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December 30, 2024

Her Excellency, Governor Kelly A. Ayotte  
And the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

1. Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 21-I:54, authorize the Department of Education, Division of Workforce Innovation, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH), to continue one full-time temporary position #8T3196 21-1010 Counselors-4, SOC 21, Pay Band 4, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval, from February 23, 2025, through February 24, 2026. (This position expires on February 23, 2025) 100% Federal Funds.

Funding is available in account VR – Field Programs Federal in FY2025 and is anticipated to be available in FY2026 upon approval of the biennial budget:

	FY2025	FY2026
06-56-56-565010-25380000-050-500109 Salary	\$43,877.34	\$45,607.77
06-56-56-565010-25380000-060-500601 Benefits	\$33,697.60	\$34,085.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$77,574.94</b>	<b>\$79,692.81</b>

2. Pursuant to New Hampshire RSA 21-I:54, authorize the Department of Education, Division of Workforce Innovation, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH), to continue one full-time temporary position #8T3197 21-1010 Counselors-5, SOC 21, Pay Band 5, effective upon Governor and Executive Council approval, from February 23, 2025, through February 24, 2026. (This position expires on February 23, 2025) 100% Federal Funds.

Funding is available in account VR – Field Programs Federal in FY2025 and is anticipated to be available in FY2026 upon approval of the biennial budget:

	FY2025	FY2026
06-56-56-565010-25380000-050-500109 Salary	\$49,526.10	\$51,495.21
06-56-56-565010-25380000-060-500601 Benefits	\$34,962.35	\$35,403.24
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$84,488.45</b>	<b>\$86,898.45</b>

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### EXPLANATION

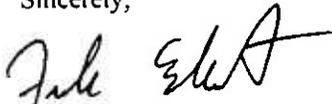
Positions 8T3196 (Rehab Counselor I – Student Transition Specialist) and 8T3197 (Rehab Counselor II - Student Transition Specialist) are critical to the success of New Hampshire Vocational Rehabilitation (VRNH) in fulfilling its federal mandate to provide statewide Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to an increasing population of eligible students with disabilities.

Consistent with the findings from the Bureau’s recent transition services strategic workforce assessment, there are highlighted gaps in coverage. These gaps are particularly in rural geographic regions, where travel requirements severely limit the time spent delivering direct services to students. The continuation of 8T3196 and 8T3197 addresses these gaps by improving service coverage and reducing the burden of travel in underserved areas. These positions are instrumental in enabling VRNH to achieve greater integration with Local Education Agencies (LEA) by coordinating with Transition Specialists, participating in Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, and supporting schools in implementing effective transition services.

While the Bureau has not determined whether these positions need to be permanent full-time roles, maintaining them in the short term allows the organization to ramp up capabilities, expand statewide Pre-ETS services, and develop sustainable strategies for the future. These positions are pivotal for adjusting to the “new normal” of increased service demands and ensuring VRNH can meet its federal and state obligations without overcommitting to long-term staffing needs.

In conclusion, positions 8T3196 and 8T3197 are vital for addressing immediate gaps in service, fulfilling federal mandates, and supporting VRNH strategic goals for Pre-ETS delivery across New Hampshire. By maintaining these positions, VRNH can continue building the capacity necessary to provide equitable access to all students with disabilities while developing a sustainable approach for future service delivery.

Sincerely,



Frank Edelblut  
Commissioner of Education