

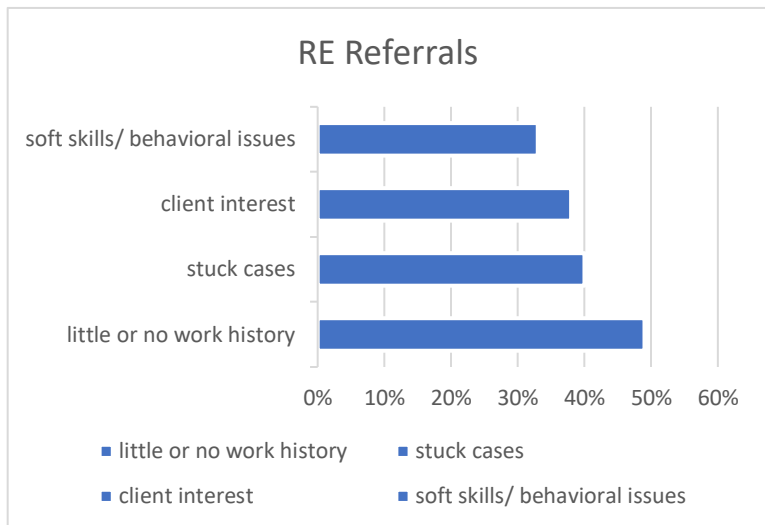
At a Glance: Progressive Employment in Nebraska

About Nebraska VR

Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation (NVR) is a general VR agency serving over 6000 clients per year, with approximately 2000 job seekers entering the work force every year. Services are available via 10 area offices, with approximately 213 total staff. Nebraska VR provides the majority of VR services in-house, using community rehabilitation providers for some service provision.

NVR Progressive Employment/ Rapid Engagement

NVR describes their Progressive Employment (PE) model as the “Meet You Where You Are” approach, with an emphasis on Rapid Engagement (RE). RE/ PE is available to all clients. Approximately 7.5% of NVR clients received RE services. According to staff survey results, the highest percentages of reasons why clients are referred to RE are “little or no work history” (49%), “stuck cases” (40%), “client’s stated interest in obtaining work experience” (38%), and “soft skills or behavioral issues” (33%).



NVR RE Implementation Strategies

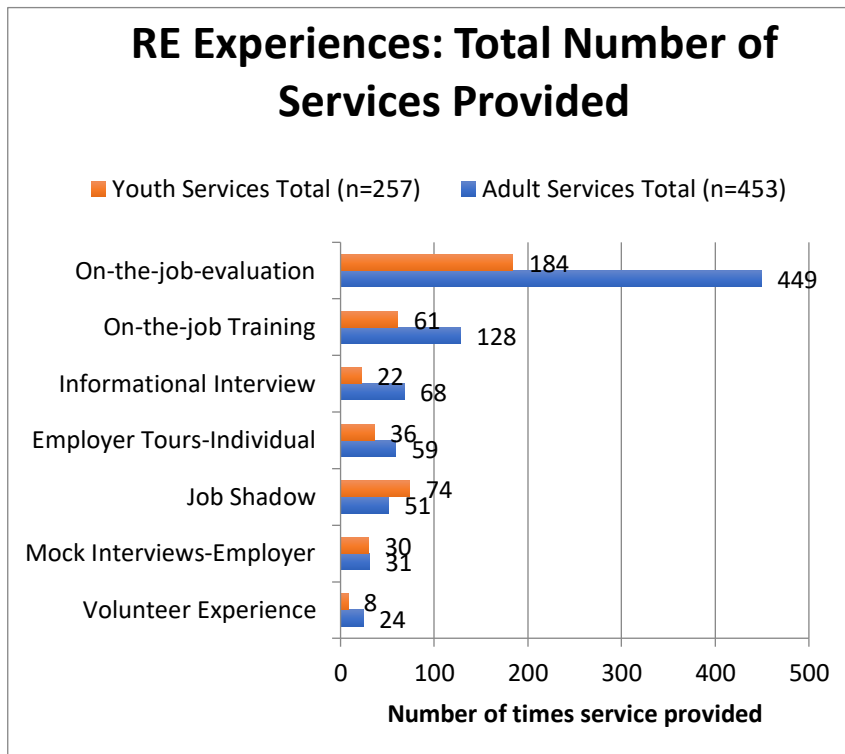
- **Business Account Managers (BAMs):** NVR has four BAMs that represent the most populated regions in the eastern part of the state. BAMs do not carry caseload. They initiate contacts with new businesses before employment specialists reach out to them.
- **Rapid Engagement (RE):** NVR is highly focused on “Rapid Engagement” as a tool for exposing clients to job opportunities and client focused career selections very early in the VR process. Approximately 1/3 of RE employment exposures are prior to IPE. Often very short time from Application to first RE experience.
- **WIN meetings:** NVR holds two WIN meetings per week that mirror Jobsville meetings. The WIN meetings foster strong teamwork amongst staff. Staff share roles, often regardless of job description.

- Funding & Liability:** NVR has funds to substantially lower the burden for employment sites, such as mechanisms for covering wages, stipends, liability, and Workers Compensation. NVR reports that they have sufficient resources in house to cover these expenses.

NVR RE Consumer Experiences

RE appears to be an effective means for addressing individuals with a limited work history or conditions that might stigmatize or otherwise seriously prevent them from finding successful employment.

- Early data indicates a dramatic decrease in drop-out rates prior to IPE. The rate of unsuccessful case closure prior to IPE was approximately 20 percentage points lower for RE youth and adult cases.



- Looking at all cases (including those closed prior to IPE), the rate of successful case closure was 11 percentage points higher for adults in RE and 14 points higher for youth compared to non-RE cases.

- NVR is the only agency using RE/PE prior to IPE. The linking of vocational evaluation with RE is seen as a promising tool for those consumers who have limited successful prior work experience.

This 2017 data and research is a product of the Progressive Employment Model Replication and Evaluation study, funded by

the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (Grant # H133B120002). The full working papers and other products associated with this study are housed on ExploreVR (www.explorevr.org).