

Organizational Profile

Mid-East Ohio Regional Council (MEORC) is a council of governments (COG) created under the authority of Chapter 167 of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC). Eighteen county boards (CB) serving persons with developmental disabilities (DD) are participants in an agreement that creates and governs MEORC. The original by-laws were adopted on January 20, 1989.

In creating MEORC, the member CB’s recognized they share common concerns and desires to provide the best possible services to persons with DD in their respective counties. They determined that by cooperating with one another and coordinating their powers and duties their respective counties’ residents would benefit and be better served. The member CBs may deploy MEORC in any endeavor they believe will improve services to respective residents they serve. MEORC is governed by a fifteen member board comprised of the following eighteen counties: Belmont, Carroll, Coshocton, Fairfield, Guernsey, Harrison, Hocking, Holmes, Jefferson, Knox, Licking, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Perry, Tuscarawas and Washington. These 18 CB’s make up what is known as Region five (V). Within the state of Ohio there are six regions in which the CB superintendent association is organized and meets monthly. The authority for CB existence is found in ORC 5126.

P.1 Organizational Description

P.1a Organizational Environment

P.1a(1) MEORC provides a broad array of services and products to CBs of DD, individuals with DD, providers and other customers. These services are delivered through three offices within MEORC.

Figure P.1a-1 lists MEORC’s main services offerings and delivery mechanisms.

Figure P.1a-1 Main Service Offerings

Main Service Offerings	Delivery Mechanisms
Business Services and Products	Business Management Services (BMS), Special Enterprise Investment Fund, Medicaid Billing Review, Payment Processing, Authorized Representative Payee (ARP), Billing Services (BS), Certified Waiver Provider (CWP), MSSF, Information Technology Services (ITS)
Investigative Services and Products	Major and Unusual Investigative (MUI) Services and Reporting Systems Coordinator (RSC)
Quality Services and	Accreditation Readiness, Behavior Support Services (BSS), Data Services (DS),

P.1a(2) Collaborating to provide valued, effective and efficient services that improve the lives of individuals with disabilities is the MEORC mission. The vision of MEORC is be an agency leading in innovation, vision, accountability, agility, and to be valued as a high performing customer focused agency inspiring the pursuit of excellence. In 2008, MEORC adopted the eleven Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE) values as its core values. These values guide the agency in ensuring its mission: Visionary Leadership, Customer Driven Excellence, Organizational and Personal Learning, Valuing Workforce Members and Partners, Agility, Focus on the Future, Managing for Innovation, Management by Fact, Societal Responsibility, Focus on Results and Creating Value and Systems Perspective.

MEORC’s core competencies include

1. Collaboration with customers and stakeholders to stimulate innovation and improve outcomes.
2. Subject matter experts in Medicaid Service System Facilitation (MSSF), assessing quality outcomes, conducting investigations, and providing data access, management and utilization provide value-added benefits to MEORC customers.
3. Utilization of the newest technology creates capacity, efficiency, and increased job satisfaction for MEORC employees in the provision of services to customers.
4. The use of innovative approaches in the development of products and services through customer engagement results in products and services that meet the desired customer requirements.
5. Learning and teaching organization focusing on continual cycles of improvement benefits employees and ultimately customers by reducing costs and improving products and services.

Products	Medication Administration & Health Related Activity Training and Certification (MATC), National Core Indicator Surveys (NCIS), Nursing Quality Assessment Review (NQAR), Provider Compliance Review (PCR), Medicaid Waiver Review (MWR), Outcomes Assessment Review (OAR), Process Management and Improvement, Quality Service System (QSS), Provider Support Services (PSS), Community Surveys (CS)
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P.1a(3) MEORC employs 29 full time employees and one part time employee. Employees are divided into administrative, professional and frontline staff. Front line staff includes the following classifications; investigators, business professional, quality assurance positions, fiscal specialists and data analyst. MEORC employees are divided into three offices, Office of Business (OB) 31% of the workforce, Office of Quality (OQ) 34% of the workforce, and Office of Investigations (OI) 34% of the workforce. These three offices provide different product lines to MEORC customers. Of the full time staff, 14% have master’s degrees, 59% have bachelor’s degrees, 7% have associate’s degrees, and 17% have high school degrees. MEORC’s gender breakdown is 62% female and 35% male. MEORC tenure shows that 17% have been employed by MEORC 11-15 years, 28% 6-10 years, 31% 3-5 years and 24% under two years.

In order to serve customers effectively, MEORC hires employees who live throughout Region V. This allows frontline staff to be able to work in close proximity to their customers. In addition to geographical diversity, MEORC hires employees with diverse academic backgrounds. Backgrounds include nursing, business, sociology, art therapy, economics, communications, english, law enforcement, and public administration. MEORC draws employees from different sectors other than the DD field in their hiring practices to enrich skill characteristics of the workforce and to stimulate innovative ideas.

On occasion, MEORC uses a temporary agency to fill some positions within the agency. On average, MEORC will have one temporary employee on staff based upon operational needs. Often, temporary staff become permanent as positions become available.

MEORC’s benefits package includes Ohio Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS), Public deferred compensation program, Flex-125 plan, 100% employer paid term life insurance, health, dental and vision insurance, all purpose leave (vacation and sick), training/educational reimbursement and paid holidays.

Health and safety requirements vary based upon job classification. Typical training requirements for all employees include a universal precaution exposure control, MUI training and individual rights training.

P.1a(4) MEORC has two main offices. The OQ and OB are located in a 9800 square foot facility in Mt. Vernon, Ohio and the OI is housed in a leased property in Cambridge, Ohio. In addition to the two main offices 38% of employees work from home offices located throughout and outside of Region V.

MEORC uses the most up to date technology to be able to serve customers more efficiently. 97% of employees utilize laptops that can be used in home offices or in the field. Frontline staff who work directly with customers have air cards for internet access to work remotely. MEORC houses multiple servers at the Cambridge and Mt Vernon offices. Other technologies and equipment employed by MEORC to increase efficiency and remote capabilities include, terminal services, Go To Meeting, Survey Monkey, Virtual Private Network (VPN), cell phones and smart phones, mobile scanners, printers, copiers, projectors and an elaborate automated phone system.

MEORC manages its data through numerous internal and external applications. Process improvement initiatives are maintained on a Sharepoint Server in order to work remotely and financial reporting is done through an outside accounting firm, Nelson and Nelson, CPAs. In addition, MEORC contracts with Muskingum Valley Educational Service Center (MVESC) for data services to build web based data collection tools and products for internal use and to meet customer requests. These web based applications include OAR, E-Packet, MUI Database and CS. These web based applications have increased staff efficiency and value to MEORC customers. MEORC staff utilize excel and access databases to track internal data such as key work process measures and timekeeping.

P.1a(5) MEORC is a government organization that operates under a complex set state laws and rules outlined in the ORC, Ohio Administrative Code (OAC), and Federal statute and rules. **Figure P1a-2** lists regulatory the environment.

Figure P.1a-2 Regulatory Environment

Regulatory Agency	Purpose/Oversight
Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD)	Sets rules and regulations that govern the delivery of service to individuals with developmental disabilities and requirements for financial reporting
CMS and ODJFS	Mandates provider requirements for environmental/home modifications and adaptive equipment, payment rates, Medicaid Local Administrative Authority
Social Security Administration	Sets rules and regulations that govern payeeship services to individuals with DD
Department of Labor	Provides oversight over personnel practices
ODJFS Employment Office	Provides oversight over unemployment compensation practices
State Auditor	Provides oversight over fiscal operations and conducts fiscal audits

P.1b Organizational Relationships

P.1b(1) MEORC is made up of a fifteen member board representing the eighteen counties in Region V. MEORC operates under a set of By-Laws that were adopted by the majority of members of MEORC. Each January the MEORC board elects the executive committee officers and assigns them to committees. There are seven committees that provide oversight and guidance to MEORC: executive, policy, finance, personnel, nominating, behavior Support, and region V county collaborative. In addition, annually three individuals with DD are elected to the MEORC Residential Advisory Council (MRAC). The MEORC board holds eight to ten meetings per year.

The MEORC board is responsible for hiring the executive director (ED), approving personnel actions,

policy, approving products and services, and developing an annual operating budget. The ED is responsible for implementing the decisions of the board. The directors of the three offices are deployed by the ED in the implementation of the board decisions and responsible for the day to day management of MEORC.

P.1b(2) MEORC’s market consists of customers located within and outside of Region V. Customers are segmented by CBDD, providers of services to individuals with DD and individuals with DD, their families and guardians. **Figure P.1b-1** lists MEORC customer groups and key requirements and or expectations.

Figure P.1b-1: Customer Requirements

Customer Group	Key Requirements or Expectations
CB	High quality services at an affordable rate; systems level data on key performance measures; development of new product offerings to meet county board requirements; Support for organizational improvement
Providers	Provide required and specialized training; provide regulatory oversight; provide a forum to collaborate with other providers; Support for organizational improvement
Individuals with DD, Families and Guardians	High quality services; Ensure health and safety is maintained through key product offerings; provide specialized product offerings and customer feedback mechanisms

P.1b(3) MEORC’s most important suppliers, partners and collaborators support MEORC in meeting its mission.

Figure P.1b-2 Suppliers, Partners, Collaborators

Supplier, Partner and Collaborator groups	Role in Key Products and Customer Support Services	Key Mechanisms for communication
DODD	Supplies rule requirements and technical support services; provides technology platform for data entry into the system.	Informational notices; steering committees; Region V County Collaborative meetings (RVCC)

MVESC	Provides technical support services for QSS program; Develops web-based applications used in product development; Provides technology platform to collect systems level data for CBs; Provides data consultation	New product development meetings; systems level data review meetings; Outcome evaluation meetings
Info-Link	Provides all Information Technology (IT) services to MEORC. Ensures stability of MEORC's technology services; Provides strategic guidance on technology capabilities.	Provides IT services through "trouble ticket" process; Strategic Plan (SP) to maintain MEORC's IT system.
Dublin Management Group	Provides human resource and personnel advice	Point Factoring Job Analysis Committee, Senior Leadership Meetings
Professional Advancement Through Training and Education in Human Services (PATHS)	Multilevel training program to allow people who support individuals with disabilities to earn a professional credential	Representative from MEORC on the PATHS regional council
Nelson & Nelson, CPAs	Provides external review of financial information; provides technical assistance related to finance and audit standards; provides platform for fiscal data exports; prepares financial statements and monthly bank and investment reconciliations	Assigned partner; export and import of fiscal data and reports

P2 Organizational Situation

P.2a Competitive Environment

P.2a(1) MEORC must compete with its primary customers, CBs for scarce funding and service delivery products. Also, as a provider for services, MEORC competes with other CWP for services. In addition, MEORC competes with private sector billing and payee organizations. MEORC exists within the 18 counties that make up Region V, however, within the 88 counties in Ohio 75 of those counties are members of a COG. There are eight COGs within Ohio. These eight COGs represent competitors that MEORC customers could potentially utilize.

MEORC's competitive position in Ohio is solid. MEORC is the largest and oldest of the 8 COGs in Ohio. Of the 18 CBs in Region V, 100% utilize the investigative services product, 72% utilize the OAR product and 50% utilize the MSSF product. These are the three key legacy products MEORC offers to CB customers. Over the past several years legacy product offerings have remained stable in the region. Strategic goals related to increasing diversity of customers and increasing new product offerings have resulted in 16 new product offerings since 2007.

Figure P.2-1 Illustrates New Product Offerings

Year	New Product Offering
2007	ARP, QSS, MATC
2008	NQAR, BSS, PATHS,
2009	MWR, PSS, NCIS, CS, CWP, BS, BMS
2010	ITS, DS, RSC

P2a(2) A key factor that will impact MEORC's competitive position is impending state budget cuts. Region V CBs will see a 2.4 million loss in state subsidy revenue in fiscal year 2012. This loss in revenue could potentially decrease CB's ability to purchase services from MEORC. In addition, technology changes and state rule changes at DODD could potentially eliminate two of MEORC's legacy products; MSSF and OAR.

In order to strengthen its competitive position MEORC has diversified its service and product offerings and has continued to collaborate with organizations to bring innovative approaches to the region. MEORC has been asked to participate in the RVCC project. This collaborative project between the Region V CB's, MEORC and DODD seeks to secure efficiencies and improve effectiveness through a redesign the DD system in the region: a focus on creating a person centered (customer focused) system is pivotal.

In addition, MEORC has partnered with the PATHS program to allow people who support individuals with developmental disabilities to pursue a career path by earning a professional credential. Another collaborative launched by MEORC was the QSS initiative. This initiative was launched to introduce quality concepts and provide comparative data for MEORC members: a focus on the CPE is promoted. 61% of the MEORC CB members and several provider agencies have participated in QSS foundation training and have begun their journey in using the Baldrige Criteria as a framework for their organization. These partnerships have helped to solidify MEORC as a high performing COG within the state of Ohio.

P.2a(3) There is limited data available to government organizations that are similar to

Figure P.2-2 Key Strategic Advantages and Challenges

	Strategic Advantages	Strategic Challenges
Business	Relationship with DODD; Relationship with CB customers; Mature organization; Exclusivity for some services and product offerings	State government funding cuts; Customers as competitors; Geographical location and wealth of customers; Limited comparable data sources
Operational	Long term successful relationships with key suppliers; Work directly with customers in their environment; Utilization of the Plan Do Study Act Cycle (PDSA)	Numerous product offerings but limited cross functional workforce; Lack of software supplier control and non-existent competition for major software vendor; limited process to develop new product offerings; Lack of a limited resource management system
Societal Responsibility	Customers believe MEORC has high ethical standards; Reduction in taxpayer costs through innovation and green building techniques	Restricted use of public funds
Human Resources (HR)	Experienced employees; Benefit packages; Staff participation in continuous improvement; large recruiting pool over 18 counties	Decentralized workforce; Retention of employees to competitors, customers, and suppliers; Lack of HR resources; Salary competition due to public entity; Weak staff training program

P.2c Performance Improvement System

P.2c Figure P.2-3 is a diagram of MEORC’s performance improvement system which is built on the framework of the PDSA cycle. Employees are empowered to be key process owners and oversee their respective processes. When areas of needed improvement are identified through strategic planning or process data review a cross functional process improvement team is formed. These teams, facilitated by employees specializing in process management, utilize the MEORC Way to guide them through the process improvement effort. When applicable, MEORC’s data analyst is deployed to perform statistical analysis and provide guidance. Process improvement techniques vary based upon the situation. Results of process improvement efforts are

MEORC. In the current DD sector there is not a centralized data repository to benchmark similar organizations. Some key measures MEORC uses to benchmark itself against competitors is type and amount of product offerings, key process measures for products, cost of services, efficiency of services, and customer satisfaction. MEORC utilizes the Are We Making Progress (AWMP) survey for frontline and leadership employees and compares these results to the results of member boards.

P.2b Strategic Context

P.2b The agency’s key business, operational, societal responsibility, and human resource strategic challenges and advantages are outlined in **Figure P.2-2**.

shared with the MEORC leadership and the MEORC board at periodic intervals.

Figure P.2-3 PDSA Cycle

