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Data Note: Time from VR Application to Closure in Employment for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

Alberto Migliore

University of Massachusetts Boston, alberto.migliore@umb.edu

Uchenna Nwangwu

University of Massachusetts Boston

John Butterworth

University of Massachusetts Boston, john.butterworth@umb.edu

ThinkWork! at the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston

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Time from VR Application to Closure in Employment for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities

By Alberto Migliore, Uchenna Nwangwu, and John Butterworth

Everyone expects a timely response when requesting services. Similarly, getting a job as soon as possible after applying for vocational rehabilitation (VR) services is important for job seekers with intellectual disabilities.

Rapid placement boosts self-confidence, and prevents job seekers from losing work skills as a consequence of inactivity. Moreover, employers are more likely to prefer candidates whose work history shows a limited gap in employment.

This DataNote describes how long it takes for job seekers with intellectual disabilities to go through the steps from application for VR services to determination of eligibility, completion of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), and closure into integrated employment (Figure 1).

Population: Adults with intellectual disabilities with a closure in integrated employment, FY 2014 (N = 17,151).

Intellectual disability refers to code 25 (“mental retardation” in the RSA-911) as either a primary or secondary cause of an impediment to employment.

Integrated employment refers to working for at least 90 days in integrated settings, with or without support.

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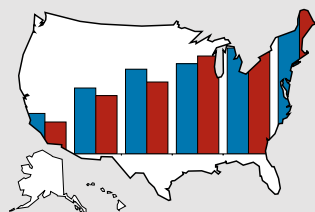
Figure 1. Steps in the vocational rehabilitation process.



The bar chart in Figure 2 shows the findings from the RSA911 dataset, FY 2014, by state. By law, the time from VR application to eligibility determination must be 60 days or less. Most states met this benchmark. However, the time from eligibility to IPE completion varied to a larger extent: from a minimum of 26 days in California to over a year (422 days) in North Dakota.

The fact that completing an IPE took so long deserves attention, especially considering that closure into integrated employment took an additional 306 days in Vermont and over two years (766 days) in Florida. A long time from IPE completion to closure does not necessarily mean slow services. This is because—by definition—a closure cannot happen before a person has worked for at least 90 days. Moreover, a closure may be delayed well after the 90-day period for a variety of reasons, such as ensuring the availability of follow-up services after hire.

Shortening the time from application to IPE completion is an important signal that VR services are delivered in a timely fashion. Tracking the date of hire would add clarity about the length of time that job seekers should expect for gaining an employment outcome through the VR programs in their states.



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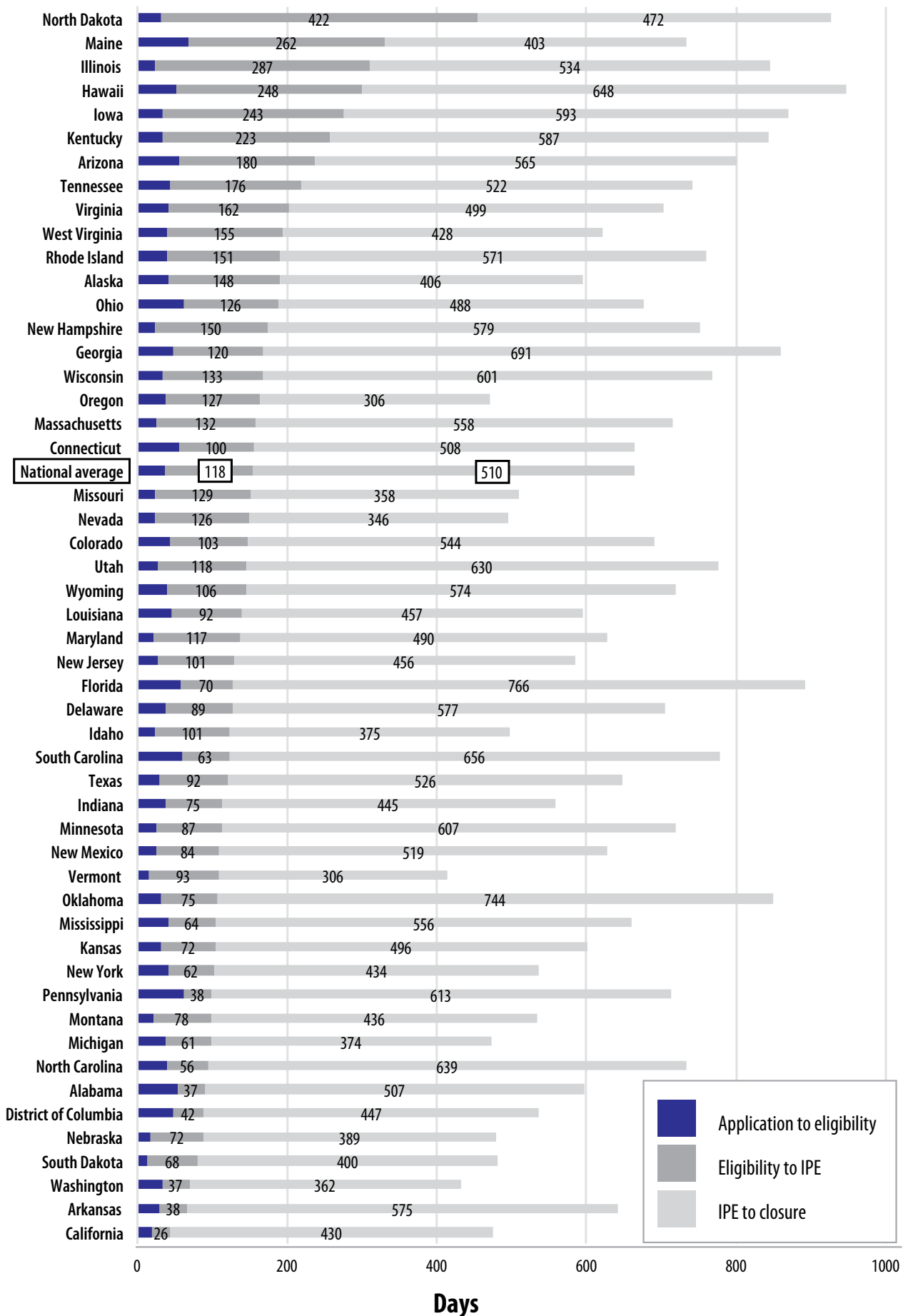
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Figure 2. Number of days from application to integrated employment, sorted by length of time to an IPE



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