AZVRS MSP PROGRAM - REHABILITATION INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. After an AT assessment is conducted will the vendor need to provide an equipment quote with the report for the client before submission?
    a. No equipment will be purchased through RIS BVI. A list of recommended and requested equipment is part of the AT Evaluation.

2. For clients we work with that are further out, will travel and lodging be billed separately, or will that need to be within the all-inclusive proposed local and distant rates?
    a. "Travel and lodging cost should be considered when proposing distant rates.
    *4.1 Payment rates are all inclusive, which means they include the Vendor's staff time, administrative costs, research, report preparation, **travel time and mileage**, time lost due to VR Client missed appointments ("no shows"), sign language and foreign language interpreting, and any other costs associated with the service provision. RSA will not pay for these costs separately."*

3. "Does the referring VR counselor need to be physically present for the client service plan to be conducted? Can the service plan be more of a zoom meeting? I'm asking because clients and counselors are all over Arizona and this can lead to a delay in services."
    a. Exhibit C3 Definitions defines Face-to-face: Includes in-person and/or virtual meetings. Virtual meetings are allowed for CSP meetings.

4. The Client Service Plan meeting should be sufficient and we should be able to start training after that meeting, can the following step be eliminated? 2.3.3 Within ten (10) business days after completion of the Evaluation, schedule and participate in a consultation meeting with the VR Client and the VR Counselor in order to review the results of the evaluations and recommendations and revise, as needed, the Client Service Plan for VR RIS BVI and assistive technology aids/devices needed, and discuss roles and responsibilities of the Vendor, and the VR Client, and the VR Counselor."
    a. RSA feels the consultation meeting after completion of the Evaluation(s) is a necessary step as it allows the RSA Client and VRC/ILOB Staff Member to discuss the outcome of the Evaluation including reviewing the results of the evaluations and recommendations and revising, as needed, the Client Service Plan. It also allows for review of assistive technology aids/devices needed and time to discuss roles and responsibilities of the Vendor, RSA Client, and the RSA Staff.

5. For the monthly progress report service hours will it be possible for it to have Total hours on authorization and total hours used during reporting month? From that information can it automatically subtract the hours and then prefill total hours on authorization? Then I would just be inputting hours used during the reporting month.
    a. The PDF form does not have the capability to auto calculate hours as described.

6. For service objective progress, can the score levels be listed on the form? Where are we getting the numbers for the weekly vendor representative score?
    a. Yes, the Skill Level chart will be added to the Monthly Progress Report (Exhibit W2 and V2). The vendor should be averaging the RSA Client's skill level in that service area to determine the Weekly Vendor Representative Score.

7. Under "describe daily activities and services", can there be some prefilled items or statements so that a box can be checked? Like:
    ☐ Basic Concept Development ☐ Residential Travel ☐ Public Transportation ☐ Pre-Cane Skills ☐ Light Business Travel ☐ Rural Travel
    ☐ Cane Technique ☐ Downtown Travel ☐ Special Situations
    a. No, the services will vary by RSA Client's needs. The vendor should write a couple of sentences to describe the areas covered during the reporting month.

8. Can there also be prefilled items or statements under describe client progress/challenges/difficulties in achieving objectives and describe areas that will be covered by training next month?
    a. No, the services will vary by RSA Client's needs and progress. The vendor should write a couple of sentences under each section for the reporting month.

9. "On Exhibit W VR RIS BVI Service Specifications, Section 1.1.1 the following items are new. Did it replace Rehabilitation Teaching? *Communication Skills Training (CST) and Work-Related Living Skills Training (WRLST)* In the current contract, under section Service Description, we see: *Rehabilitation Teaching (RT) for Development of Independent Living Skills.*
    a. While not identical, Work-Related Living Skills Training (WRLST) does cover many of the areas/skills of the previous Rehabilitation Teaching service area.

10. In the VR RIS progress notes section, there is no place to add additional reports. Currently, we have been able to submit additional reports that clarify the services that we offer, and allows us to better describe the client status in achieving their goals. Can we add a section to upload additional reporting information?
    a. Yes, additional supporting documentation can be added/attached behind the Monthly Progress Report (Exhibit V2 and W2). Supporting documentation should be in support of the MPR and does not replace the requirement to complete all applicable sections. In the fillable field, please note "see attached".

11. The progress notes for the ILOB section appear to be the same as the progress notes in the VR section. These notes ask for the number of hours authorized. For ILOB services, we have received a lump sum authorization in each of the ILOB service categories. We do not receive individual authorizations per consumer. Are you able to check with RSA SBVID to adjust?
    a. Agency authorizations will no longer be provided for ILOB RIS BVI under this new contract. Client authorizations will be utilized for ILOB RIS BVI.

12. I was told to enter first and last names of all instructors in the Vendor/Representative's Name field. I can barely enter two names. Many times we have up to six different instructors. I tried converting the PDF to Word, hoping the fields would expand, but it was password protected. Can the form be adjusted to allow for expanding sections?
    a. Thank you for the note. We will revise the form to allow for more names to be added.

13. The form has separate service hour sections for AD and O&M, but we currently have only RIS on our authorizations. Will that change with the new fiscal year? We have received new authorizations for fiscal year starting 7/1/24, and they do not separate AD and O&M. How will we be able to track the hours remaining separately?
    a. That change will occur on 10/01/2024 when RIS BVI transitions to the MSP. Current authorizations will not be valid after 9/30/2024.

14. Since we'll have multiple instructors training our clients, many on the same day, how do we show multiple start and end times in the attendance section? Or, are you expecting us to enter the times the client arrived and left for each day, but have the hours show actual training hours?
    a. The calendar should be completed to enter the time the client arrived and left for each day but the hours should be actual training hours. A calendar notes section will be added to the form to notate durations of any breaks in service for the day.

15. I think it would be helpful to show the range of scores and what they mean somewhere, if it can fit. Currently we are not asked to score BVI clients, only ILOB. That will be a change for us. Especially, if we have to average each week's score among all instructors. Are you counting weeks as days 1-7, 8-14, no matter where they fall in a normal work week? I'm worried average weekly scores will be tricky.
    a. Yes, the Skill Level chart will be added to the Monthly Progress Report (Exhibit V2 and W2). The weeks are calendar weeks starting on Sunday and ending on Saturday, which is why there is a 5th week included on the form.

16. I can paste only three sentences of text for activities and services provided. In my attached example, I could not paste even one day for one instructor in one of the areas. I get pages of reports with comprehensive data from all of the instructors. Is there a way to make the description sections expandable (like in a Word document)? Also, currently we show the hours for each day, so we can prove the training hours for each service type. Will you just be relying on start and end times (which won't work as is with multiple instructors)?
    a. For notes from multiple instructors please note "see attached" on the form and add/attach supporting documents behind the Monthly Progress Report (Exhibit V2 and W2).

17. I am assuming that I will need to average scores for each week and each skill for multiple instructors. If one instructor chooses No for Standard Achieved, I'm assuming I will enter no for the whole section. Correct?
    a. Yes, that is correct.

18. Will we need signatures from all instructors? If so, we will need room for them at the bottom of the form.
    a. This varies by vendor. A signature is not required by all instructors. Suggestion: The vendor can designate a representative (or supervisor) to compile, complete and sign the form.

19. I asked two instructors who use screen readers to try to navigate the template. They both had trouble navigating with JAWS. One determined that using the tab key was better in most cases to get around, but in an area that is asking for equipment, it tabs to yes and no, but you have to arrow up and down to view the headings. The other instructor could tab to the editable boxes, but she couldn't insert anything in them. The first instructor wondered if there would be any training on how to use screen readers with this document. Converting the document to Word may help, and then I can ask my helpers to try again.

    a. Thank you for the feedback. The final exhibits will be sent to AbleDocs for additional accessibility testing and conversion to ensure compatibility prior to Go Live on 10/01/2024.

20. It came to my attention today, because we just received an authorization that included RIS, and in the service description area, the purchasing specialist listed O and M, Home Organization and Safety, Work Related independent living skills, and Adjustment to Disability. The RIS-BVI progress report did not have "Home Organization and Safety" listed, but it also did not have Employment Services. I was assuming that WRLST was work related and would be used for Employment Services, but that will not be the case, will it? The authorization we received today had all I mentioned above under RIS PLUS AT, Adaptive Communication, and Employment Services. Did I miss something?
    a. Although "Employment Services" is not a specific Service Objective in RIS BVI, all VR services are employment related. "Employment Services" as a Service Objective is included in Comp BVI, not RIS BVI.

21. What is the MSP's interaction with the consumer? How does "informed choice" come into play?
    a. From the MSP perspective, the consumer / client will not know who we are. The MSP will interact with counselor or individual handling the client's case.

       If there is an open referral opportunity, it will be made available to the RIS BVI vendor community for 3 business days to confirm ability to provide services. On the 3rd business day, the opportunity will close, and the MSP will send the counselor/individual handling the case a list of vendors who confirmed they can provide services to the client. The vendor list provided contains the vendor company's VRS Vendor Profile information. The vendor list will be reviewed by the counselor/individual handling the client's case with the client, and the client will make their informed choice for vendor selection.

       The VRS Vendor Profile is a marketing opportunity for your vendor company, and it is a form completed by your organization (Onboarding Step 3). The VRS Vendor Profile will be a write-up about your organization that you would like to share with the counselor/client.

22. Is it up to vendor to market themselves? What if the consumer knows who they want to go with? Can we give marketing materials?
    a. The referral will be initiated under the MSP through the counselor/individual handling the client's case. If the client knows they would like to use your company as their vendor, at time of referral this can be specified. This is referred to as a Pre-Identified referral. The service opportunity will be available for your organization's review for three business days.

       For Marketing Material: The VRS Vendor Profile is an electronic form, and you can complete it how you would like. This is totally up to you. The VRS Vendor Profile will ask for your organization's website, but you can also include URLS within the write-up.

23. Is there a link to refer back to get a better sense of the guidelines?
    a. The vendor community will be provided a direct link to the RIS BVI vendor page in a follow-up email after the training today.

On the AZVRS Vendor Page, you can select the 'Become a Vendor' page, and it will take you to the Steps to Get Started in becoming a vendor under the MSP. The MSP will notify the RIS BVI Vendor Community when to start completing the below identified steps.
Step 1: Interested Vendor Form: Once the Interested Vendor Form is ready for your review and completion, the RIS BVI Vendor Community will be notified via email.
Step 2: The Masters Service Agreement (MSA) is not currently ready for completion because the finalized service specifications will be incorporated within the MSA. When reviewing the MSA, you will be asked to attach a W-9 and COI. You can download and PDF the sample COI and provide this to your insurance company.
Step 3: VRS Vendor Profile will be sent to counselors/individuals overseeing a client's case for open service opportunities on the 3rd business day. It is also used to tell the MSP who should be receiving clearance emails or authorizations for your organization.
Step 4: Vendor Personnel Compliance Forms are due to be submitted to the MSP for incumbent vendor representatives for RIS BVI services by 11/1/24.
Step 5: Vendor Code of Conduct is required to be signed on behalf of your entire organization.

24. Will vendors still have interaction with counselors?
    a. The MSP is not here to hinder your current relationships with the counselors, and you will still directly be providing updates about the clients to the counselor. However, you will be receiving authorizations directly from Knowledge Services for RIS BVI services. The authorizations will be sent from RSA to Knowledge Services, and then we will send the authorization to the vendor. If an authorization is received outside of the MSP, please notify our team. The referral process for RIS BVI services will also be through the MSP.

25. What's the process to submit new rates under the MSP?
    a. The MSP will notify you the time to submit your proposed rates on the Interested Vendor Form. The proposed rates are provided to RSA for their review. RSA will conduct an analysis of the rates and will then approve the rates. There is an opportunity for negotiation for the rates. If RSA denies the proposed rates, RSA will ask for a BAFO. RSA will be completing the approval of the rates.

26. How many rates will there be? Will I be able to write a justification on the proposed rates?
    a. There are two rates: a local and distant rate. The rate with be considered local or distant based on the county in which the VR Client / ILOB Client resides.
    Local county is if your company owns, leases, or rents an office location in that county.
    Distant county is if your company does not own, lease, or rent an office location in that county.
    There will not be a separate training rate.
    Although there won't be a box or field to include a justification, if RSA needs clarification, the MSP will reach out and request this justification or insight.

27. We are anticipating to get into new services. Do we request proposal through KS to grow into different services?
    a. If interested in providing other services offered under the MSP, you can complete the Interested Vendor Form for service(s) that have an open vendor list. For services KS does not manage, you would follow the current RSA process.

28. For Forms, the Monthly Progress Report and the service plan, does the vendor fill out the forms, or does the counselor fill out the forms?
    a. The Vendor is completing these State Exhibits. The Client Service Plan will start service provision. The service specifications will also contain further details. All three parties must be present at the Client Service Plan (CSP) meeting: the Client, Vendor Representative, and Counselor. The CSP would be conducted, and all three parties (Client, Counselor, and Vendor Representative) would sign the exhibit with a physical or electronic signature, or an approval email agreeing to the service provision identified within the CSP.

       Once the CSP has been completed, the Monthly Progress Report (MPR) would document the service provision provided.

       The Vendor Training that will be provided in September 2024 will go into further details on how to complete the State exhibits. We will have RSA approved Samples exhibits to demonstrate what a complete and accurate exhibit looks like prior to "Go Live" date of 10/1/24.

29. Will ACH Payments be an option under the MSP?
    a. Under the MSP, you can register for direct deposit. Once you have completed the MSA, we can send you a link to register for ACH. Knowledge Services does not receive ACH from RSA, but vendors will have the opportunity to receive ACH from Knowledge Services.

30. If AT and RT services continue through ATEI, what role will Knowledge Services and the RIS BVI vendors play within this process as RT & AT are listed in the service specifications?
    a. As part of an AT Evaluation, RIS BVI vendors will determine computer/smart device access relative to the RSA Client's functional visual condition, diagnosis and prognosis; the RSA Client's preferences and skills; existing/anticipated environment; and tasks to be done necessary for the RSA Client's achievement of their goal. The outcome of the AT Evaluation is findings and recommendations for AT/IT aids and devices that shall be descriptive, and feature matched to meet the RSA Client's specific needs.
       The CSP is being revised to include a section of recommended AT equipment and will be discussed with the RSA Client and RSA Staff Member at the consultation meeting