



## Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities

Mike DeWine  
Governor  
Kevin L. Miller  
Director

Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired  
Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Division of Disability Determination

November 16, 2022

The Honorable Mike DeWine  
Governor  
Riffe Center, 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
77 South High Street  
Columbus, OH 43215-6117

Acting Commissioner Carol Dobak  
Rehabilitation Services Administration  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Governor DeWine and Acting Commissioner Dobak:

We hope this letter finds you well. On behalf of the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) Council, I would like to start by expressing our appreciation for the opportunity to work with OOD's Director Kevin L. Miller and his outstanding team. It is truly an honor to be a part of the vital mission to help Ohioans with disabilities achieve meaningful and productive employment which will ultimately result in independence and a good and happy life.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter. It outlines the work and accomplishments of the OOD Council in collaboration with the OOD Leadership Team during calendar year 2022. The following accomplishments reflect an effort to improve the experience for the people who benefit from OOD services, the OOD staff, and the providers who deliver quality services.

**Provider Selection Video:** The Council collaborated with OOD to develop a provider selection video. The video was produced to help individuals receiving services and families as they navigate the provider selection process. Members of the Council assisted by participating in the video and by identifying others to tell their stories.

**Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Fee Schedule:** The Council provided input into fee schedule changes, including changes to the rates and the development of new Bridge Support Services. The Bridge Support Services are designed to remove barriers to participation in VR Services.

**VR Policy Review and Modifications:** The Council and the Council's Policy Subcommittee offered their expertise, experience, and insight into the process to review and modify several VR policies. The policies included Self-Employment, Rehabilitation Technology, Individualized Plan for Employment, Comprehensive Assessment, Appeals, Confidentiality, Custody, Guardianship and Power of Attorney, Residency/Immigration, VR Services, Vision Rehabilitation Therapy and Orientation and Mobility, VR Fee Schedules, and Provider Management.

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**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan Subcommittee:** The Council assisted in the review of the 2-Year Modifications to the VR Services Portion of the WIOA Combined State Plan. This work included input into the State Rehabilitation Council (OOD Council) section of the plan.

As you can see, 2022 has been an active and productive year for the Council and the OOD Team. In addition to the important work listed above, the Council is also proud to celebrate the following additional accomplishments:

- Development of a new Communication Card for Ohioans who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing,
- Creation of a new VR Support Award to increase financial support for individuals who are pursuing credentials,
- Increased efforts to raise median earnings of individuals served by the VR program,
- Serving 2400 students through the Summer Youth Work Experience program, and
- Implementing a new field office concept of smaller offices in more locations to improve access for VR participants.

Amidst many challenges over the past few years, 2022 provided us with the opportunity to renew our energy and commitment to the relationship between the Council and the OOD Team. More importantly, our dedication to the great Ohioans who benefit from VR services is stronger than ever. We are excited for future collaborative efforts focused on the success of the people who receive services and the professionals who serve them.

Again, the OOD Council is honored and pleased to share this letter outlining our work this year. We would like to thank Governor Mike DeWine, OOD Director Kevin Miller, and the people of the great state of Ohio for the privilege of serving Ohioans with disabilities through the vital work of this important council.

Sincerely,

John Moore  
Chair, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Council

c: OOD Council Members  
OOD Director Kevin L. Miller

Attachments: OOD Annual Report  
OOD Council Roster