

**Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
State Rehabilitation Council Annual Retreat
November 12, 2025
Final Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Commissioner Kathy Hayfield, Christopher Martin, Ryan Haywood, Nick Zweerink, Lillian Garland, Gayl Brunk, Brandy Schantz, Frederick Foard, Becky Alwood, Patricia Morgan, and Marco Callender.

Members Absent: Travis Staton, Beth Klein, Heidi Lawyer, and Ryan Mauzy.

Others Present: Dale Batten, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Julie Jacobs, DARS; Barbara Burkett, DARS; Meghan Cox, DARS; Cara Kaufman, DARS; Lisa Robertson, DARS; Patti Hodge, DARS; Becky Gibbs, DARS.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

Introduction of Members: Martin called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

Approval of meeting agenda: Commissioner Hayfield's remarks advanced to earlier time on agenda. Motion to approve change presented by Alwood, seconded by Haywood, and approved by voice vote.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Commissioner's Remarks: Commissioner Hayfield welcomed members to the Annual Retreat. The Annual Retreat gives the Council an opportunity to review performance of the VR program and sets the stage for the next year's activities. The Commissioner looks forward to the Council's recommendations and input. In that the Council might consider current events in drafting recommendations, the Commissioner confirmed that the VR program has operated continuously and without interruption during the federal shutdown and is not anticipating a decrease in VR program funding.

Presentation: Evaluating the Effectives of Vocational Rehabilitation Program Performance and Initiatives for Federal Fiscal Year 2025

Lead Program Analyst Barbara Burkett, Deputy Commissioner Dale Batten, and Field Rehabilitative Services Director Julie Jacobs presented to the Council an overview of DARS VR Program performance for Federal Fiscal Year 2025. The full presentation is included with the meeting materials.

DARS Agency Responses to 2024 SRC Recommendations

The SRC was provided with a copy of their 2024 recommendations to the agency and written information in response to the recommendations. Batten and Cox went over the written

responses and provided the Council with an opportunity to ask additional questions. Agency leadership and staff addressed questions and provided additional feedback to Council regarding agency responses. The agency updates assist the SRC in developing its 2025 recommendations. The SRC will begin work on recommendations to be included in the 2025 Annual Report today with finalization of the recommendations on the agenda for the 11/13 SRC Business Meeting.

Development of 2025 SRC Recommendations

Martin guided the Council through an initial discussion on the 2025 SRC Recommendations. DARS staff will prepare draft recommendations based on Council feedback and provide those to Council members at the 11/13 SRC Business Meeting. The 2025 SRC Recommendations are scheduled to be finalized at the 11/13 SRC Business Meeting.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

The SRC Quarterly Executive and Business Meetings will take place on November 13, 2025 at the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Headquarters in Henrico.

Meeting Handouts:

1. Draft Meeting Agenda
2. VR Program Performance FFY 2025 Presentation
3. 2024 SRC Recommendations
4. 2024 SRC Recommendations with Agency Responses