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Jessica Whittaker
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Little Rock, Arkansas 72201
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VIA EMAIL

Re: Act 595 of 2021 Initial Report

Ms. Whittaker:

Below is the first monthly report for Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) under Act 595 of 2021. The ARS contact for Act 595 purposes is Charles Lyford, General Counsel. My direct line is 501-682-2286, and my email is charles.lyford@arkansas.gov.

ARS will promulgate two rules as a result of acts passed in the 2021 Regular Session:

1. Act 263 of 2021

This Act made technical changes to the Telecommunications Access Program, an assistive-technology initiative assigned to ARS. Among those changes was a clarification to the end-of-year accounting procedure followed by ARS staff.

ARS is pursuing an amended rule that will incorporate the new accounting procedure as well as other program updates. A draft of the amended rule is complete and under review by agency staff.

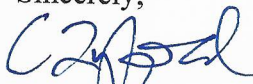
2. Act 282 of 2021

This Act amended the Forgiveness of Student Loan Program, a recruitment and retention program for certain ARS staff. Loan-forgiveness payments under the program are now made after eligible staff have completed the requisite two years of employment with ARS, instead of before.

ARS is pursuing an amended rule that will incorporate the change in the timing of payments, as well as other program updates. A draft of the amended rule is complete and under review by agency staff.

Thank you. If further information is needed, please let me know. Best regards.

Sincerely,



Charles Lyford

cc via email:

Joseph Baxter
ARS Commissioner

Charisse Childers, Ph.D.
Director, Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Steven Porch
Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Commerce