

Disability Right Michigan (DRM) Quarter 3 (April—June 2022)

Employment Team Report

- Staff met with MRS Policy director and division directors to discuss small business cases at Grand Rapids office, SSDI & SSI financial contributions, and MRS Credit/Debit Cards for direct pays to build greater efficiencies for MRS customers.
- Staff provided several virtual trainings this quarter; Staff trained 30 counselors and managers at MRS Grand Rapids district; 23 staff at Ann-Arbor Center for Independent Living; 30 staff at Disability Network Southwest Michigan; 10 staff at Disability Advocates Kent County; and 42 staff at Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network.
- Staff continue to attend MRS policy cadre meetings- This quarter we reviewed the Training-Adult Secondary/Education, Disability Related Training and Support Services, and Training-Job Readiness.
- Staff continue to meet quarterly with Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) staff. This quarter we received information about MIABLE accounts and Special Needs Trusts.
- Employment team advocates assisted several Social Security beneficiaries 'with waving their work-related overpayments cases. The total amount of waving the overpayment for Quarters one, two and three was \$168,000.
- Staff continues to reach out to students and youth with disabilities ages 14 and older under Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The staff has developed strategies to work with agencies as Michigan Alliance for Families who help students and youth with disabilities to make successful transitions from school to college and competitive integrated employment.
- Staff have been working with Communication Team on a marketing campaign for transition. They completed three transition outreach events and staff members filmed "Transition Tuesday" posts for social media and they launched 90-day transition social media campaign on the website.
- DRM featured a transition section in the Exchange (newsletter) (#3) that highlighted the transition campaign and asked for questions the agency could address regarding this topic. The Exchange was mailed to 9,867 individuals.
- DRM hired an attorney, John Sloat to work with the Employment team.

Other DRM Activities

- DRM staff help state and local governments create an inclusive voting experience for individuals with disabilities by participating in clerk trainings to increase employees' awareness and capacity to accommodate, and work with existing election rights coalitions, workgroups, and committees to promote implementation of elections reforms.
- DRM Representative Payee Team returned \$52,590.00 from a payee to SSA due to a finding of misuse of benefits for multiple beneficiaries. This payee was found to no longer be suitable by SSA.

- DRM Vaccine staff reached out to Community clinics in Detroit, Flint, Saginaw, Benton Harbor, Niles, Lansing, and Muskegon have impacted low-income communities and communities of color, Community clinics in western and southwestern Michigan have impacted rural areas. DRM vaccinated 559 individuals this quarter, including 165 in community clinics, 119 in shelters, 45 in homebound settings, and 233 in adult foster care or other long-term care. Total vaccinations – 602.
- As a direct result of DRM advocacy staff new licensing rules for Child Caring Institutions (CCIs) regulations prohibit the use of restraint, except in an emergency which places “the youth at or others at serious threat of violence or injury if no immediate intervention occurs
- DRM signed on in support to a letter for the Stop Institutional Child Abuse Act (SICAA), along with NDRN and other civil and human rights organizations. The Act, if passed, would establish a bill of rights for children in institutions, defines “institutional child abuse” and “youth residential programs and facility”, requires funding for P&As to investigate and report abuse/neglect, and creates a Federal Youth Residential Program Oversight Commission.
- DRM staff continue to meet with co-counsel to evaluate the potential for class action lawsuit against a specific school district with a pattern of failure to provide FAPE(free appropriate public education) due to failures to timely conduct comprehensive evaluations.