

1-2013

2012 State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report

Maine State Rehabilitation Council

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2012 Maine State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report



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State Of Maine
Office of the Governor
1 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-00001

Governor LePage:

On behalf of the Maine State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), I am pleased to present the 2012 Maine State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report for the period October 1, 2011, to September 30, 2012.

At a time when the nation's economy is still sluggish and Maine's budget constraints have forced reductions in its workforce and services, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) continues to provide a high quality of services to its DVR consumers. With the waitlist gone and an increase in the numbers of people accessing their services, DVR is in the position of possibly having a lack of human resources to be able to provide quality services to Maine individuals with a disability. The Maine SRC would like to advocate for your continued support of this important program.

Below are some of the activities the Maine State Rehabilitation Council has worked on this past year:

- Five-Council Collaborative. Members comprised of: State Rehabilitation Council-General, State Rehabilitation Council-Blind, Statewide Independent Living Council, Division for the Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing, and Late-Deafened, and Governor's Council on Disability and Employment. The purpose of this collaboration is to increase communication and cooperation between the five councils to provide optimal support for employment opportunities and independent living services for Maine residents with disabilities.
- DVR Statewide Training. Council members attended and participated in the DVR Statewide training at the Augusta Civic Center.
- State Plan: DVR/SRC–Public Hearing. The joint DVR/SRC public hearing was held on April 19, 2012, during the regular SRC meeting and was available for public comments. This hearing provided the opportunity for members of the community to voice suggestions for improvements or concerns about the DVR programs.
- State Plan: Council Comments. Council members provide a valuable input in reviewing the State Plan and providing comments to DVR. The state plan is submitted to DVR's Federal oversight partners, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) in Washington DC.

In closing, I want to thank Betsy Hopkins, Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and her staff: Alice Johnson, Allison Bubier, Elinor Weissman, Libby Stone-Sterling and Karen Fraser for all the work they have done for DVR and the collaboration they have shown by working with the SRC this past year.

Respectfully,

Janet A. Avery

Maine State Rehabilitation Council-Chair



Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF REHABILITATION SERVICES
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
150 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0150

Jeanne S. Paquette
COMMISSIONER

January, 2013

To the Citizens of Maine:

As Director to the State of Maine's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, (DVR) I am pleased to again recognize the contribution of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in their vital role as the Division's partner, advocate and advisor. Over the years the Division has relied on the Council for guidance and support in our efforts to provide vocational services to Maine citizens with disabilities. We are particularly fortunate to have an SRC membership that is made up of individuals who are well versed in issues relating to vocational rehabilitation and who have demonstrated excellent leadership.

Maine continues to face challenges related to the downturn in the national economy. All state departments are being asked to examine their policies and practices to ensure the most effective use of resources while maintaining quality services. It has been a little over two years since we eliminated a wait list for services for the DVR program. During these two years, our application and enrollment numbers have increased, but so have our employment outcomes by 30%. In addition, our Rehabilitation Rate is the highest it has been in 10 years!

The SRC has been very supportive of DVR in helping us make the case to fill vacant positions, and actually in a couple of instances get new positions to continue to serve all Mainers who access our services. Our goal is to continue to provide seamless, quality services to individuals with disabilities while carefully tracking and managing our human and financial resources. Continued advocacy and support from the SRC is crucial for us to be able to achieve this.

I look forward to another successful year ahead of consultation and collaboration with the SRC.

Sincerely,

Betsy Hopkins, Director
Maine Department of Labor
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Mission Statement

The Mission of the State Rehabilitation Council is to partner with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the development of state goals, priorities, policy, and practice; and to review and analyze the Division's results and performance in support of securing and maintaining integrated and competitive employment, through a process of informed choice, for individuals with disabilities.

Purpose

In complying with the rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998 that were contained in Title IV of the workforce Investment Act of 1988 (WIA), the Maine State Rehabilitation Council was established in accordance to Federal Regulations governing the Rehabilitation Act.

Under these regulations, (Title I of the Rehabilitation Act), the Council works in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to review, analyze and evaluate the Maine State Rehabilitation Program.

Role/Responsibilities

Review, analyze, and advise the designated State Unit regarding the performance of the State unit's responsibilities pertaining to:

1. Eligibility, including order of selection.
2. Extent, scope and effectiveness of services provided.
3. Functions performed by State agencies that affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes.

Specific areas mentioned in the Federal Regulations:

1. Consumer Satisfaction
2. CSPD
3. Informed Consumer Choice
4. State Plan
5. Comprehensive Statewide Assessment
6. Fair Hearing Board
7. Records of Service (case file)

How to Be Appointed

Members of the Council are appointed by the Governor of the State of Maine after soliciting recommendation from the citizens of the State, representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. To the extent possible, the membership shall reflect the cultural diversity of the State of Maine. A member may be reappointed and a vacancy shall be filled by the Governor.

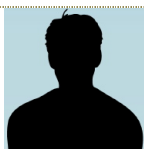
For more information, please contact a Council member.

FY2011-2012 Council Membership

There is a direct correlation between the expertise and dedication of individual members serving on a council and its collective effectiveness as a group. The SRC for DVR is fortunate to have members who know the vocational rehabilitation system and possess the dedication to helping improve these services for Maine's citizens with disabilities.

During fiscal year October 2011, to September 2012, the Council held 12 monthly meetings during the year and our Annual Meeting in September.

Council composition under Section 361.17 Requirements for a State Rehabilitation Council (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Part 361-State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program) is below. Also included are pictures of Council members and a brief statement of their contribution to the Council where available.



Unavailable

Vacant

Statewide Independent Living Council

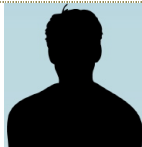


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Jan Avery

Parent Training and Information Center

Jan retired after 25 years of teaching. She was a special education teacher for 7 of those years. She is currently a Parent Training and Information Specialist with Maine Parent Federation. She has worked in this position for 5 years.

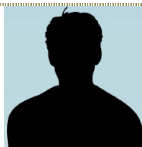


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Jenny Ardito

Client Assistance Program

Jenny Ardito, Advocate, with the Client Assistance Program at C.A.R.E.S., Inc. Jenny works directly with consumers who are clients of Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living Services. She is involved in systemic and individual advocacy for negotiation and mediation regarding services under Title I and VII of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 2001. Jenny provides consumers with general information regarding the rights and services under the Rehabilitation Act. Jenny has a B.S. degree in Human Development and is a licensed Social Worker.



Unavailable

Annette Coderre-Proulx

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Annette is currently a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with Wabanaki Vocational Rehabilitation Program, the 121 Native American VR program in Maine. Annette works with tribal members with disabilities in the Bangor region.



Allison Bubier, CRC

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (ex officio)

Allison has been working as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for 5-years for the State of Maine. As a person with a disability and a former VR client, Allison brings a full perspective of working with individuals with disabilities. Allison brings to the Council information regarding the vocational process and working effectively with clients.



Drew Bolduc

Community Rehabilitation Program Service Provider

Drew Bolduc has been an Employment specialist for the past ten years, has served on the council for the past six years and is a past chair. Drew has an adult child with a disability.

| | |
|--|--|
|  | <p>Vacant</p> <p><i>Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor</i></p> |
|  | <p>Vacant</p> <p><i>Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor</i></p> |
|  | <p>Vacant</p> <p><i>Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor</i></p> |
|  | <p>Vacant</p> <p><i>Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor</i></p> |



Janine Collins

Representative of Disability Advocacy Groups

Janine M. Collins, MTS, MSW is a Research Associate at the University of Maine's Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies and a project contributor for the Autism Research Institute (ARI). She holds an undergraduate degree in Special/Elementary Education and Psychology and graduate degrees in Theology and Social Work. Prior to work in the area of research, her experience was in direct service delivery, first as a public school special educator and then as a case manager in adult social services. She is co-author of *Quality Employment Practices for Supporting Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders*, a contributor to and editor for the *AGI Daily Living/Residential Skills Curriculum & Training*, and works on a number of projects related to best practices and improving service delivery. She serves as President of the Board of the Autism Society of Maine, has been recommended for appointment to the Maine Developmental Disability Services Oversight and Advisory Board (OAB), and lends a consumer perspective as a member of the Maine's State Rehab. Council. Her work is informed by her own experience as an individual with disabilities.



Debra Brucker

Representative of Disability Advocacy Groups





Debra Brucker is a resident of Maine and a researcher at the Institute on Disability at the University New Hampshire. Dr. Brucker has held research positions in state government, in academic institutions, and in private research organizations. She currently studies the economic well-being of persons with disabilities.

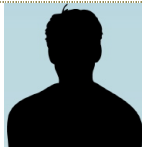


Vicky Taylor

Current or former applicants for, or recipient of, Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Vicky has lived in Maine most of her life, and she is a graduate of the University of Maine at Augusta with a B.S. in Mental Health and Human Services. Vicky completed her internship at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and she is a former and current recipient of VR Services.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>Kelly Osborn <i>Section 121 Representative</i></p> <p>Kelly Osborn is the Director of the Wabanaki Vocational Rehabilitation Program (WVRP). WVRP is a section 121 Native American vocational rehabilitation program in Maine. Kelly also serves as the Chair of the Maine Statewide Independent Council and as a member of the DBVI-SRC.</p> |
|  | <p>Pauline Lamontagne, Esq. and Anouk <i>Representative of State Educational Agency</i></p> <p>Legally blind since birth, Pauline is a former Vocational Rehabilitation client whose case was successfully closed. Her undergraduate degree was in Rehabilitation Work. At the University of Maine School of Law, she was the first legally blind student to earn her Juris Doctorate degree. Currently, she is employed as a Due Process Coordinator for Maine's Department of Education and oversees the dispute resolution system provided for by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). On the SRC, she brings advocacy skills and knowledge on behalf of people with disabilities as well as works collaboratively towards the goals of program and consumer success.</p> |
|  | <p>Vacant <i>Representative of the State Workforce Investment Board</i></p> |
|  | <p>Betsy Hopkins <i>Director of Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (ex officio)</i></p> <p>Betsy has over 25 years of experience working with people with disabilities. She previously worked a VR counselor, VR casework supervisor as well as a DHHS casework supervisor before taking on the Director position for DVR in 2009.</p> |



Unavailable

Elinor Weissman

Regional Director of DVR-Augusta and Rockland (ex officio)

Elinor's background includes education in Deafness Rehabilitation Counseling, Speech and Hearing Sciences, Psychology and Special Education. In addition to experience as a VR counselor and supervisor, she has been a teacher to students with disabilities related to autism, deafness and developmental issues as well as an Individual Support Coordinator for the Office of Adults with Cognitive and Physical Disabilities (DHHS).

How VR helped someone – Allison Bubier, CRC

VR helped a 26 year old man who sustained a traumatic brain injury while in college. He completed his bachelor's degree and is now working 40 hours a week in a residential facility. His employer wants him to complete the MHRT training to advance his skills.

Council Meetings

The SRC meets on the third Thursday of every month at the Commerce Center in Augusta, ME, from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM. The meeting schedule is published in several newspapers and on our website. The meetings are open to the public, and the individuals may participate by phone from other areas of the state.

We begin each meeting with a brief presentation about how vocational rehabilitation services have helped improve the life of a person with a disability. These “success stories” have helped remind the Council the real reason we exist and how important and effective vocational rehabilitation services can be in a person’s life.

Gaining knowledge about programs that have an impact on employment for people with disabilities has been a priority for the Council. At our 2012 Annual Meeting, the Council developed a work plan for 2013.

The Council worked with the TACE Center & Institute for Community Inclusion staff Cecilia Gandolfo and Bob Burns. The TACE Center is the State Rehab Council’s technical assistance center. The Maine State Rehabilitation Council has a deep respect for their ability to bring us together and work as a single cohesive unit. The Council appreciates their facilitation skills and their assistance in helping us achieve successful outcomes with our goals and objectives.

Committee Work in 2012

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings, the SRC has several committees that meet to address a specific task, issue or topic. Some of the committees are "Standing" committees, a permanent part of the Council's work. Other committees are "Ad Hoc", or convened as needed. Also, SRC members have been invited to participate on internal DVR Committees such as the CSPD (Comprehensive System of Personnel Development).

Executive Committee Report:

Members:

Jan Avery -Chair, Pauline Lamontagne-Vice-Chair, Kelly Osborn-Treasurer, Drew Bolduc-Past Chairperson and Betsy Hopkins-Director of the Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Executive Committee has direct oversight responsibility in soliciting and nominating candidates to the Governor for appointment to the Council. The Chair may appoint additional members from the Council's ranks to assist in filling the membership functions. As a result, the council has also developed a Membership Committee to assist with this task and report to the full council.

The Executive Committee met in person on two occasions during this fiscal year regarding issues with the SRC fiscal agent. The committee met to discuss issues regarding a lack of communication and response between the SRC and the fiscal agent representatives. As a result, the committee scheduled a second in person meeting with the fiscal agent representative present to discuss and resolve the issue. During this meeting, the committee members and the fiscal agent representative determined that the fiscal agent would not continue past the current fiscal year.

Additionally, during the year, the Executive Committee communicates frequently as needed through email and telephone calls to ensure that SRC business is completed and any issues are addressed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Osborn, SRC Treasurer

Five Council Collaborative Committee Report

Members:

Jan Avery, Pauline Lamontagne, and Drew Bolduc, Maine State Rehabilitation Council – General (SRC)

Kathy Despres, Maine State Rehabilitation Council – DVBI (DVBI-SRC)

Kelly Osborn, State Independent Living Council (SILC)

Amy Sneirson, Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened (DDLDDH)

Mel Clarrage, Commission on Disabilities and Employment (CDE), a subcommittee of the Maine's Jobs Council

The purpose of the Five Council Collaborative is to increase communication and cooperation between the five councils to provide the best support for employment opportunities for Maine residents with disabilities.

With the assistance of a facilitator, the Five Council attendees developed important priorities during its inception in the prior year:

- Priority 1 – Build Inter Council Cooperation and Collaboration.
- Priority 2 – Legislative Advocacy: attend forums, testify, provide testimony, training and assistance to clients, and defend budgets submitted by the five councils.

Over the course of the last fiscal year, the committee has met six times and discussed various issues. During the prior year, the following discussion occurred:

Scott Van Orman, Special Assistant to the Governor, attended a meeting regarding the new “Authorization of Personal Information Form” required for anyone wishing to be appointed to a board or a council. The Five Council members conveyed that this form was very intrusive and invasive into members’ personal lives. As a result of this meeting, Amy Sneirson from DDLDDH and Kathy Despres from SRC-DVBI drafted a new “Release of Personal Information” form that requires less personnel information. The new form has been submitted to the Maine State Police legal counsel for approval.

As an update to this issue, during the current year, the Five Council members continued to collaborate with the governor’s office regarding revision of the above mentioned release form. As a result of this collaboration, the form was revised by the governor’s office and approved by members of the Five Councils. Consequently, the appointment process for the affected councils, the SRC, DVBI-SRC, and the SILC, has been streamlined. Previously, the appointment process would linger for several months; however, due to the work of the Five Councils, the process has greatly improved and has been reduced substantially. Members are now being formally appointed by the governor is approximately 2-4 weeks.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Osborn, SRC Treasurer

Membership Committee Report

Members:

Jenny Ardito, Kelly Osborn, Betsy Hopkins

The SRC saw considerable turnover this past year of several key SRC members. We did, however, bring in several new members to fill vacancies in the Disability Advocacy, CAP, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and Current/Formal VR client slots. With turnover comes an opportunity to revisit membership recruitment practices and priorities. With the new administration, there was a new policy put into place for how members are appointed by the Governor. The Membership Committee worked closely with VR staff and the Governor's Appointment Liaison to work on making this process go as smoothly as possible. As a result, the current appointment process is faster and more streamlined than it has been for a number of years.

The Committee is specifically looking to increase our membership of former VR consumers who have closed successfully in self-employment plans. We believe that engaging this population will bring forth a fresh perspective from both the client and business person. The SRC By-laws are currently being amended to add an At-Large seat on the SRC; the purpose of this is to recruit a member who has a genuine interest in the SRC and VR but does not necessarily fit into one of the mandated seats. The Committee is also revising the current membership orientation materials and further engaging new members by assigning SRC Mentors to perspective and new members. Part of the orientation process will also include a VR tutorial with a current VR Counselor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Ardito, SRC Member

Website Committee Report

Members: Allison Bubier

The purpose of the Website Committee is to make recommendations on the design and development of the SRC website. The website committee also ensures the recommendations are implemented correctly by the website manager.

Below are the current fiscal year activities:

- The website was updated with the new meeting dates for the current fiscal year.
- The SRC Council member's personal information was updated.

The Website Committee works collaboratively with the website manager to ensure that the website is up-to-date and accessible.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Bubier, SRC, Committee Chair

SRC/DVR Policy Group Report

Members:

Drew Bolduc, Jenny Ardito, Deb Brucker, and Betsy Hopkins

During the reporting year, the SRC/DVR Policy Group was tasked with providing feedback and assistance with two MOUs that DVR drafted in 2012 – one with the Department of Corrections and one with the Veteran's Administration. All MOUs created by DVR are reviewed by the SRC prior to implementation.

In addition, the group assisted DVR with updating a protocol regarding working on joint VR cases with Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) partners. During the year, any policy or procedure that DVR develops or revises is presented to the SRC for input.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report

Members: Allison Bubier

The development of the Consumer Satisfaction Survey was completed. Business cards for the survey were developed inviting VR consumers to participate in the survey on-line. These business cards have been placed in the interview rooms where clients may take them if they wish to complete the survey.

The website designer continues to monitor the electronic website survey and make any updates or changes per request of council.

During the September 2012 SRC Annual Retreat, two new people were added to this committee: Annette Coderre-Proulx and Vicky Taylor. Task at hand for 2012 is to delegate more time on marketing the survey as there has been poor response from VR clients.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Bubier, CRC, Committee Chair

CSPD Committee Report

The Comprehensive System of Professional Development (CSPD) committee meets quarterly and is chaired by the Training Coordinator for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The SRC has a seat on the committee and provides input regarding the recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel.

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, the SRC shall review and comment on the development of plans, policies, and procedures pertaining to; recruitment, preparation, and retention of qualified personnel, and staff development.

Additionally, the SRC membership is invited to participate, when appropriate, in DVR trainings.

Training highlights FY2012 include:

- Assistive Technology for Transitioning to Post Secondary Education, Life and Work
- World of Work Inventory
- Employment Readiness Scale
- MaineAware Reports training
- Statewide Training Conference
- Writing Skills for Vocational Rehabilitation Staff and Providers
- Working with Personality Disorder
- Helping Individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder
- Verbal Judo
- Motivational Strategies

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Osborn, SRC Representative

Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Statistics Related To DVR Clients Served During Fiscal Year
October 1, 2011 - September 30, 2012

DVR by the Numbers

Individuals Served in 2012

3,742 New Applicants

3,007 Found Eligible for Services

4,242 Receive Services through Employment Plans

778 Individuals Placed in Employment

Employment Outcomes

\$235.33 Average Weekly Wage at Application

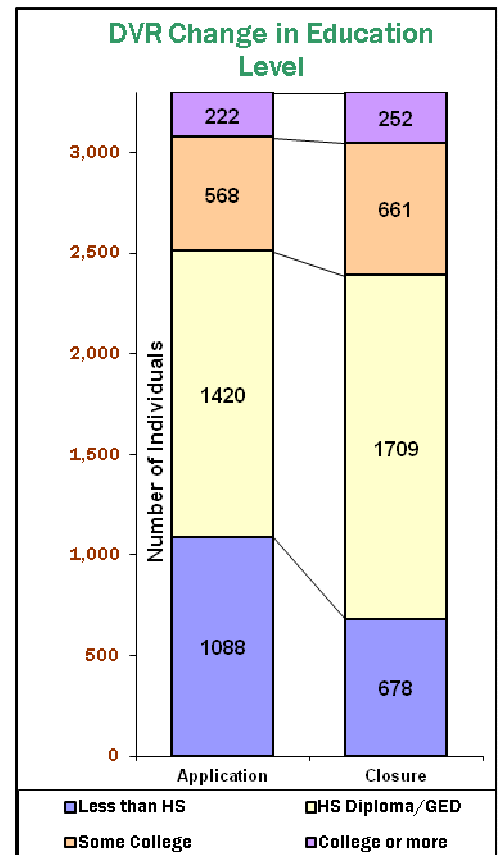
\$341.33 Average Weekly Wage at Closure

145% Increased Earning Capacity

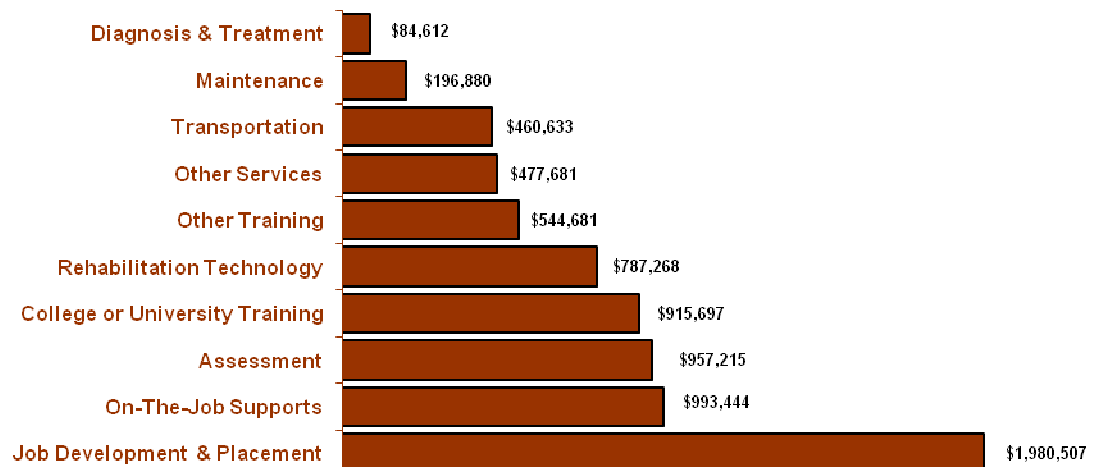
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### Age at Application

|                | #    | %   |
|----------------|------|-----|
| <b>14 - 22</b> | 870  | 26% |
| <b>23 - 54</b> | 1949 | 59% |



### DVR Case Service Categories & Cost





# Maine State Rehabilitation Council

## Contact Information

Mailing Address:

Maine State Rehabilitation Council  
PMB #171, 126 Western Avenue  
Augusta, ME 04330

Email Address:

[mainesrcdvr@hotmail.com](mailto:mainesrcdvr@hotmail.com)