

# Rethinking Individual Plan for Employment (IPE)

A Case Study in Systems Change in a VR  
Agency



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# Presenters

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# Objectives

- To learn about time to plan challenges and the impact of this on early exiting from VR programs around the country.
- To learn how Maine DVR addressed these challenges and to review best practices in timely eligibility determination and plan development
- To learn about some specific strategies and tools used and how they impacted positively overall outcomes for individuals served in Maine.
- To hear about lessons learned as Maine DVR implemented changes in their system

# WIOA Rule Language Re: Eligibility

- The determination of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services shall be based on— (i) the **review of existing data** described in section 7(2)(A)(i); and (ii) to the extent that such data is unavailable or insufficient for determining eligibility, the provision of assessment activities described in section 7(2)(A)(ii).
- TIMEFRAME FOR MAKING AN ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION.—The designated State unit shall determine whether an individual is eligible for vocational rehabilitation services under this title **within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 60 days**, after the individual has submitted an application for the services unless— (A) exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the designated State unit preclude making an eligibility determination within 60 days and the designated State unit and the individual agree to a specific extension of time; or (B) the designated State unit is exploring an individual’s abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations under paragraph (2)(B).

# WIOA Rule Language Re: Time To Plan

- (F) TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETING THE INDIVIDUALIZED PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT.—The individualized plan for employment shall be developed ***as soon as possible, but not later than a deadline of 90 days*** after the date of the determination of eligibility described in paragraph (1), unless the designated State unit and the eligible individual agree to an extension of that deadline to a specific date by which the individualized plan for employment shall be completed.

# National Perspective on Eligibility and Timely Development

- All States want to comply with the letter of the law
- Some believe 60 and 90 days means due to resource challenges, they should take that full amount of time whenever possible
- Even though time to Eligibility has been in statute before WIOA, some states still struggle meeting the 60 day timeframe
- Engagement Early and Often has a positive impact on when and why individuals Exit the VR programs

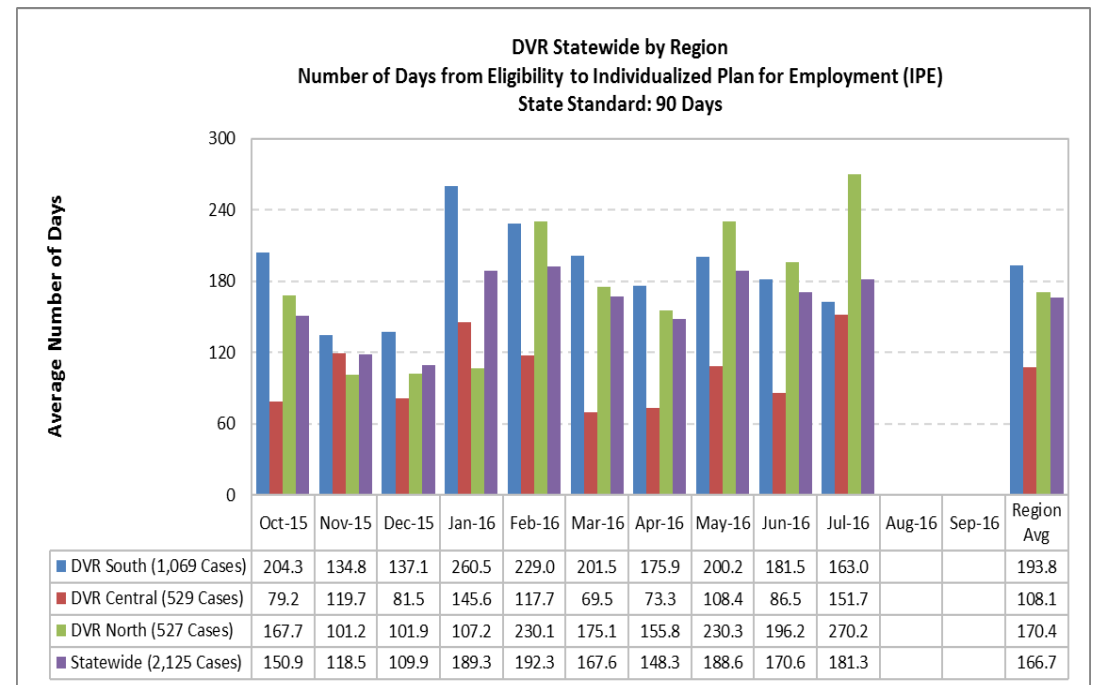
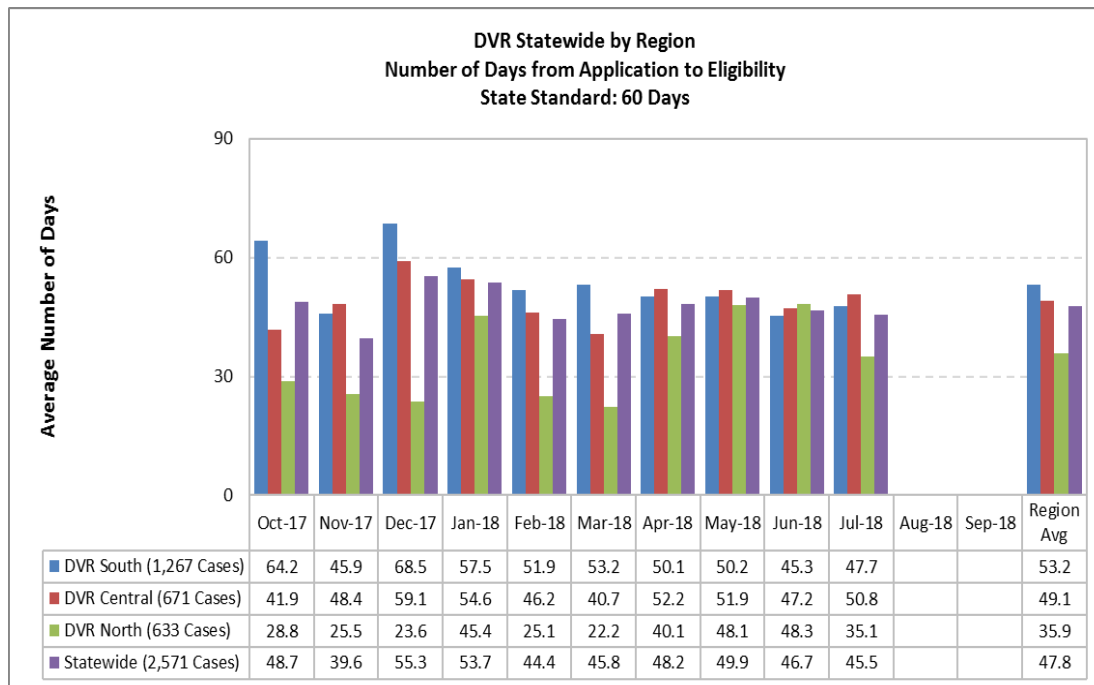
# Trends in the VR Program “Reasons For Exit” FY 2017



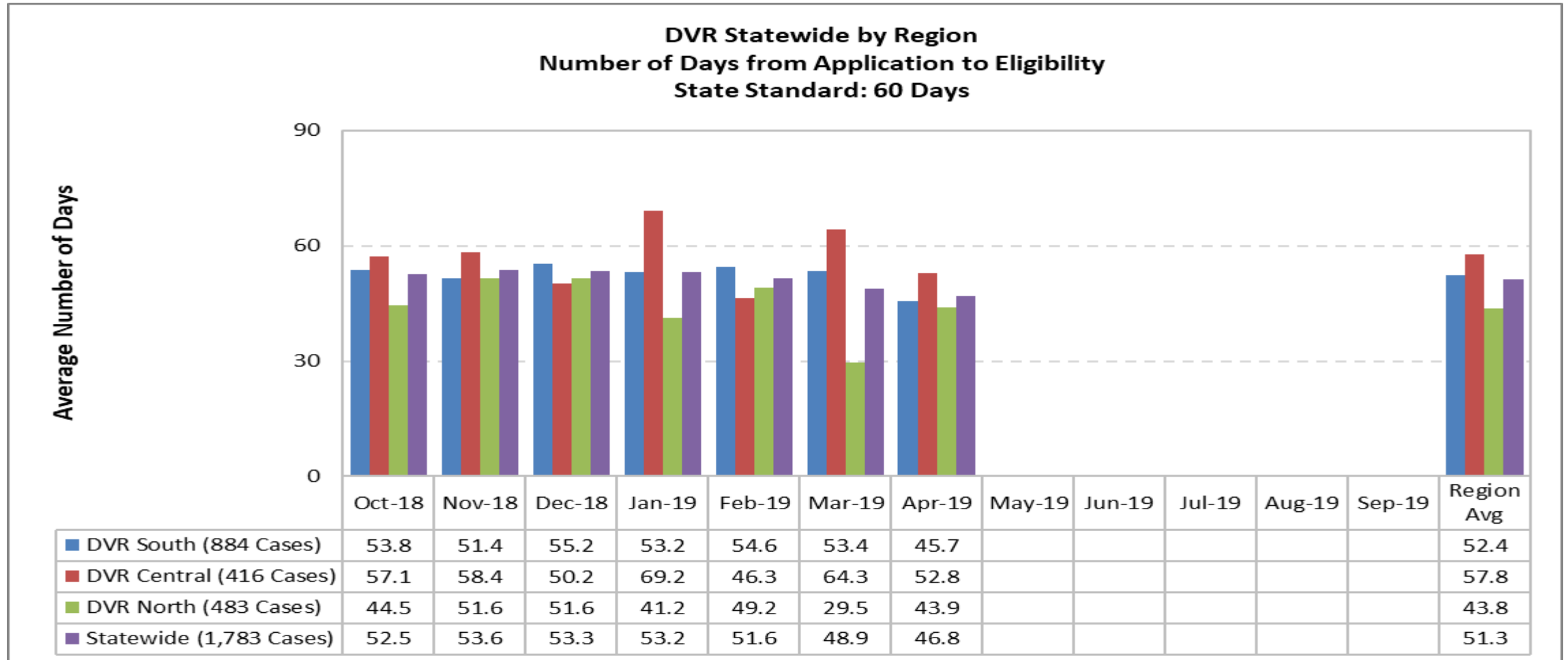
# The Maine DVR Eligibility and IPE History, Actions and Lessons Learned



# Where Maine DVR Was Two Years Ago

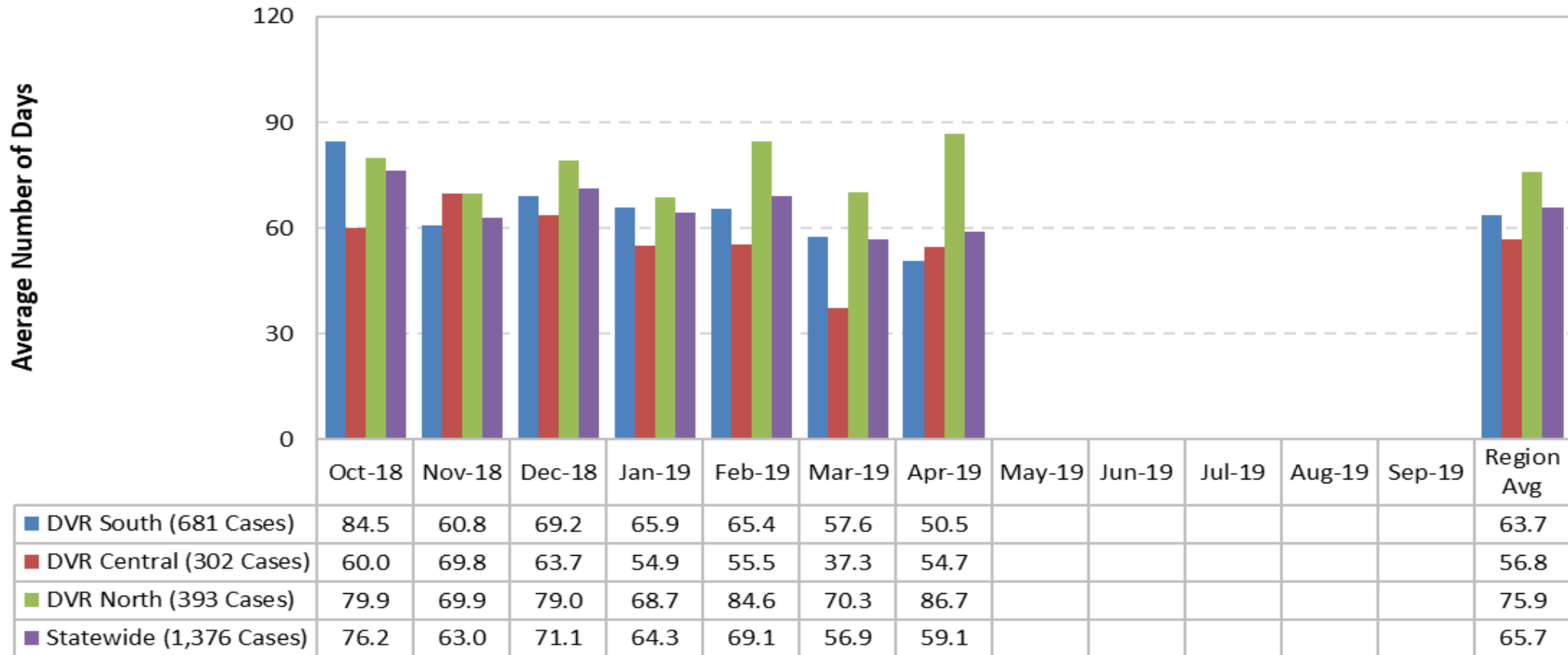


# Time to Eligibility – Maine DVR Today



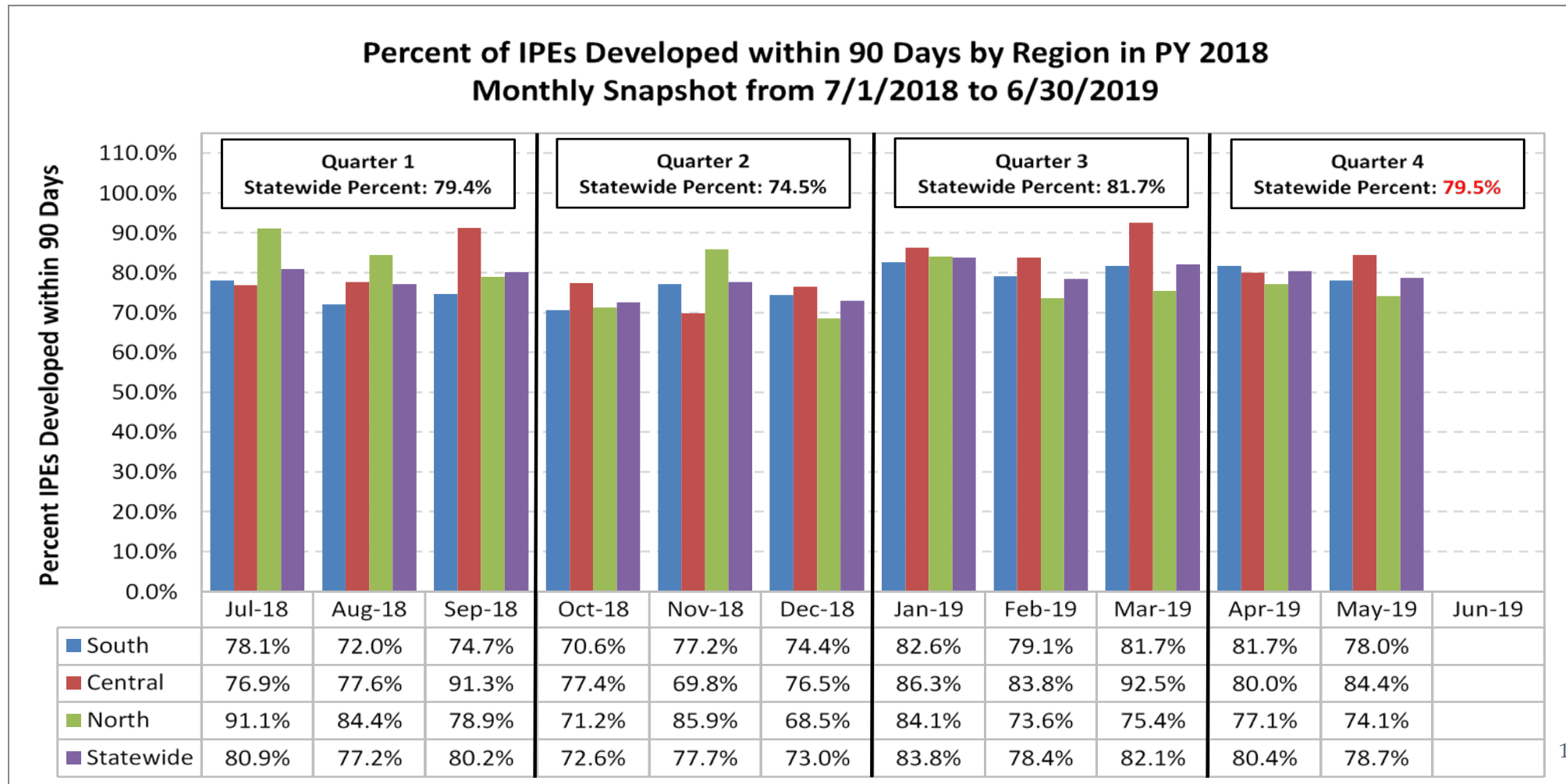
# Time to Plan – Maine DVR Today

**DVR Statewide by Region**  
**Number of Days from Eligibility to Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)**  
 State Standard: 90 Days

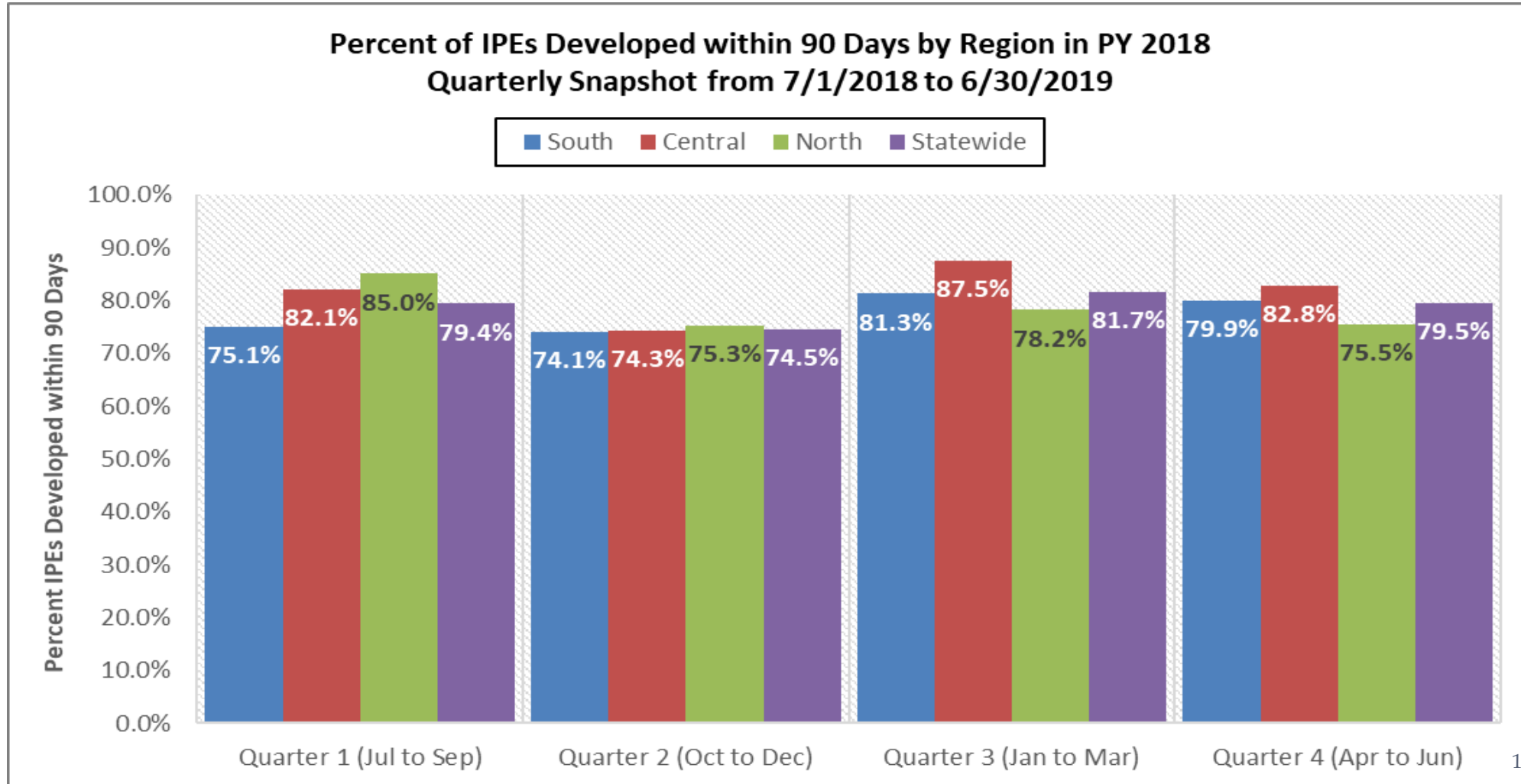


# Different Way to Look at the Data – Time to IPE

**Data Source:** Customized Aware Layout Data Extract on 6/3/2019 Based on PY 2018



# Time to IPE Quarterly and By Regions



# Review of Eligibility Criteria for Maine VR

- The current Maine VR Rules state that an individual is eligible for services if one:
  - 1) has a physical, mental or emotional disability that keeps one from getting and keeping a job, and
  - 2) an individual requires Vocational Rehabilitation services to overcome the disability-related barriers that interfere with preparing for, finding and keeping a job.
- Recent updates to the VR rules includes “advancing” in a job, in compliance with federal regulation

# Eligibility Determination – Helpful Reminders

- Feedback and TA provided during RSA Monitoring in in 2011 and 2017
- When possible, ask consumers or family members to bring documents with them to intake
- Unless there is an outstanding question in the VRC's mind as to OOS 2 or 3, can often determine eligibility after first meeting

# Eligibility Determination – SSI/SSDI

- Reminder – automatic eligibility for applicants who receive SSI/SSDI benefits or who receive or are eligible for waiver services
- Eligibility can be completed immediately upon intake with back up information sought to support the eligibility
- If questions about which OOS, seek support from supervisors and/or Central Office
- Note: OOS elements unchanged in proposed VR rules




# IPE Development – Transition Helpful Reminders

- Starting Points
  - IEP
    - Check post-secondary education and employment goals
  - Interview with client and family if appropriate
  - TCEW portfolio
  - Results of Pre-ETS
  - Results of work-based learning/paid work experience
- Need to Explore More
- Think Community!
  - Job shadows
  - Informational interviews
  - Situational assessment
  - Work experience
  - Summer work
  - Pre-Apprenticeships
- Expect that many youth will have exploratory goals/plans

# Sample Screenshot to show how to capture Plans In Case Management System For a Youth

Name  Participant ID  Case Status  Case Type

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**Employment Goal**  
 Goal     
 Custom  







**Reason for Selecting this Employment Goal Checkbox List (At least one item or the narrative is required.)**  
 I have successfully completed related training.  
 I have successfully done this type of work before.  
 It matches my abilities, interests and strengths  
 The job outlook for this type of work is good.

Employment Goal Reason Narrative

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**2. Planned Services (At least one required)**

**3 records**

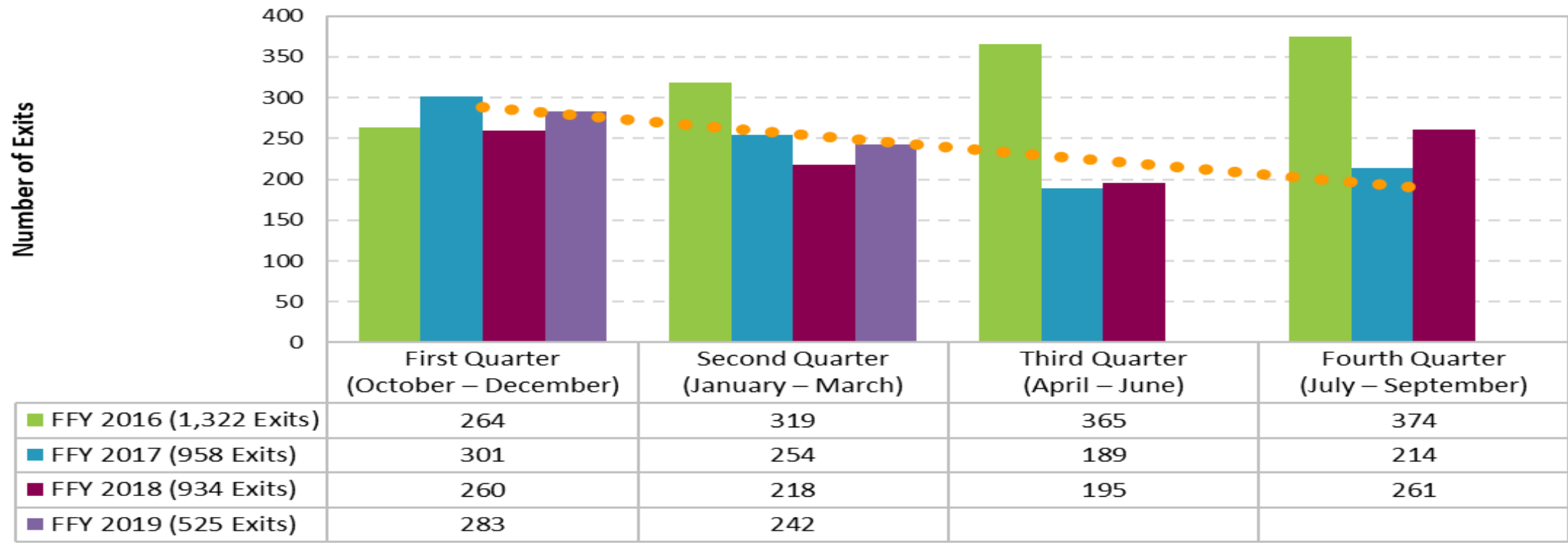
Number▼	Service Category	SubCategory	Description	Estimated Start Date	Estimated End Date
1	Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling & Guidance	Counseling & Guidance	Alice will receive guidance and counseling services to help determine if Fashion Designers is a feasible goal.	6/2015 	10/2015 
2	Job Readiness Training	Work Adjustment Training	Alice will continue to participate in Job Club activities through her high school in order to develop and improve upon her work skills.	6/2015 	10/2015 
3	Assessment	Other Assessment	Alice will participate in the Transitional CEW in order to take assessments to determine her work interests, transferable skills and help her to identify her strengths and weaknesses. She will also receive pre-employment information around job searching.	6/2015 	10/2015 

# IPE Development – Adult Helpful Reminders

- **Starting Points**
  - What is the individual's expressed vocational goal?
  - If completed, what do the CEW results tell you?
  - Is DPG an option?
  - If appropriate, what have you learned from the family
- **Need to learn more**
  - Labor Market Info
    - How does this influence goal?
  - It is OK for plans to be amended and can be short-term if needed!
  - Work experience isn't just for youth! – Don't forget the importance of job shadows, informational interviews, OJTs, etc.

# ME DVR Early Exiter Data for Transition Students

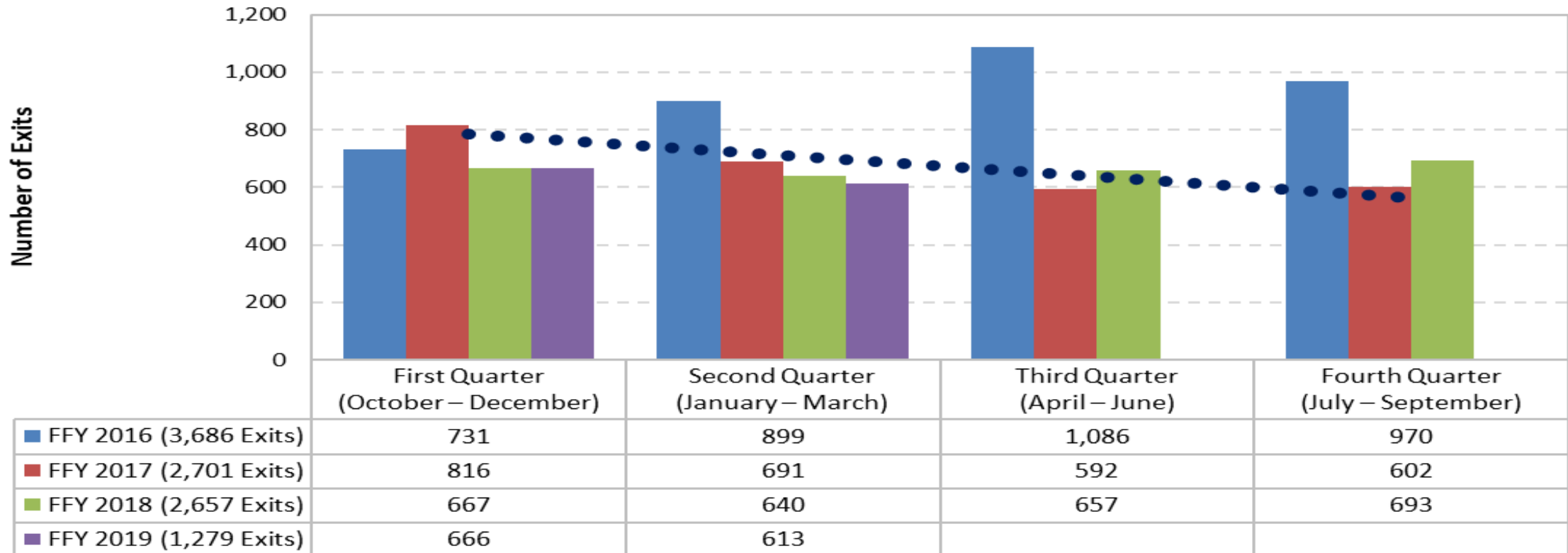
**DVR Transition Statewide by Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)  
Other than Rehabilitated (OTR) Exits  
Number of OTR Exits by Quarter**



\*Case Status Included in Analysis: Closed-Other Exits at Application, Eligible, Service, Job Ready, Employed  
Data Source: biAdaptor Cases\_VR\_DVR Table Data Extract Based on Federal Fiscal Year Time Period

# ME DVR Early Exiter Data for All Consumers

**DVR All Clients Statewide by Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)  
 Other than Rehabilitated (OTR) Exits  
 Number of OTR Exits by Quarter**



\*Case Status Included in Analysis: Closed-Other Exits at Application, Eligible, Service, Job Ready, Employed  
 Data Source: biAdaptor Cases\_VR\_DVR Table Data Extract Based on Federal Fiscal Year Time Period

# Lessons Learned

- Staff training early and Often – explain “Why” Eligibility and Time to Plan are so important
- Give concrete examples (screen shots of how to document in the case management system, use case scenarios, etc.).
- Share monthly Data with all staff so they can see how their offices are doing in meeting goals
- Show how their work impacts the quarterly reporting and Data Dashboards from RSA
- “Myth Busting” is an ongoing process
- Needed to change how we were collecting and showing the data

# Resources

- REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 [As Amended Through P.L. 114–95, Enacted December 10, 2015]  
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/leg/rehab/rehabilitation-act-of-1973-amended-by-wioa.pdf>
- State of Maine Division of Vocational Rehabilitation  
Internal Data Sources

# Questions?

- Does anyone have any examples or tools to share of how their state has addressed eligibility and time to plan?
- Do people see any additional challenges around the transition population specifically?
- Are states tracking Early Exiter information? What does it say?