



**PROVIDER REPORT  
FOR  
VOCATIONAL  
ADVANCEMENT CENTER  
115 Watertown Street  
Watertown, MA 02472**

**May 13, 2022**

**Version**

**Public Provider Report**

**Prepared by the Department of Developmental Services  
OFFICE OF QUALITY ENHANCEMENT**

## **SUMMARY OF OVERALL FINDINGS**

**Provider** VOCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT CENTER

**Review Dates** 3/8/2022 - 3/14/2022

**Service Enhancement Meeting Date** 3/28/2022

**Survey Team** Raymond Edi-Osagie  
Mark Boghoian  
Leslie Hayes (TL)

**Citizen Volunteers**

<b><u>Survey scope and findings for Employment and Day Supports</u></b>					
<b>Service Group Type</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Licensure Scope</b>	<b>Licensure Level</b>	<b>Certification Scope</b>	<b>Certification Level</b>
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	2 location(s) 11 audit (s)	Full Review	39/44 2 Year License 03/28/2022 - 03/28/2024		36 / 46 Certified with Progress Report 03/28/2022 - 03/28/2024
Community Based Day Services	1 location(s) 6 audit (s)			Full Review	13 / 17
Employment Support Services	1 location(s) 5 audit (s)			Full Review	17 / 23
Planning and Quality Management				Full Review	6 / 6

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY :**

The Vocational Advancement Center (VAC) is a non- profit human services agency that has been serving people in the greater Boston area since 1957. VAC provides supports to individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities, and other Mental Health conditions. The agency serves these individuals in its Employment and Community-Based Day Services (CBDS) services with a focus on development of employment skills. The agency is also planning to support individuals on the Autism Spectrum, as well as Acquired Brain Injury in the upcoming future.

This 2022 Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Office of Quality Enhancement survey was a full review of all Licensing and Certification indicators applicable to adult services in Employment and Community-Based Day Services. The Licensing review covered domains such as personal and environmental safety, communication, human rights, goal development and competent/skilled workforce. It also encompassed a Certification review of areas such as exploring and supporting job interests, skill development and ongoing assessment.

Vocational Advancement suspended in person services for a period due to the COVID 19 pandemic, conducting many activities virtually during that time. The agency has now fully returned to in-person supports within the CBDS program. Individuals are adjusting to the flow of things, and are again being supported to explore leisure activities, and in some cases engaging in employment and volunteering options as well. The agency is also now working to re-establish contacts within the community which had provided volunteer opportunities for individuals prior to the Pandemic.

Survey results in Licensing showed that Vocational Advancement had effective systems for the tracking of mandatory staff trainings, ongoing staff development and the screening of potential hires. Staff meetings occurred regularly, and staff were kept regularly informed of individual matters and requirements/ programmatic changes. The CBDS location was clean, and annual inspections were conducted as required. In the area of the ISP, required submissions occurred within required timeframes, and individual goal implementation and accomplishments were well supported.

In the area of Certification, the agency conducted annual satisfaction surveys for the services it provides. It sought input from individuals, guardians, family members and other stakeholders and used the information it gathered to inform program growth and changes. Individuals expressed enjoyment with the various choices of activities that were being offered in the community, and in groups and classes available when on site. Individuals were once again able to access the community, including going to area malls, local libraries, and doing outdoor activities such as walks as the weather allowed.

In the Employment Program, individuals who had jobs prior to the pandemic had returned to their group and supported employment jobs, while others were in various stages of job seeking. Individuals continued to be supported within the agency's employment program contract at Tufts University's dishwashing rooms. People had the choice to work approximately one to five days a week at Tufts and attend CBDS programing the other days.

While VAC showed areas of effective supports to individuals, some areas required further attention. For example, the agency is currently affiliated with another agency's Human Rights Committee but did not have all attendance records for the committee meetings over the past two years. It was thus, indeterminate whether the committee functioned with a full complement of its required members, met quorum at meetings; it also did not discuss VAC related matters under its purview as they were not presented. The agency also did not meet the mandate to ensure that incidents are reported and finalized within the required timeframes.

Within the CBDS and Employment Programs, the processes for understanding individual's work-

related interests, providing training, and expanding individual's employment opportunities were also in need of attention. The agency also needs to show that individuals are safe in their use of work-related equipment by the completion of assessments. Additionally, as a path towards employment, effort should be put into developing plans that identify each person's skills, job goals and support needs. This should include developing strategies aimed at removing barriers that hold people back from finding employment that match their skills and interests. For employed individuals, VAC needs to ensure that they give regular feedback on job performance, and fully assess individuals on the need for assistive technology, identifying ways that technology tools can further their independence.

Based on the findings of this review, the agency will receive a Two-Year License for its CBDS, and Employment supports grouping with a score of 89% of licensing indicators Met. Within 60 days of the Service Enhancement meeting, the DDS Office of Quality Enhancement will conduct a follow-up review of Licensing indicators that were not met.. The agency is also Certified for the CBDS, and Employment supports grouping with 78% of Certification indicators receiving a rating of Met. The agency will complete a progress report for the Certification indicators that were not met and submit the findings to the DDS Office of Quality Enhancement within one-year of the SEM meeting.

## **LICENSURE FINDINGS**

	Met / Rated	Not Met / Rated	% Met
<b>Organizational</b>	<b>6/7</b>	<b>1/7</b>	
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	<b>33/37</b>	<b>4/37</b>	
Community Based Day Services Employment Support Services			
<b>Critical Indicators</b>	<b>6/6</b>	<b>0/6</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>39/44</b>	<b>5/44</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>2 Year License</b>			
<b># indicators for 60 Day Follow-up</b>		<b>5</b>	

### **Organizational Areas Needing Improvement on Standards not met/Follow-up to occur:**

Indicator #	Indicator	Area Needing Improvement
L48	The agency has an effective Human Rights Committee.	Vocational Advancement is affiliated with another DDS provider's Human Rights Committee, but the agency did not have the required minutes to determine the effectiveness of the committee and its role in it. The agency needs to ensure that it maintains a Human Rights Committee that is fully constituted, meets all regulatory requirements, and maintains meeting minutes (including attendance records).

### **Employment/Day Areas Needing Improvement on Standards not met/Follow-up to occur:**

Indicator #	Indicator	Area Needing Improvement
L1	Individuals have been trained and guardians are provided with information in how to report alleged abuse/neglect.	For four of the eleven individuals, abuse/neglect training materials were mailed to individuals and no actual training took place. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are trained on how to report alleged abuse/neglect.
L9 (07/21)	Individuals are able to utilize equipment and machinery safely.	For ten of the eleven individuals, assessments on the safe use of equipment needed for job-related activities had not been completed. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are assessed on the safe use of job-related equipment.

L49	Individuals and guardians have been informed of their human rights and know how to file a grievance or to whom they should talk if they have a concern.	For three of the eleven individuals, human rights and grievance training materials were mailed to individuals and no actual training took place. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are trained on Human Rights and how to report a grievance.
L91	Incidents are reported and reviewed as mandated by regulation.	At one of the two locations, incidents were either reported and /or finalized late. The agency needs to ensure that incidents are reported and reviewed within the required timelines

## **CERTIFICATION FINDINGS**

	Met / Rated	Not Met / Rated	% Met
<b>Certification - Planning and Quality Management</b>	<b>6/6</b>	<b>0/6</b>	
<b>Employment and Day Supports</b>	<b>30/40</b>	<b>10/40</b>	
Community Based Day Services	13/17	4/17	
Employment Support Services	17/23	6/23	
<b>Total</b>	<b>36/46</b>	<b>10/46</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>Certified with Progress Report</b>			

### **Community Based Day Services- Areas Needing Improvement on Standards not met:**

Indicator #	Indicator	Area Needing Improvement
C38 (07/21)	Specific habilitative and behavioral goals necessary to prepare individuals for work are identified.	For two of five individuals, Specific habilitative and behavioral goals to prepare individuals for work had not been identified. The agency needs to identify and work on specific habilitative and behavioral goals necessary to prepare individuals for work
C39 (07/21)	There is a plan developed to identify job goals and support needs that would lead to movement into supported employment.	For one of four individuals, a plan developed to identify job goals and support needs that would lead to movement into supported employment was not in place. The agency needs to ensure that it identifies individual job goals and needs, and support individuals to potentially move into supported employment.
C44	Staff have effective methods to assist individuals to explore their job interests if appropriate.	One of three individuals had not been adequately assessed for their job interests. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are assessed for their job interests.
C54	Individuals have the assistive technology and/or modifications to maximize independence.	For five of the six individuals, assessments for assistive technology needs were incomplete and/or lacking meaningful information. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are assessed for assistive technology to determine their needs and maximize their independence.

C22	Staff have effective methods to assist individuals to explore their job interests.	For two of the four individuals, methods used to determine job interests were not evident. The agency needs to ensure that they utilize effective methods to determine individual job interests and that these methods are documented.
C23	Staff utilize a variety of methods to assess an individual's skills, interests, career goals and training and support needs in employment.	For three of the four individuals, there were no evident methods for assessing and determining individual job interests, skills and career goals to determine employment support needs. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are assessed for their skills, interests, career goals and training and support needs in employment.
C24	There is a plan developed to identify job goals and support needs.	None of the four individuals had plans to identify their job goals and support needs. The agency needs to develop plans to identify individual's job goals and support needs.
C25	Staff assist individuals to work on skill development for job attainment and success.	For two of four individuals, it could not be ascertained that staff assisted individuals to work on skill development for job attainment and success. Agency staff needs to assist individuals to work on skill development for job attainment and success and maintain records of their efforts.
C35	Individuals are given feedback on job performance by their employer.	Three of five individuals were not given regular or annual feedback on job performance by their employer. The agency needs to ensure that individuals receive regular feedback, and the records are maintained.
C54	Individuals have the assistive technology and/or modifications to maximize independence.	For two of the five individuals, assessments for assistive technology needs were incomplete and/or lacking meaningful information. The agency needs to ensure that individuals are assessed for assistive technology to determine their needs and maximize their independence.

## MASTER SCORE SHEET LICENSURE

### Organizational: VOCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT CENTER

Indicator #	Indicator	Met/Rated	Rating(Met,Not Met,NotRated)
☒ L2	Abuse/neglect reporting	1/1	Met
L3	Immediate Action	1/1	Met
L4	Action taken	1/1	Met
L48	HRC	0/1	Not Met(0 % )
L74	Screen employees	1/1	Met
L76	Track trainings	3/3	Met
L83	HR training	3/3	Met

### Employment and Day Supports:

Ind. #	Ind.	Loc. or Indiv.	Emp. Sup.	Cent. Based Work	Com. Based Day	Total Met / Rated	Rating
L1	Abuse/neglect training	I	2/5		6/6	8/11	Not Met (72.73 %)
L5	Safety Plan	L			1/1	1/1	Met
☒ L6	Evacuation	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L7	Fire Drills	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L8	Emergency Fact Sheets	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L9 (07/21)	Safe use of equipment	I	1/5		0/6	1/11	Not Met (9.09 %)
☒ L11	Required inspections	L			1/1	1/1	Met
☒ L12	Smoke detectors	L			1/1	1/1	Met
☒ L13	Clean location	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L14	Site in good repair	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L15	Hot water	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L16	Accessibility	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L17	Egress at grade	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L18	Above grade egress	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L20	Exit doors	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L21	Safe electrical equipment	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L22	Well-maintained appliances	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L25	Dangerous substances	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L26	Walkway safety	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L29	Rubbish/combustibles	L			1/1	1/1	Met
L31	Communication method	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L32	Verbal & written	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L37	Prompt treatment	I	5/5			5/5	Met

P L38	Physician's orders	I			3/3	3/3	Met
L49	Informed of human rights	I	2/5		6/6	8/11	Not Met (72.73 %)
L50 (07/21)	Respectful Comm.	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L51	Possessions	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L52	Phone calls	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L54 (07/21)	Privacy	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L77	Unique needs training	I	5/5		6/6	11/11	Met
L80	Symptoms of illness	L	1/1		1/1	2/2	Met
L81	Medical emergency	L	1/1		1/1	2/2	Met
L85	Supervision	L	1/1		1/1	2/2	Met
L86	Required assessments	I	4/5		6/6	10/11	Met (90.91 %)
L87	Support strategies	I	4/5		5/5	9/10	Met (90.0 %)
L88	Strategies implemented	I	5/5		5/5	10/10	Met
L91	Incident management	L	1/1		0/1	1/2	Not Met (50.0 %)
#Std. Met/# 37 Indicator						33/37	
Total Score						39/44	
						88.64%	

## MASTER SCORE SHEET CERTIFICATION

### Certification - Planning and Quality Management

Indicator #	Indicator	Met/Rated	Rating
C1	Provider data collection	1/1	Met
C2	Data analysis	1/1	Met
C3	Service satisfaction	1/1	Met
C4	Utilizes input from stakeholders	1/1	Met
C5	Measure progress	1/1	Met
C6	Future directions planning	1/1	Met

## Community Based Day Services

Indicator #	Indicator	Met/Rated	Rating
C7	Feedback on staff / care provider performance	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C8	Family/guardian communication	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C13	Skills to maximize independence	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C20 (07/21)	Emergency back-up plans	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C37	Interpersonal skills for work	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C38 (07/21)	Habilitative & behavioral goals	3/5	<b>Not Met (60.0 %)</b>
C39 (07/21)	Support needs for employment	1/4	<b>Not Met (25.00 %)</b>
C40	Community involvement interest	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C41	Activities participation	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C42	Connection to others	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C43	Maintain & enhance relationship	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C44	Job exploration	2/3	<b>Not Met (66.67 %)</b>
C45	Revisit decisions	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C46	Use of generic resources	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C47	Transportation to/ from community	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C51	Ongoing satisfaction with services/ supports	6/6	<b>Met</b>
C54	Assistive technology	1/6	<b>Not Met (16.67 %)</b>

## Employment Support Services

Indicator #	Indicator	Met/Rated	Rating
C7	Feedback on staff / care provider performance	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C8	Family/guardian communication	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C20 (07/21)	Emergency back-up plans	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C22	Explore job interests	2/4	<b>Not Met (50.0 %)</b>
C23	Assess skills & training needs	1/4	<b>Not Met (25.00 %)</b>
C24	Job goals & support needs plan	0/4	<b>Not Met (0 %)</b>
C25	Skill development	2/4	<b>Not Met (50.0 %)</b>
C26	Benefits analysis	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C27	Job benefit education	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C28	Relationships w/businesses	1/1	<b>Met</b>

C29	Support to obtain employment	3/4	<b>Met</b>
C30	Work in integrated settings	4/5	<b>Met (80.0 %)</b>
C31	Job accommodations	2/2	<b>Met</b>
C32	At least minimum wages earned	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C33	Employee benefits explained	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C34	Support to promote success	4/5	<b>Met (80.0 %)</b>
C35	Feedback on job performance	2/5	<b>Not Met (40.0 %)</b>
C36	Supports to enhance retention	4/5	<b>Met (80.0 %)</b>
C37	Interpersonal skills for work	4/5	<b>Met (80.0 %)</b>
C47	Transportation to/ from community	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C50	Involvement/ part of the Workplace culture	4/4	<b>Met</b>
C51	Ongoing satisfaction with services/ supports	5/5	<b>Met</b>
C54	Assistive technology	3/5	<b>Not Met (60.0 %)</b>