#### **NextGen Careers**

#### Moving Traditional Vocational Rehabilitation to a Self Actualization Model

Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Presentation to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission State Rehabilitation Council 6/16/2022

Michelle Banks NextGen Strategic Director David Sykes NextGen Director of Operations

### **Presentation Agenda**

- Overview of NextGen Careers Practice Model
- Overview of the RSA Innovation Grant that funds NextGen Careers
- Target Population for NextGen Careers
- Project Components of NextGen Careers
- Partnership with the MRC SRC

# **Innovation Grant Overview**

- December 2021 MRC received a \$17M Innovation Grant from RSA. The grant is fully funded through 6/30/2026 with the potential for renewal.
- 5-year demonstration project focused on improving long term career outcomes.
- The grant provides a rich opportunity to use implementation science to design and deliver a service model, specific to young adults with disabilities between the ages of 18-30 years old.
- MCB and MCDHH are partners on this grant.

# New Model: NextGen Careers

#### **Target Population:**

- VR eligible young adults (YA) with a disability
- Age 18 30
- Young Adults with all disabilities are eligible

#### **Targeted efforts to engage Young Adults:**

- intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD),
- autism spectrum disorders
- sensory (Blind, Low Vision, Deaf, Hard of Hearing)
- from underserved racial and ethnic groups (Black and Latinx).

**Participants may include** new VR applicants, those previously served who are unemployed, and those currently employed but seeking a career change or advancement.

## NextGen Careers Core Components

- Multi-disciplinary Integrated Resource Team (IRT). IRTs bring together key stakeholders to work collaboratively around individuals' employment goals. This team includes a Specialty Counselor focused on young adults with sensory disabilities.
- Career Preparedness. Career Preparedness focuses on assessing and enhancing factors associated with Career Self Actualization (CSA), helping participants improve their preparation for their careers.
- Career Pathways. Career Pathways focuses on work-based learning particularly in the field of STEM, including apprenticeships, building career pathways, and obtaining initial competitive employment.
- Career Extended Support. Career Extended Support begins when the participant is employed, and consists of on-the-job problem-solving to help maintain employment, counseling to better prepare for promotional opportunities, and other supports to promote independence.

# NextGen Careers Learning Experience Self CAReS

- Focus on developing and enhancing young adults' internal skills, specifically:
- *self-capacity* (confidence in their ability to perform a job),
- self-advocacy (ability to direct one's own life)
- self-realization (understanding of their strengths and limitations),
- self-sufficiency (ability to be independent)

# Service Delivery Approach

Standard VR

- Career mentoring
- VR counselors are responsible for moving consumers through the service model
- Compliance/time in status are important
- Minimal utilization of apprenticeships, internship
- Individualized Plan for Employment
- 90+ days competitive employment is the benchmark
- Large caseloads

NextGen Careers

- Psychosocial mentoring
- The NextGen service model is built around a team approach
- Case compliance differs from SVR; less stringent
- Utilization of apprenticeships, internships will be higher; STEM careers
- Career Portfolio (very fluid)
- Competitive employment remains a benchmark, although improvement in SelfCARES are measured too
- Smaller caseloads

### NextGen Careers Staff Titles

### Titles:

Peer Mentor

Counselor

Employment Success Specialist Benefits Counselor Specialty Counselor role Family Specialist/Partner Supervisor

### Working with MRC SRC

- Help the SRC to be knowledgeable about the purpose and practice of NextGen.
- Advise NextGen Careers on recruitment and service strategies.
- Provide the SRC with periodic updates regarding NextGen progress, challenges and opportunities.
- Receive feedback and recommendations from the SRC that informs NextGen programming and benefits our shared young adult participants.

# Thank you!