**Developing Cohort Training**

**Best Practices Virginia Career Pathways**

**Issue:** Providing clients with information and support for post-secondary training is generally offered individually by the Vocational Counselor. However, a look at regional employment goals in a case management system frequently results in the identification of numerous individuals with the same goal. Once determined that local labor market information matches local business needs, Virginia VR, through the CPID RSA project, developed a method to support cohorts of clients preparing for and or entering post-secondary training through the development of partnerships with training providers.

Steps are as follow:

1. First, VR needs to know how many individuals in a designated area have a particular employment goal. For example, if you are considering a training program or a business tour, it is helpful to know how many individuals are interested in auto-mechanics or HVAC.
2. The Plan Goal/Employment Goal Layout in Aware allows the user to pull up all the open plans and employment goals for a specific office with counselors assigned. This information can then be populated to an excel sheet.
3. With a review the user can then see the most popular plans and even combine similar plan goals (Laborers And Freight, Stock, And Material Movers, Hand and Warehouse Workers for example).

4. Example: Certified Logistic Associate (CLA) Training

* The CPID project saw regional business demand for the Certified Logistic Associate (CLA) Training option. In Richmond, the training was offered as a two-week training through the community college. In Hampton region, it was available through Adult Education/Hampton University as an eight-week training. The Hampton training including academic skill remediation. Both trainings included OSHA 10, Forklift and CLA certifications.
* CPID staff started with informational Zoom meetings for Counselors and candidates selected by Counselors. These review sessions discussed the credentials, the training program being offered, the labor market and the large number of individuals with material handing as an employment goal. Limited referrals came from this program.
* To gather more interest for the in-person informational sessions, CPID sent letters of invitation to consumers with this career goal describing what the sessions would be discussing. Permission was given by office managers to send out these letters. Moving forward, counselors will receive a listing of potential candidates prior to letters going out to keep the counselors engaged in the process.
* Following these sessions, participants were invited to participate in a CASIS assessment to look at their academics. This determined which candidate would be a good fit. From these assessments, the CPID project recommended 4 individuals in Hampton and 10 individuals in Richmond for trainings. The four Hampton candidates received xxx credentials: in Richmond, six clients passed their credential testing the first time and the other two were preparing to retest when testing was suspended due to the COVID-19.
* Following completion of the training in Richmond, CPID offered an opportunity for the CLA participants to meet and work on applications and resumes. Three sessions were completed prior to the COVID 19 issues. In Hampton, the participants completed their training prior to the shutdown. They had several activities canceled including a tour and informational interviews from employers.