



STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR THE OFFICE OF ADULT CAREER AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SERVICES - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
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December 22, 2022

To: ACCES-VR CRS 2.0 Vendors and Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible Vendors

From: Linda Schramm, Assistant Commissioner of ACCES

Re: Transition from the Electronic Reporting System (ERS) to Aware Vendor Portal

The New York State Education Department's (NYSED) Office for Adult Career and Continuing Education – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) is providing this memorandum as guidance to alert ACCES-VR CRS 2.0 vendors and Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible Vendors to the steps they will need to take prior to ACCES-VR shutting down the Electronic Reporting System (ERS) Portal, including the Potentially Eligible System in April 2023.

Background

In April 2023, ACCES-VR will be transitioning from its current case management system, CaMS, to its new case management system, Aware. With the new Aware system ACCES-VR will have an integrated vendor portal. CRS 2.0 and Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible vendors **will be required to utilize the Aware Vendor Portal** for obtaining authorizations as well as submitting billing and required supporting documentation to ACCES-VR as all other portals/systems will be disabled.

Note: Once the Aware Vendor Portal becomes available, this will be the **only** option for vendors to use to obtain authorizations as well as submit billing and required supporting documentation, **as no other offline methods will be utilized**. Training will be provided to vendors on the new processes for using the Aware Vendor Portal in late January through March 2023 (please see information below).

To assist vendors in readying for this transition, please prepare your organization for the upcoming changes and timelines by sharing the following information:

CRS 2.0 Vendors

The Aware Vendor Portal will have the capability for vendors to:

- Obtain authorizations in one centralized location in real time as they are issued.
- Submit billing and supporting documentation in real time as deliverables are completed. Vendors will be able to request payment directly from the authorization in the Aware Vendor Portal and **the use of the VR-370 and the ERS portal will be discontinued.**

CRS 2.0 Vendors need to also be aware of the following short-term steps as ACCES-VR transitions to using the Aware Vendor Portal:

- 2022 CRS 2.0 Reconciliation Period: Due to the timing of the Aware implementation, and to allow vendors to fully reconcile their contracts, the 2022 CRS 2.0 reconciliation period will be extended from March 31, 2023 to May 31, 2023.
- January 2023 Billing: The January 2023 VR-370, as well as all associated documentation, must be submitted **no later than February 15, 2023** to be reviewed for approval and processed prior to the change to the Aware Vendor Portal. Should corrections need to be made to any submissions, corrected documents must be submitted **no later than February 27, 2023** so they can be reviewed for approval and processed.

Should a vendor not submit required corrections by February 27, 2023 or any other outstanding 2022 services, then vendors will have to wait until April 2023 to make those submissions when the Aware Vendor Portal is made available.

- February 2023 Billing Submission: As stated above, the new Aware Vendor Portal will eliminate the need to use the VR-370 and the ERS portal will be shut down. All open authorizations will be converted to new Aware authorizations prior to the launch of the Aware Vendor Portal in April 2023. All vendors will be required to submit their billing and all associated documentation in the new Aware Vendor Portal utilizing the new Aware authorizations. **Note:** To assist vendors with this process, both the original authorization number and the new Aware authorization number will be displayed in the Aware Vendor Portal. Training for vendors on this process will be available in late January through March 2023 (see below).

Vendors should anticipate payments for these services will take 2-4 weeks longer (e.g., payments will be dispersed in May 2023 instead of by April 15, 2023). This delay is anticipated to occur only for the February 2023 billing submission.

- Questions: Should CRS 2.0 vendors have any questions, please direct those questions to the CRS mailbox at: crs2@nysed.gov

Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible Vendors

- 2022 Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible Reconciliation: Due to the timing of the Aware implementation, and to allow vendors to fully reconcile their contracts, the 2022 Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible reconciliation period will be extended from ninety (90) days to May 31, 2023. **Note:** The extension of the reconciliation period **does not** apply to NYC Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible vendors. Their reconciliation period will remain the same as it is after the Aware Vendor Portal implementation in April 2023.

Vendors that submit their 2022 program reports for approval into the Potentially Eligible System **by February 27, 2023** will have those submissions reviewed for approval by the ACCES-VR SVRC Transition and Youth Services (TAYS) staff. These reviews will be

completed and claims for payment available no later than **March 15, 2023**. Vendors must print and submit their claims for payment to ACCES-VR **no later than March 22, 2023**.

Should a vendor not submit 2022 program reports for approval by February 27, 2023 and their claim for payment by March 22, 2023, then those vendors will have to wait and submit their program reports in the new Aware Vendor Portal when it is made available in April 2023.

- January 1-April 2023-Required Authorizations and Billing: The ACCES-VR SVRC TAYS staff will continue to provide email authorizations to vendors until the Aware Vendor Portal is available in April 2023. In April 2023, **vendors will be required to replace all previously emailed authorizations for 1/1/23 until April 2023 with the Aware authorizations.** Training for vendors on this process will be available in late January through March 2023 (see below).
- Questions: Should Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible vendors have any questions, please direct those questions to the Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible mailbox at: vrpeswd@nysed.gov

Upcoming Aware Vendor Portal Training

Beginning in late January 2023 and through the March 2023, staff from Cornell's Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disabilities will be providing one (1) hour live-remote training sessions for vendors on use of the Aware Vendor Portal. Separate sessions will be available for CRS 2.0 vendors, Sign Language Interpreter vendors, and Pre-ETS Potentially Eligible vendors and will provide detailed instructions on the new processes that will be utilized with the Aware Vendor Portal.

Attending one of these sessions is a requirement for vendors' staff responsible for accessing authorizations and for those submitting billing to ACCES-VR.

More information on the dates/times of these training sessions and how to register will be forthcoming in a separate communication.

ACCES-VR thanks you for your continued partnership in assisting New Yorkers with disabilities.