

**IDVR Proposed Stimulus Projects
March 2009**

IDVR is proposing the following projects in order to take advantage of the stimulus funds in the ARRA recently signed by President Obama.

Category 1 Funds (pertains to projects 1-7):

- a. The total amount of funds designated for IDVR is \$2,903,000
- b. Receipt of funds is set to begin in Federal FY 2009 but an exact date has not been communicated to IDVR.
- c. Funds will be allocated through the existing Vocational Rehabilitation program.
- d. No positive or negative impact on State funding is anticipated with receipt of federal stimulus funding.
- e. Additional spending authority will be necessary for the full \$2,903,000 in stimulus funding.
- f. Two temporary employees will be needed to serve as coordinators for the Disabled Homeless Project.
- g. Vocational Rehabilitation funds under the Act require no state match, cost sharing, or percentage limitations. Funds will be available beginning Federal FY 2009. Information about when the federal funding is available including an ending date has been requested from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) but clarification is still pending at the time of this submission.
- h. Pending clarification from RSA.
- i. Please see the following project descriptions for exit strategy by project.

Note: Each of the following projects is designed for temporary interventions that will facilitate employment of individuals with disabilities.

1) Project Name: Automated Case Management Software

- Total cost, \$450,000
- Purpose and Client Impact: The project impact on clients will not be directly noticed by them as the project is designed to update our agency case management system for efficiency. One possibility is to adopt a new system. At a minimum updates to the current FAMIS system are needed for interface with the case management and STARS system. Employees will notice the update in terms of efficiency of use and ease of maintenance.
- Time to Start: Research has already started in reviewing software solutions by our IT and some field staff.

- Time to Completion: Project completion will take at least a year and a half.
- Required Personnel: No additional hires will be needed for this project. Some consulting with outside firms will be required. All of the employees of the agency will be affected in some manner. The majority of the staff will need adjustment to new software that will be accomplished with training.
- Fund Source: Only funds from the stimulus package will be used for the project.
- Exit Strategy: The exit strategy is simply a matter of finishing the project. Once finished the case management system will need on-going maintenance in the same manner currently provided by our IT staff.

2) Project name: Document Imaging and Other IT Projects

- Total cost: \$280,700
- Purpose and Client Impact: Clients will be indirectly impacted by this project. The purpose is to move the agency information management forward by converting paper documentation to the electronic form. Counselors and support staff will have significantly enhanced access to case file documentation. In the present system files are partially stored in a paper form and partially stored in the electronic form. Paper or hard copy documents are usually reports and letters received by the agency from other sources or provided by clients. The documents may be medical reports, psychological reports, academic records, or other historical and employment information. These will be scanned and stored within the electronic case file. Other smaller projects requiring some computer programming will be included in this project.
- Time to start: Research has already started by our IT staff in consultation with an outside firm.
- Project completion: This project will likely take more than one year to finish as it is partially dependent on the progress of the Case Management system revisions.
- Employees required: The project will be completed by employees in house. Training in the implementation of new practices for document

imaging and use of new equipment will be needed. The training impact will be primarily on 48 support staff. The anticipation is that information flow and control will be enhanced by moving to a paperless system. Additional IT projects are smaller and involve primarily contracted programming for improved agency data management functions.

- **Funding Source:** The total funds needed for the project will come from the Federal Stimulus Package.
- **Exit Strategy:** The exit from this project will be natural once new practices are in place and staff training is complete.

3) Project Name: Unmatched Federal Funds Compensation

- **Total Cost:** \$1,090,000
- **Purpose and Client Impact:** If needed IDVR will use Stimulus funds to fill in for the loss of unmatched federal funds. The latter part of 2009 we will determine if we are able to match all available federal funds. We are anticipating a five percent increase in federal funds from the COLA included in the Omnibus Budget package passed by Congress last week. The anticipated COLA increase currently cannot be matched with state general fund dollars due to the necessary hold-backs. Partnerships with other agencies such as CRPs may assist us in matching federal funds, but it isn't clear if all of them will be met.
- **Time to Start:** The project will begin during this fiscal year if federal funds can not all be matched.
- **Project Completion:** This will occur by either meeting federal match requirements from other sources or when the federal Stimulus Funds are expended. No additional state commitment is indicated.
- **Employees Required:** No additional work will be needed for this project.
- **Funding Source:** Compensating for unmatched funds will be done entirely by Stimulus funds.
- **Exit Strategy:** When the funds are expended, the project is ended returning the agency to traditional practice.

4) Project Name: Employee Training & Ergonomic Equipment

- Total Cost: \$33,000
- Purpose and Client Impact: Maintain staff training while cutting back on travel by purchasing equipment that allows staff to access training programs through other sources such as the internet. Additionally, make workstations more comfortable by providing ergonomic equipment to reduce pain and/or injury while at work. Funds saved can be utilized for client needs.
- Project Start Time: Late Federal FY 2009.
- Project Completion: Federal FY 2010.
- Employee Requirements: No additional hires are needed for this project. Some outside contracting may be done, but it is not yet determined. The anticipated training will be designed to enhance employee work efficiency.
- Fund Source: The funding for this work will be entirely provided by the Stimulus Package.
- Exit Strategy: Once the training projects are completed regular agency training funds will be used for typical future annual training needs.

5) Project Name: Temporary Employer Incentive Package

- Total Cost: \$500,000
- Purpose and Client Impact: During the recession unemployment is climbing and we anticipate a similar effect of job loss for people with disabilities. Obtaining employment for current clients has already shown to be difficult. For example we are finding that employers who have laid off employees are intending to hire their own employees back prior to hiring any new employees. This project will provide funds to employers who will hire IDVR clients during the project period. The funds will be used for employer or business incentive hiring and for on the job training of IDVR clients.
- Time to Start: Within a month of Stimulus funds being released the criteria and process will be in place for project start.
- Project Completion: Two factors are to be considered for project completion. If hiring among employers is resumed at a more normal rate

within a year or so the project will end. Otherwise, once the funds are used up the project will be completed and obtaining employment for clients will return to previous agency practice.

- **Employees Required:** This project will not require any additional staff. The work will be done by current counselors and support staff.
- **Funding Source:** All cost for the project will come from federal stimulus funds.
- **Exit Strategy:** The exit strategy is as described above. Once the funds are used up or when employers are hiring at a more normal rate as seen prior to this recession, the agency will return to its regular practices for obtaining employment for clients.

6) Project Name: Assistive Technology

- **Total Cost:** \$150,000
- **Purpose and Client Impact:** There is always a need for assistive technology to be purchased for clients and for such equipment to be available for demonstration. This project proposes to acquire needed assistive technology devices for client exposure and for client use. IDVR will work in conjunction with The Assistive Technology program located at the University of Idaho Center on Disabilities and Human Development.
- **Time to Start:** The project may begin within two months of the time funds are released for use by the agency. The time needed to start is based on working with the Assistive Technology program with the U of I.
- **Project Completion:** This project will take about one year to complete.
- **Employees Required:** No additional IDVR staff are required for this project. No additional staff will be needed by the Assistive Technology program at the U of I.
- **Fund Source:** All funding for this project will come from the Stimulus Package. No matching funds or any other funds will be used.
- **Exit Strategy:** Once the funds are spent acquiring assistive technology and any needed support, the project will be completed. The exit strategy therefore is simply project completion.

7) Project Name: Temporary Disabled Homeless Project

- Total Cost: \$400,000

- Purpose and Client Impact: During the time of the recession, the homeless population is growing. A portion of this population has disabilities compromising their ability to obtain employment even when there is not a recession and will need extra services to get back on their feet and obtain employment. This project will be done in collaboration with other agencies such as homeless shelters, Mental Health, Health and Welfare, the Department of Corrections and any other organization addressing the needs of this population.

- Time to Start: About three months will be needed to begin this project.

- Project Completion: Two key factors are critical in determination of project completion. In the next year or so if the economy turns around and a more normal hiring pattern of employees returns to the state, the project can be concluded. The second key factor is the amount of available stimulus funds. If the economy does not turn around in a satisfactory manner, the project will be completed when the stimulus funds are used up.

- Employees Required: The project will require two temporary employees to serve as coordinators between the normal VR staff application and as liaisons between IDVR and other agencies that are designed to provide services to homeless individuals.

- Fund Source: Only designated Stimulus funds will be used in this project. There will likely be some cross over funds normally used in providing VR services to clients. There will not be an increase of commitment by the state to this population.

- Exit Strategy: It is IDVR's hope that the turning around of the economy will provide a natural exit strategy with the rehiring of laid off employees in businesses across the state. Short of an economic reversal, the project will end when Stimulus funds for the project are exhausted. At that time the agency will return to standard functioning as practiced prior to the recession.