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Contacts: Nancy McKenzie, Vocational Rehabilitation Division Director, 701-328-8926; Cheryl Wescott Wetsch, Program Administrator, Vocational Rehabilitation Division, 701-328-8959; or Heather Steffl, Public Information Officer, N.D. Department of Human Services, 701-328-4933

## **State seeks information about employment needs of people with disabilities**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Human Services and the State Rehabilitation Council are working together to gather information about the employment needs of people with disabilities, as well as issues encountered by providers delivering services to these individuals. The agency's Vocational Rehabilitation Division is distributing surveys statewide and hosting focus groups in tribal areas, and invites interested individuals, service providers, advocates, and others to participate. Findings will help identify priorities and shape services for the next three years.

"This process helps us understand consumer and provider needs, so that we can deliver effective training and employment services," said Nancy McKenzie, director of the department's Vocational Rehabilitation Division.

McKenzie said the department has mailed paper surveys to individual consumers and providers. Individuals can also complete the survey by phone by calling 328-8950 in Bismarck, 1-800-755-2745 toll free for long distance calls, or by contacting ND Relay 711, a telecommunication service for people with hearing impairments.

In addition, people can complete the survey about consumer needs online at <https://eforms.nd.gov/lfserver/ConsumerFocus>. The survey about organizations that provide employment-related services to North Dakotans with disabilities can be completed at <https://eforms.nd.gov/lfserver/ProviderFocus>.

In recent years, North Dakota's vocational rehabilitation program has earned national recognition for its outreach efforts to businesses and rural residents. Last year, the program provided training and employment services to 6,472 North Dakotans. For information about services see <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/rcs/>.

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