

Department of Education
Office of Inspector General – Internal Audit
Twelve-Month Status Report on: Alliance Community & Employment Services, Inc.
Report # A-1819DOE-006 Issued: May 30, 2019
Status as of May 30, 2020

Finding	Recommendation(s)	Prior Management Responses	Management Response as of May 30, 2020	Anticipated Completion Date & Contact
<p>DVR did not conduct monitoring in accordance with the monitoring plan</p>	<p>We recommend DVR conduct monitoring in accordance with the provider’s risk assessment and subsequent monitoring plan. In addition, we recommend DVR promptly provide the monitoring results and recommendations for improvement to ACES and ensure corrective action has been initiated on noted deficiencies.</p>	<p>Management Response as of May 30, 2019</p> <p>Concur. DVR has put new monitoring processes in place that changed the monitoring frequency associated with each risk level. We have reassessed risk level for all providers. Alliance Community and Employment Services, Inc. is now considered a medium risk Provider. New monitoring processes now include providing the monitoring results and recommendations to the Provider.</p> <p>Management Response as of November 30, 2019</p> <p>The Provider Manager is conducting consistent monitoring. The Provider</p>	<p>DVR monitored the Provider’s activity for 2019. The Provider manager completed a Compliance Review form and Monitoring Letter detailing results and notified the Provider of the results on March 17, 2020.</p> <p>Project completed.</p>	<p>May 2020</p> <p>Maggie Munsey 850-245-3386</p>

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		<p>Profile form is updated to reflect these monitoring efforts. The timeframe for the current monitoring period is January – December 2019. Results and recommendations will be completed within the first three months of 2020.</p> <p>Anticipated Completion: March 2020</p>		
<p>ACES placed customers in jobs that did not match the customer’s IPE goal, and DVR paid for the placement benchmarks.</p>	<p>We recommend DVR review ACES placement benchmarks and ensure the jobs obtained match the IPE goal at the time of placement. For any payments made for placement benchmarks not matching the IPE goal, we recommend DVR consider asking ACES for repayment.</p>	<p>Management Response as of May 30, 2019</p> <p>Concur. Current system limitations restrict the Provider Manager from confirming when an IPE amendment is signed off by the Customer or Customer’s representative; and a qualified VR Counselor. DVR is working to secure a new case management</p>	<p>The IPE and Amendment Signature Dates screen in RIMS went live in July. The MECU reviewed all placements from July – December 2019 to verify signature dates were recorded in the Screen prior to placement. All cases in which the details on the screen either</p>	<p>January 2020</p> <p>Maggie Munsey 850-245-3386</p>

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	<p>We additionally recommend DVR include in their monitoring efforts a review of amendment dates compared to placement benchmark dates.</p> <p>We recommend DVR ensure counselors are appropriately trained and instructed to only approve NOAs in which the job goals match the IPE goal at the time of placement. In the event, the amendment occurred after the placement, the counselors should reject the NOA.</p>	<p>system, at which time better reporting mechanisms can be put in place to verify this information.</p> <p>In the interim DVR will conduct random post audits of IPE amendments to verify whether placement occurred prior to IPE amendment. The Bureau of Vendor & Contracted Services (BVCS) will share the results of these audits with Bureau of Field Services (BFS) management so that they may provide technical assistance to counseling staff.</p> <p>Management Response as of November 30, 2019</p> <p>RIMS changes are in process that will that will allow the system to update a change to the IPE job goal after the Counselor</p>	<p>showed signature dates after placement date or no signature dates at all were recorded. The list was sent to the former Bureau Chief of Field Services for further review.</p> <p>The Division is working on new business requirements for the case management system. One of the recommendations is for the IPE job goal to change only after signature dates are recorded in RIMS.</p>	

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		<p>has entered the amendment signature date.</p> <p>Until this goes into effect, DVR will continue to conduct random audits of IPE amendments during monitoring efforts.</p> <p>Anticipated Completion: March 2020</p>		
<p>ACES did not make timely contact with customers.</p>	<p>We recommend ACES begin regular contact with the customers within two weeks of referral acceptance in accordance with contract terms and document the contact with the customers in the MPRs. If ACES is unable to contact the customers, they should notify the VRC in writing to document contact attempts.</p>	<p>Management Response as of May 23, 2019</p> <p>Management will meet with employment specialists regularly to inform them that contact has to be made two weeks prior to receiving a referral. Management will follow up to make sure that contact is made with clients when a referral is received in the REBA system. Management will notify</p>	<p>Management has met with employment specialists regularly via, phone, and email and in person to discuss making contact with DVR client two weeks prior to receiving a new referral. Management has reached out DVR</p>	<p>05/04/2020</p>

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		<p>the employment specialist if they are having a hard time reaching the client to email the VR counselor and copy management on the email.</p> <p>Management Response as of November 30, 2019</p> <p>Aces ES specialists have made the effort to reach out to VR customers within two receiving the referral and if we unable to reach to customers, we follow up with an email to DVR counselor asking for alternative means of contact to reach customer. If the VR counselor is unable to provide us with alternative contact phone number, Aces employment specialist also makes the effort by going to the client's home to try to make contact to schedule intake with the customers.</p>	<p>clients to make sure that they were contacted to schedule the intake meeting to discuss employment services. The Employment Specialist has reached out to the DVR counselor if they are having a difficult time making contact with DVR client.</p>	

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		<p>Aces Implemented new policy of making sure we meet make contact with DVR customers within 2 weeks since June 1, 2019</p>		
<p>ACES did not obtain approval prior to hiring customers at ACES, and DVR paid for benchmarks achieved prior to approval.</p>	<p>We recommend ACES refrain from placing customers in businesses in which the provider has an ownership interest until after written approval from the VR Counselor and the VR Area Supervisor or VR Counselor Analyst.</p>	<p>Management Response as of May 23, 2019</p> <p>Management will make sure, before considering any VR participant for employment, that ACES notifies the VR counselors and the area supervisor that ACES is considering the VR participant as a staff member</p> <p>Management Response as of November 30, 2019</p>	<p>ACES has refrained from hiring / placing customers in businesses in which the provider has an ownership interest until after written approval from the VR Counselor and the VR Area Supervisor or VR Counselor Analyst.</p>	<p>05/04/2020</p>

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		<p>Since June 1, 2019 ACES has taken procedures to make sure that if any DVR consumers is considered for employment with ACES, that all the proper steps are taken prior to any employment offer is made to any current DVR consumer that is being for job placement in the community.</p>		