SERVICES

- Solution: First find out what happened. Then provide reassurance.
  - VR no longer deems people “not competitively employable”.
  - They have a special partnership with the IPS programs where things can happen more quickly.
  - They won’t have to wait for assistance with seeking a job because they have IPS services!
  - Remind them that you will also be there to advocate for them along the way, provide reminders, help with paperwork, etc.
  - Their services will still primarily be from the IPS program rather than VR.
HESITANCY AROUND VR SERVICES

Problem: “Why do I need VR if I have IPS services?”
Solution: Offer examples of ways that VR has helped some of your job seekers in the past (without promising they will get exactly the same services, of course.)
THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Just as you have fidelity requirements to meet, VR has federal rules to comply with and also get audited.
- Due to this, their rules are sometimes different from ours and they can’t support every situation.
**ADDITIONAL TIPS**

- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Partnering
- Education
- Documentation
What tips do you have for your fellow IPS colleagues?