

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Avenue – Department 325, Bismarck ND 58505-0250**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For more information, contact public information officers Heather Steffl at 701-328-4933, or LuWanna Lawrence at 701-328-1892.

Agency seeks public comments on Vocational Rehabilitation services; hosts meetings in Minot and Fargo

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services’ Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and the North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council are co-hosting community meetings in Minot and Fargo next week. They are seeking public comments and suggestions on VR employment services.

The **Minot** general stakeholder and public meeting is Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2-4 p.m., Central Time, at the Grand Hotel, Viking Room, 1505 N. Broadway. The **Fargo** public meeting is Thursday, Dec. 10, 2-4 p.m., at the Baymont Inn and Suites, Woodland East Room, 3333 13th Ave. S.

“We host annual community meetings to hear directly from stakeholders, providers, and others interested in the employment of people with disabilities and VR services,” said Russ Cusack, director of the VR division. “The feedback we collect helps shape our state plan, which outlines priorities for the upcoming year.”

During the 2015 Federal Fiscal Year, Cusack said VR professionals worked with both employers and individuals with disabilities and helped 531 North Dakotans obtain and maintain employment.

Individuals who need accommodations, including auxiliary aids or other services to participate in the meetings, should contact Marv Erhardt at 701-223-1192, or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888.

Written comments will also be accepted until 5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 18, and should be sent to Marv Erhardt, Discovery Consulting, 1527 Territory Dr., Bismarck, N.D., 58503, or marverhardt.discovery@midco.net.

For background, stakeholders can review the 2013-2014 VR State Plan online at www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/policies/state.html. It can also be obtained by calling 701-328-8950, 800-755-2745, or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888.

Business and employer comment meetings will also be held in Minot on Dec. 8 and in Fargo on Dec. 10. See details online at www.nd.gov/dhs/info/publicnotice/2015/10-23-vocational-rehabilitation-state-plan-public-comment-meetings.pdf.

North Dakota is a leader in the employment of people with disabilities. Division information is available on the Web at www.nd.gov/dhs/dvr/index.html.

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