**Department of Rehabilitation Services**

**Strategic Planning and Proposed Structure**

January 2014

The Department of Rehabilitation Services is actively involved in a strategic planning process. Our Department is a fairly new agency. We are focused on building some of the key structural components so we can continue to serve our consumers with the same high standards as we had in the past.

The consolidation of our programs creates an opportunity for us to align the direction and the intent of the Department moving forward. We are focusing on strategic effectiveness, working to set the right goals and consistently achieve them. We are also focused on a shared mission, common across all programs. At this point in time, our shared mission reads as follows:

*Maximizing opportunities for people in Connecticut with disabilities to live, learn and work independently.*

Throughout our DORS Strategic Planning efforts, one of the clear strategic priorities has been Organizational Structure. We have been evaluating different options for the Department, keeping the following guiding principles in mind:

* Ensuring continuity of service to our customers
* Creating equity across Bureaus
* Maximizing efficiency
* Creating the best program fit and opportunity for program identity
* Leveraging opportunities
* Creating a robust department

We discussed a number of different options, including variations on combining and separating various programs. Based on our discussions and weighing the benefits and challenges of each possible variation of the organizational structure, we have developed the following draft for your review and comment.

The attached Organizational Chart visually represents our proposed structure. It builds off of what was working in our interim structure, with some program realignments designed to meet the principles listed above. The differences between our interim structure and our proposed structure are as follows:

* Disability Determination Services (DDS) moves out of Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) to its own Bureau. This program has a staff of 110, as well as a cadre of about 45 medical, psychiatric and speech consultants. DDS has a distinct program mission and funding source that warrants a separate Bureau status.
* The Workers Rehabilitation Program moves from BESB to BRS, as the population served is better matched to the population served by the other BRS employment programs.
* The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Counseling Unit moves under BRS. This move was part of the interim structure, but not yet implemented. This will allow for closer collaboration with both the State Coordinator for the Deaf (SCD) and our Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCDs).
* The Interpreting Unit moves under the Bureau of Organizational Support. Similar to the Counseling Unit, this move was also part of the interim structure, but not yet implemented.
* To strengthen the continuity of services for children with vision impairments that are served by BESB Children’s Services, these students will transition to BESB Vocational Rehabilitation in the same manner as the transition for children who are legally blind.

We welcome your feedback on the mission and the proposed structure. For the majority of you, emailing your comments may be the most efficient way of sharing your feedback. We are particularly interested in the following questions:

* What excites you about the mission and structure?
* What issues or concerns do you have with the mission or structure?
* What suggestions do you have for successful implementation?

**You can email your feedback to BetsyAnn Mangano at** [**BetsyAnn.Mangano@ct.gov**](mailto:BetsyAnn.Mangano@ct.gov) **by February 15, 2014.**

For those of you who prefer an in-person discussion, we will be hosting a public meeting.

**Where:** T**he NEAT Marketplace, 33 Coventry Street, Hartford CT**

**When: January 28th from 4:00 to 6:00.**

**Snow Date:** In the event of bad weather, our decision about whether to hold the meeting will be based on the Hartford Public Schools. If the Hartford schools are closed or have an early dismissal, we will go with our snow date of January 30th. Please feel free to join us to share your thoughts.

We will be gathering feedback over the next month, and then reviewing all of the feedback in February. We hope to finalize the mission and the structure by early Spring, and will communicate the final versions at that time.