



REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR FISCAL YEARS 2014–15

REPORT ON FEDERAL ACTIVITIES
UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973*, AS AMENDED

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FOR
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UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973*, AS AMENDED**

APRIL 2018

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

U.S. Department of Education

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April 2018

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full Term
ABA	<i>Architectural Barriers Act</i>
ACL	Administration for Community Living
ADA	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i>
ADAAG	<i>Americans with Disabilities Act</i> Accessibility Guidelines
AIVRS	American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ARRA	<i>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act</i>
ASL	American Sign Language
BEP	Business Enterprise Program
CAP	Client Assistance Program
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CIL	Center for Independent Living
CRD	Civil Rights Division
CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
DD Act	<i>Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act</i>
DOL	Department of Labor
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRO	Disability Rights Ohio
ED	Department of Education
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
GSA	General Services Administration
HHS	Health and Human Services
ICI	Institute on Community Inclusion
IDEA	<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Act</i>
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IL	Independent Living
IL-OIB	Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind
ILS	Independent Living Services
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
IRI	Institute on Rehabilitation Issues
MIS	Management and Information System
MSFW	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program

Acronym	Full Term
NCD	National Council on Disability
NCRTM	National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials
NIDILRR	National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research
NIDRR	National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OFCCP	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program
OIB	Older Individuals Who Are Blind
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
P&A	Protection and Advocacy
PAAT	Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology
PAIR	Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights
PASS	Plan to Achieve Self-Support
PCS	Personal Care Services
PTI	Parent Training and Information
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
SE	Supported Employment
SGA	Substantial Gainful Activity
SILC	Statewide Independent Living Council
SILS	State Independent Living Services
SMPID	RSA's State Monitoring and Program Improvement Division
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
SSI	Supplemental Security Income
TACE	Technical Assistance and Continuing Education
TVR Circle	Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Continuous Improvement of Rehabilitation Counselors, Leaders, and Educators
USU	Utah State University
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
VR Program	Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program
WIA	<i>Workforce Investment Act of 1998</i>
WIOA	<i>Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</i>

PREFACE

The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended (*Rehabilitation Act*), provides the statutory authority for programs and activities that assist individuals with disabilities in the pursuit of gainful employment, independence, self-sufficiency, and full integration into community life.

On July 22, 2014, the president signed the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (*WIOA*) (P.L. 113-128) into law. Among other things, *WIOA* superseded the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998* (*WIA*) and amended the *Rehabilitation Act*. The *WIOA* passage—a bipartisan and bicameral effort—reformed the Federal adult education and workforce development system and presented opportunities to change the way these systems operate. *WIOA*

- transferred certain programs from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, including
 - the independent living programs under *Title VII, Chapter 1*;
 - programs under the *Assistive Technology Act*; and
 - the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), renaming it the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).
- repealed the following RSA programs and program areas
 - In-Service Training of Rehabilitation Personnel
 - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
 - Recreational Programs
 - Projects With Industry
- modified many RSA programs (changes that are described throughout the report in the applicable sections devoted to individual programs).

This report to the president and Congress describes the activities of RSA (a component of OSERS) during fiscal year (FY) 2014 (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014) and fiscal year 2015 (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015). RSA is the principal agency for carrying out *Titles I, III, VI*, and specified portions of *Titles V and VII* of the *Rehabilitation Act*. RSA is responsible for preparing and submitting this report to the president and Congress under Section 13 of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

The *Rehabilitation Act* also authorizes research activities that are administered by NIDILRR, which will submit its portion of the report separately. The *Rehabilitation Act* also authorizes the work of the National Council on Disability (NCD) and includes provisions focused on rights, advocacy, and protections for individuals with disabilities. This report describes those activities.

Data used in this report were accessed from Federal, ED, OSERS, or RSA systems and annual reports that may require user permission or registration or are restricted to ED or RSA personnel. Access to these systems and reports has not been made available to the public in this report. Reports on RSA activities that are readily available can be found at the RSA website: <https://rsa.ed.gov>.

THE REHABILITATION ACT: AN OVERVIEW

Federal interest and involvement in rehabilitation issues and policy initially date from 1920 with the enactment of the *Civilian Vocational Rehabilitation Act*, commonly called the *Smith-Fess Act*. The *Smith-Fess Act* marked the beginning of a Federal and State partnership in the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. Although the law was passed shortly after the end of World War I, its provisions were specifically directed at the rehabilitation needs of persons who were industrially injured rather than those of veterans with disabilities.

A major event in the history of the Federal rehabilitation program was passage of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, which provides the statutory authority for programs and activities that assist individuals with disabilities¹ in the pursuit of gainful employment, independence, self-sufficiency, and full integration into community life. Under the *Rehabilitation Act*, the following Federal agencies and entities are charged with administering a wide variety of programs and activities: the departments of Education, Labor, and Justice; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board; and the National Council on Disability.

On July 22, 2014, the president signed *WIOA* into law, which, among other things, superseded the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA)* and amended the *Rehabilitation Act*. *WIOA* reformed the Federal adult education and workforce development system and presented tremendous opportunities to change the way these systems operate. *WIOA* supports innovative strategies to keep pace with changing economic conditions; focuses on competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities, including students and youth with disabilities; provides expanded training and employment opportunities; and supports the individuals who have the greatest barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities, by offering them enhanced access and clear pathways to good jobs making family-sustaining wages.

The changes made by *WIOA* will help to streamline the way we do business in order to shape the nation's employment and training system into one that continues to provide improved outcomes for all job seekers, workers, and employers. *WIOA* requires improved collaboration among adult education, vocational rehabilitation (VR), and workforce development agencies by identifying six core programs across the U.S. departments of Education (ED), Labor (DOL), and Health and Human Services (HHS). The six core programs (and their authorizing titles in *WIOA* and implementing agencies) are the:

1. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities (*Title I*) (DOL);
2. Youth;
3. Youth Workforce Investment Activities (*Title I*) (DOL);

¹ *Individual with a disability* is defined, for purposes of programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*, at Section 7(20). See Appendix C for the full definition.

4. *Adult Education and Family Literacy Act* programs (*Title II*) (ED, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education);
5. *Wagner-Peyser Act's* Employment Service program (*Wagner-Peyser Act*, as amended by *Title III*) (DOL); and
6. Vocational Rehabilitation Services program (*Title I* of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended by *Title IV*) (ED, OSERS, RSA).

The core partners have worked to establish collaborative relationships, implement the statute, and develop regulations for the joint and program-specific provisions. *WIOA* provides expanded training and employment opportunities for the millions of youth and adults served annually by our systems.

Overall, *WIOA* made reforms that affect all of the core partners and programs. *WIOA*

- I. increased coordination of core programs with Unified and Combined State Plans by
 - modernizing and streamlining workforce development through an integrated system that provides opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services that link all job seekers and workers with local and regional employers;
 - requiring States to prepare a single, coordinated Unified State Plan across the core *WIOA* programs;
 - requiring State plans to include a strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce and for meeting the needs of employers and include the operational elements that support a four-year State strategy; and
 - giving States the option to submit a Combined State Plan that would include other Federal programs with a workforce development component, such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program or those funded through the *Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act*, among others.
- II. emphasized accountability and improvements in program outcomes by
 - establishing common performance measures across the core programs to improve alignment and collaboration in data collection and reporting;
 - including both employment-related outcomes and education-related outcomes, such as credential attainment and measurable skill gain, in the six primary indicators of performance to which States are held accountable; and
 - placing a strong emphasis on accountability and improvements in program outcomes to ensure that individuals have access to high-quality services and opportunities.

III. committed to improving training and employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment by

- targeting and prioritizing programs and services that address the education, training, and employment needs of “individuals with barriers to employment”— a new, defined term that includes individuals with disabilities.

IV. promoted connections to employers, businesses, and regional and community needs by

- streamlining the governing boards that establish State, regional, and local workforce investment priorities, strengthening their role in coordinating and aligning workforce programs, and adding functions to better meet worker and employer needs;
- engaging employers across the workforce system to align training with high-demand skills and match employers with qualified workers; and
- redefining the role and contributions of one-stop partners, including requiring partner programs to provide access to services through the one-stop system and provide financial contributions to support the infrastructure costs of one-stop centers.

ED has primary responsibility for administering the *Rehabilitation Act*. RSA is the administrative entity responsible for oversight of the programs under the *Rehabilitation Act* that are funded through ED. It is the principal agency for carrying out *Titles I, III, VI*, and specified portions of *Title V* and *VII* of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

Since 2015, *Title II* has been administered by NIDILRR, and *Title VII, Chapter 1* Independent Living (IL) programs have been administered by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), both within HHS. Under *Title II*, NIDILRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research, demonstration projects, training, and related activities. NIDILRR-funded programs and activities are designed to promote employment, independent living, maintenance of health and function, and full inclusion and integration into society for individuals with disabilities. IL programs maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities and integrate them into the mainstream of American society.

Title IV is administered by the National Council on Disability. Portions of *Title V* are administered by ED’s Office of Civil Rights. (See figure 1 for title names.)

Figure 1. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, by its various titles

Title	Name
I	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
II	Research and Training
III	Professional Development and Special Projects and Demonstrations
IV	National Council on Disability
V	Rights and Advocacy
VI	Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities
VII	Independent Living Services and Centers for Independent Living

RSA administers grant programs that provide direct support for VR, independent living, and individual advocacy and assistance. The agency also supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel trained in providing VR and other services. RSA has also provided training grants to upgrade the skills and credentials of employed personnel, although FY 2014 was the last year funding was provided to these grants. Finally, RSA conducts monitoring, provides technical assistance, and disseminates information to public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and effective participation by individuals with disabilities in employment and in the community.

The largest program RSA administers is the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services program, also known as the VR program. This program funds State VR agencies to provide employment-related services for individuals with disabilities so that they may prepare for and engage in gainful employment that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

For more than 90 years, the VR program has helped individuals with physical disabilities to prepare for and enter into the workforce. In 1943, the program expanded to serve individuals with mental disabilities. Nationwide, the VR program serves more than one million individuals with disabilities each year. More than 91 percent of the people who use State VR services have significant physical or mental disabilities that seriously limit one or more functional capacities, which are defined as “mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, and work skill” (34 CFR §361.42). These individuals often require multiple services over an extended period. For them, VR services are indispensable for attaining employment and reducing their reliance on public support.

The *Rehabilitation Act* has been a driving force behind major changes that have affected the lives of millions of individuals with disabilities in this country. This report, covering FYs 2014 and 2015, describes all the major programs and activities authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act* and the success of the Federal government in carrying out the purposes and policies of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

PROGRAMS UNDER THE *REHABILITATION ACT*

Through partnerships with other Federal and non-Federal agencies, RSA reports on a wide variety of programs, initiatives, and activities that are authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Many of these are funded or supported by RSA, but some are funded or supported by other agencies. For the purpose of this report, these programs, initiatives, and activities are organized into five major areas: Employment Programs; Independent Living; Technical Assistance, Training, and Support; Evaluation, Research, and Dissemination; and Advocacy and Enforcement. Within each area, this report describes the discrete program, initiative, or activity. The programs, organized by these areas, are

Employment Programs

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services program
- Supported Employment Services program
- American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services program
- Demonstration and Training programs

Independent Living

- Independent Living Services program
- Centers for Independent Living program
- Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind program

Technical Assistance, Training, and Support

- Capacity-building for Traditionally Underserved Populations
- Rehabilitation Training
- Special Projects and Demonstrations

Evaluation, Research, and Information Dissemination

- Program Evaluation
- Information Clearinghouse
- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research / National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Advocacy and Enforcement

- Client Assistance program
- Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights program
- Employment of People With Disabilities
- Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board
- Electronic and Information Technology
- Employment Under Federal Contracts
- Nondiscrimination in Programs that Receive Federal Financial Assistance
- National Council on Disability

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

RSA administers six programs that assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes. Two of these programs, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services program and the Supported Employment Services program, are State formula grant programs. The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Demonstration and Training, and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs are discretionary grant programs that make competitive awards for up to a five-year period. Each of these programs is described below.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM

**Authorized under Sections 100–111 and 113 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education**

The VR program is an integral part of each State's coordinated workforce development system that assesses, plans, develops, and provides VR services for individuals with disabilities. The program is designed to provide VR services to eligible individuals with disabilities so that they may achieve an employment outcome that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

The Federal government covers 78.7 percent of the program's costs through financial assistance to the States for program services and administration. Federal funds are allocated to the States based on a statutory formula in Section 8 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. The formula takes into consideration a State's population and per capita income. As part of the matching requirement for the VR program, State agencies expended and obligated \$845,167,713 in FY 2014 and \$882,619,814 in FY 2015. This information is reported in the SF-425, Federal Financial Report, for the respective fiscal year.

The *Rehabilitation Act* provides flexibility to the States for positioning the VR program within the State government. The VR program can be located in one of two types of State agencies. The first is any State agency that is primarily concerned with VR or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities. The other is a designated State VR unit that is primarily concerned with VR or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the State agency's VR program under the State plan.

The 50 U.S. States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands all have VR agencies. The *Rehabilitation Act* allows States to have two State VR agencies—one for individuals who are blind and one for all other individuals with disabilities. VR agencies that serve only individuals who are blind or visually impaired are known as “blind agencies;” and VR agencies that serve all other individuals with disabilities in States with a blind agency are known as “general agencies.” States with only one VR agency that serves all individuals with disabilities have a “combined agency.” Of the 80 VR agencies nationwide, 24 are blind agencies, 24 are general agencies, and 32 are combined agencies.

Structurally, the 80 State VR agencies are located in 12 education agencies, 16 labor and workforce agencies, 25 social service agencies, nine disability program agencies, and 17 agencies of other types. For American Samoa, Section 101(a)(2)(A)(iii) of the *Rehabilitation Act* identifies the governor’s office as the VR agency.

The VR program is committed to providing services to individuals with significant disabilities² and assisting consumers to achieve high-quality employment outcomes. RSA, in its relationships with the States, has continued to emphasize the priorities of high-quality employment outcomes and increased services to individuals with significant disabilities. Helping State agencies achieve positive employment outcomes for the people with disabilities they serve requires a robust system of collaboration, monitoring, and State improvement plans that address identified needs and goals.

The VR program requires State agencies to administer a complex array of service delivery methods and funding mechanisms. As such, program monitoring ensures that RSA is able to identify areas of need in order to support agencies to improve performance and comply with the *Rehabilitation Act* and its supporting regulations.

Within RSA, the State Monitoring and Program Improvement Division (SMPID) is responsible for monitoring State VR agencies. SMPID personnel are assigned to State teams that work collaboratively with consumers, providers, State agencies, and other interested parties to implement a continuous, performance-based monitoring process that identifies areas for program improvement, areas of noncompliance, and effective practices. Each State is assigned a State liaison who serves as the single point of contact for that State.

² *Individual with a significant disability* is defined in 34 CFR §361.5(b)(31), for the time period covered by this report, as “an individual with a disability

- (i) who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
- (ii) whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and
- (iii) who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.”

Staff also is assigned to units to perform specific functions that support the work of the State teams. The VR unit is responsible for

- developing and implementing systems for the submission, review, and approval of the VR State Plan;
- developing the VR State grant monitoring process implemented by State teams; and
- providing policy guidance and technical assistance to VR agencies to ensure consistency with VR program requirements.

In FY 2014, RSA modified the monitoring protocol for the FY 2012 through FY 2015 cycle to assess State compliance and performance as required by Section 107 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. This monitoring protocol was revised based on feedback received from State VR agencies, stakeholders, and RSA staff, and focused on three areas: VR program performance of the designated State agency and designated State unit, transition services and employment outcomes for youth with disabilities, and the allocation and expenditure of VR and Supported Employment program funds. The modified protocol was designed to be used for the remaining years in the monitoring cycle, which included both FY 2014 and FY 2015.

In FY 2014, RSA initiated monitoring activities using the modified protocol to prepare for and conduct on-site reviews of the VR and Supported Employment programs in 10 States. With the passage of *WIOA* and the significant changes to the VR and Supported Employment programs, as well as the short timeline mandated by Congress for adopting regulations, RSA suspended the FY 2014 monitoring activities. However, RSA conducted targeted technical assistance visits in Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Utah in FY 2015 to address agency needs related to accurate and timely financial reporting.

To provide VR agencies, disability advocates, VR consumers, service providers, and other VR stakeholders with information on the performance of the VR Program, RSA publishes an annual review report for each of the 80 State VR agencies. The reports are written in nontechnical language for the general public and are available online through the ED's Management Information System (MIS) at <http://rsa.ed.gov>. The FY 2013 annual review report was published in December 2014. The annual review report includes the following information about each State VR agency:

- individuals served by the VR program (i.e., individuals who receive VR services)
- program outcomes
- agency staffing patterns (i.e., staffing patterns within the VR agencies)
- financial data (i.e., Federal award, amounts of matching funds, amounts of funds carried over)
- compliance with performance accountability status of appeals (i.e., eligible individuals of a VR agency who disagree with a decision rendered by the agency).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA made major changes to the VR program. WIOA

- I. made significant improvements for individuals with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities and youth with disabilities transitioning from education to employment, by
 - placing emphasis on achieving competitive integrated employment through customized employment, supported employment, and individualized services;
 - emphasizing career advancement through graduate degrees, particularly science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers;
 - placing significant emphasis on serving students and youth with disabilities by increasing opportunities to practice and improve workplace skills, including internships and apprenticeships; and
 - requiring VR agencies to reserve at least 15 percent of VR program funds for providing pre-employment transition services to assist students with disabilities transition from secondary school to postsecondary education programs and employment.
- II. strengthened alignment between vocational rehabilitation, special education, and employers by
 - expanding VR focus on employer engagement to provide work-based learning experiences and to identify competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities in the job-driven workforce;
 - requiring VR agencies to provide descriptions in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan regarding how they will work with employers to identify competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities;
 - permitting VR agencies under an order of selection to serve eligible individuals outside of the order if they require specific services or equipment to maintain employment; and
 - strengthening coordination between VR agencies and local educational agencies when providing transition services under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* and pre-employment transition services.
- III. added new provisions related to limitations on the use of subminimum wages that
 - require individuals with disabilities seeking or continuing employment at subminimum wages with entities holding special wage certificates under Section 14(c) of the *Fair Labor Standards Act* to access services, including VR services, enabling them to achieve competitive integrated employment in the community; and

- require VR agencies to provide these individuals career counseling and information and referral services at specific intervals while employed at subminimum wages.

WIOA was implemented on July 22, 2014, during the third quarter of FY 2014. Collaboration at the Federal and State levels and implementation of the VR-specific requirements began immediately after *WIOA* was enacted. ED exercised its transition authority to allow State VR agencies to modify their data collection systems to comply with the new requirements under *WIOA*. Therefore, data for FYs 2014 and 2015 were collected under data collection requirements in place prior to the passage of *WIOA*.

Ticket to Work or Social Security Reimbursement

The *Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999* continues to provide beneficiaries and recipients of Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) with a range of new or improved work incentives and employment-related services to support their movement to financial independence through work. The Social Security Administration (SSA) issues tickets to eligible beneficiaries, who may choose to assign those tickets to an Employment Network of their choice to obtain rehabilitation services, employment services, and vocational or other support services necessary to achieve a vocational (work) goal under the Ticket to Work program. The Employment Network coordinates and provides appropriate services to assist beneficiaries in obtaining and maintaining employment upon acceptance of the work ticket. Further information on this program may be found here: <http://www.ssa.gov/work>.

For a VR agency to receive reimbursements from SSA, the SSDI beneficiary or SSI recipient must perform paid employment at a level of earnings high enough to be terminated from receipt of his or her SSDI or SSI benefits.

In FY 2014, State VR agencies received nearly \$141.5 million in reimbursements from the SSA for the rehabilitation of 9,451 individuals with disabilities. In FY 2015, State VR agencies received more than \$187.8 million in reimbursements from the SSA for the rehabilitation of 12,291 individuals with disabilities. This information is provided by the State VR agency to RSA in the Year to Date Report of Clearances Program Counts.

VR Program Performance

RSA has a long history of ensuring accountability in the administration of the various programs under its jurisdiction, especially the VR program. Since its inception in 1920, the VR program has been one of the few Federal grant programs that has had outcome data on which to assess its performance, including its performance in assisting individuals to achieve employment outcomes. Over the years, RSA has used these basic performance data, or some variation, to evaluate the effectiveness of State VR agencies. In FY 2000, RSA developed two evaluation standards and performance indicators for each evaluation standard as the criteria to assess the effectiveness of the

VR program. The two standards, which were in effect for the time covered by this report, establish performance benchmarks for employment outcomes under the VR program and the access of minorities to the services of the State VR agencies.

All VR agency performance rates for the performance indicators are calculated using data that was reported in the Case Service Report (RSA-911) for the respective fiscal year. Through the RSA-911, the agency reports detailed characteristics of participants who have exited the program as well as data needed to calculate agency performance.

Evaluation Standard 1 focuses on employment outcomes achieved by individuals with disabilities subsequent to the receipt of services from a State VR agency, with particular emphasis on individuals who achieved competitive employment.³ The standard has six performance indicators, each with a required minimum performance level to meet the indicator. Calculations for each performance indicator for agencies that exclusively serve individuals with visual impairments or blindness are based on aggregated data for the current and previous year.

For VR agencies serving all disability populations other than those with visual impairments or blindness, or VR agencies serving all disability populations, the calculations are based on data from the current year only, except for Performance Indicator 1.1, which requires comparative data.

Three of the six performance indicators have been designated as "primary indicators" because they reflect a key VR program priority of empowering individuals with disabilities, particularly those with significant disabilities, to achieve high-quality employment outcomes. High-quality employment outcomes include supported employment or full- or part-time employment in the competitive labor market and for which individuals with disabilities are compensated. Compensation is in terms of the customary wage (but not less than the minimum wage) and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work carried out by individuals without disabilities.

The six performance indicators for Standard 1 under 34 CFR §361.84 of the VR program regulations that were in effect in FY 2014 before *WIOA* changes took effect, the minimum performance level established for each indicator, and the number of State VR agencies that met the minimum level for FYs 2014 and 2015 are described as follows. The three primary performance indicators are highlighted by an asterisk (*). To pass evaluation Standard 1, the agency must pass at least four of the performance indicators defined in Standard 1.

³ *Competitive employment* is defined in 34 CFR §361.5(b)(11), for the time period covered by this report, as "work:

- (i) In the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting; and
- (ii) For which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled."

Performance Indicator 1.1

The number of individuals who exited the VR program and achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exited the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.

Minimum Required Performance Level: Performance in the current period must equal or exceed performance in the previous period.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 80 State VR agencies, 57, including 41 general and combined agencies and 16 agencies for the blind, or 71.3 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: Of the 80 State VR agencies, 59, including 39 general and combined agencies and 20 agencies for the blind, or 73.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.2

Of all individuals who exited the VR program after receiving services, the percentage determined to have achieved an employment outcome.

Minimum Required Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the level is 68.9 percent; for other agencies, the level is 55.8 percent.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 15, or 62.5 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 44, or 78.6 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 15, or 62.5 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 38, or 67.9 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.3*

Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage that exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage. BEP refers to the entrepreneurial self-employment program under the Randolph-Sheppard

Vending Facilities Program discussed later in this report. *Employment outcome* means, for purposes of the VR program, entering or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive employment in the integrated labor market; supported employment; or any other type of employment in an integrated setting, including self-employment, telecommuting or business ownership, that is consistent with an individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice (34 CFR §361.5(b)(16)).

Minimum Required Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the level is 35.4 percent; for other agencies, the level is 72.6 percent.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: All of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 54, or 96.4 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: All of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 54, or 96.4 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.4*

Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities.

Minimum Required Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the level is 89 percent; for other agencies, the level is 62.4 percent.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 23, or 95.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level; 55 of the 56 other agencies, or 98.2 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 23, or 95.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. All of the 56 other agencies, or 100 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.5*

The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage. The wage is determined as a ratio to the State's average hourly earnings for all individuals in the State who are employed (as derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics report on State average annual pay for the most recent available year, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics State and Area Program for 2014 and 2015 <https://www.bls.gov/sae/>).

Because Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa did not report their State wage data, these agencies were not included in the calculation of Indicator 1.5.

Minimum Required Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the ratio is 0.59; for other agencies, the level is a ratio of 0.52.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 20, or 83.3 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 53 agencies that reported data, 29 general and combined agencies, or 54.7 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 21, or 87.5 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 53 agencies that reported data, 28 general and combined agencies, or 52.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Performance Indicator 1.6

Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP) employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they applied for VR services.

Minimum Required Performance Level: For agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the level is the difference of 30.4; for other agencies, the level is the difference of 53

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 17, or 70.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 49, or 87.5 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

Fiscal Year 2015 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 21, or 87.5 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 43, or 76.8 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

In FY 2014, 21 of the 80 State VR agencies, or 26.3 percent, passed all six performance indicators; 34, or 42.5 percent, passed five of the performance indicators; and 19, or 23.8 percent, passed four of the performance indicators. In total, 74 agencies, or 92.5 percent, passed Evaluation Standard 1. The six agencies, or 7.5 percent, that failed Evaluation Standard 1 include one agency that serves only individuals with visual impairments or blindness (North Carolina) and five agencies that serve all disability populations (Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Northern Marianas, and Pennsylvania).

In FY 2015, 20 of the 80 State VR agencies, or 25 percent, passed all six performance indicators; 32, or 40 percent, passed five of the performance indicators; and 22, or 26.3 percent, passed four of the performance indicators. In total, 74 agencies, or 92.5 percent, passed Evaluation Standard 1. The six agencies, or 8.8 percent, that failed Evaluation Standard 1 include one agency that serves only individuals with visual impairments or blindness (North Carolina) and five agencies that serve all disability populations (Florida, Kansas, Montana, New Hampshire, and Northern Marianas).

Table 1 presents the performance rates in FYs 2014 and 2015 of the 80 State VR agencies on the performance indicators for Evaluation Standard 1. For an agency to pass Evaluation Standard 1, it must meet or exceed at least four of the six performance indicators, including two of the three primary performance indicators.

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that passed or failed each performance indicator in Standard 1: FYs 2014–2015

Performance indicators for Standard 1 ^a	General and combined VR ^b agencies pass	General and combined VR agencies fail	VR agencies serving the blind pass	VR agencies serving the blind fail
FY 2014				
1.1 The number of individuals who exited the VR program and achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exited the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.	41	15	16	8
1.2 Of all individuals who exited the VR program after receiving services, the percentage determined to have achieved an employment outcome (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table).	44	12	15	9
1.3 Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage that exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program ^c employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	54	2	24	0
1.4 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	55	1	23	1

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that passed or failed each performance indicator in Standard 1: FYs 2014–2015, *continued*

Performance indicators for Standard 1 ^a	General and combined VR ^b agencies pass	General and combined VR agencies fail	VR agencies serving the blind pass	VR agencies serving the blind fail
1.5 The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	29 ^e	24 ^e	20	4
1.6 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they applied for VR services (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table).	49	7	17	7

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that passed or failed each performance indicator in Standard 1: FYs 2014–2015, *continued*

Performance indicators	General and combined VR ^b agencies pass	General and combined VR agencies fail	VR agencies serving the blind pass	VR agencies serving the blind fail
FY 2015				
1.1 The number of individuals who exited the VR program and achieved an employment outcome during the current performance period compared to the number of individuals who exited the VR program after achieving an employment outcome during the previous performance period.	39	17	20	4
1.2 Of all individuals who exited the VR program after receiving services, the percentage determined to have achieved an employment outcome (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table).	38	18	15	9
1.3 Of all individuals determined to have achieved an employment outcome, the percentage that exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program ^c employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	54	2	24	0
1.4 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the percentage who are individuals with significant disabilities (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	56	0	23	1

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that passed or failed each performance indicator in Standard 1: FYs 2014–2015, *continued*

Performance indicators	General and combined VR ^b agencies pass	General and combined VR agencies fail	VR agencies serving the blind pass	VR agencies serving the blind fail
1.5 The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table). ^d	28 ^b	25 ^b	21	3
1.6 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or Business Enterprise Program employment with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage, the difference between the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of economic support at the time they exit the VR program and the percentage who reported their own income as the largest single source of support at the time they applied for VR services (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table).	43	13	21	3

^a Evaluation Standard 1, Employment: Outcomes: Vocational rehabilitation agencies must assist any eligible individual, including an individual with a significant disability, to obtain, maintain, or regain high-quality employment.

^b Vocational rehabilitation (VR).

^c The Business Enterprise Program is the entrepreneurial self-employment program under the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facilities Program.

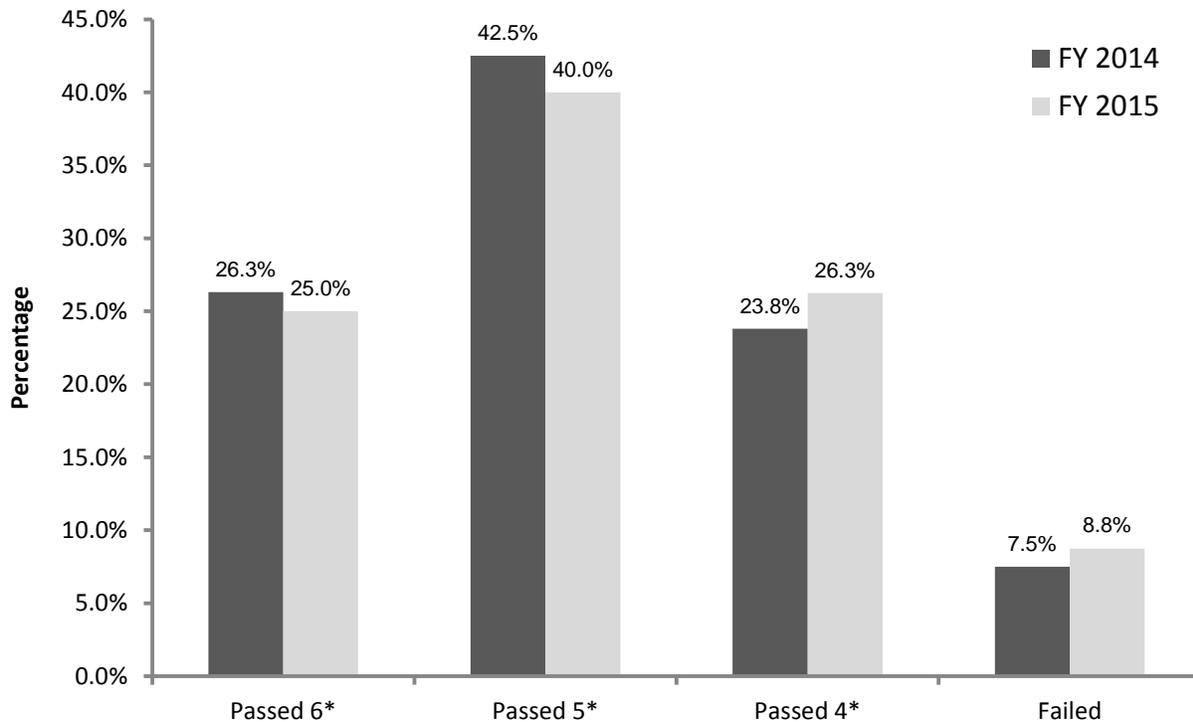
^d This indicator is a primary indicator that an agency must pass.

^e Because Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa did not report their State wage data, they were not included in the calculation of Indicator 1.5.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014 and 2015

From FY 2014 to FY 2015, overall agency performance for Evaluation Standard 1 changed slightly. Figure 2 shows the percentages of the 80 State VR agencies (general and combined VR agencies and agencies serving the blind) that passed four or more performance indicators and the percentage that failed to pass a minimum of four performance indicators.

Figure 2. Evaluation Standard 1: Performance of State vocational rehabilitation agencies, by the percentage that passed four or more performance indicators or failed to pass a minimum of four: FY 2014 and FY 2015.



* Includes at least two of the three primary indicators including indicators 1.3, 1.4, or 1.5.

Source: U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014 and 2015

Evaluation Standard 2 focuses on equal access to VR services by individuals from a minority background. For purposes of this standard, the term *individuals from a minority background* means individuals who report their race and ethnicity in any of the following categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or Hispanic or Latino. For this standard, there is one indicator (34 CFR §361.81).

Performance Indicator 2.1

The service rate⁴ for all individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds as a ratio to the service rate for all individuals with disabilities from non-minority backgrounds.

Minimum Required Performance Level: All agencies must attain at least a ratio level of 0.80. If an agency does not meet the minimum required performance level of 0.80, or if an agency had fewer than 100 individuals from a minority background exit the VR program during the reporting period, the agency must describe the policies it has adopted or will adopt and the steps it has taken or will take to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services.

Fiscal Year 2014 Performance: Of the 66 State VR agencies that served at least 100 individuals from a minority population, 59, or 89.4 percent, attained the performance level for Indicator 2.1 of 0.80 or higher. Of the seven agencies that did not achieve the performance level of 0.80 for Indicator 2.1 but served at least 100 individuals from a minority population, two agencies served all disability populations except for individuals with visual impairments or blindness (Idaho and Maine), and five agencies served all disability populations (Guam, North Dakota, Northern Marianas, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin).

Of the 14 VR State agencies that served fewer than 100 individuals from a minority population, 12 served exclusively individuals with visual impairments or blindness (Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont). Two agencies (American Samoa and the Virgin Islands) served fewer than 100 individuals from a minority population.

All agencies that did not meet the required performance level or served fewer than 100 individuals of a minority population described policies that they have adopted to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services; therefore, all agencies have met Standard 2.

⁴ For purposes of calculating this indicator, the numerator for the service rate is the number of individuals whose service records are closed after they receive services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE), regardless of whether they achieved an employment outcome; the denominator is the number of all individuals whose records are closed after they applied for services, regardless of whether they had an IPE.

**Fiscal Year 2015
Performance:**

Of the 65 State VR agencies that served at least 100 individuals from a minority population, 60, or 92.3 percent, attained the performance level for Indicator 2.1 of 0.80 or higher. Four agencies that did not achieve the performance level of 0.80 for Indicator 2.1 and served at least 100 individuals from a minority population were agencies that served all disability populations (Georgia, Guam, North Dakota, and Wisconsin). One agency (Maine) served all disability populations except for individuals with blindness or visual impairments.

Of the 15 VR State agencies that did not serve 100 or more individuals from a minority population, 12 were from agencies that serve exclusively individuals with visual impairments or blindness (Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont). Three agencies (American Samoa, Northern Marianas, and the Virgin Islands) that serve all disability populations, served fewer than 100 individuals from a minority population.

All agencies that did not meet the required performance level or served fewer than 100 individuals of a minority population described policies that they have adopted to ensure that individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds have equal access to VR services; therefore, all agencies have met Standard 2.

Table 2 presents the performance levels by the number of State VR agencies for FYs 2014 and 2015 on the performance indicator for Evaluation Standard 2. Appendix A provides a State-by-State breakdown of VR agency FYs 2014 and 2015 performance for both evaluation standards.

Table 2. Evaluation Standard 2: Number of VR agencies, by performance level, serving individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds: FYs 2014 and 2015

Performance levels for Standard 2 ^a	General and combined VR agencies	VR agencies serving the blind
FY 2014		
Ratio of 0.80 or higher	47	12
Ratio of less than 0.80	7	0
Fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the State VR program	2	12
FY 2015		
Ratio of 0.80 or higher	48	12
Ratio of less than 0.80	5	0
Fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the State VR program	3	12

^a Evaluation Standard 2, Equal access to services: Vocational rehabilitation agencies must ensure that individuals from minority backgrounds have equal access to vocational rehabilitation services.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA- 911), FYs 2014 and 2015

Other Program Performance Information

In FY 2014, about 1.34 million individuals were involved in the public VR process, pursuing the achievement of their employment outcomes, including 882,033 individuals who were actively receiving services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE). Approximately 93.6 percent of the total number of individuals who received services under an IPE in FY 2014 were individuals with significant disabilities.

In FY 2015, about 1.36 million individuals were involved in the public VR process, pursuing the achievement of their employment outcomes, including 856,795 individuals who were actively receiving services under an IPE. Approximately 94 percent of the total number of individuals receiving services under an IPE in FY 2015 were individuals with significant disabilities.

Figure 3 compares statistical information from FYs 2014 and 2015 on the number of individuals applying for or participating in the VR program by these factors:

- new applicants
- new applicants determined eligible
- new applicants with significant disabilities determined eligible
- individuals served under an IPE

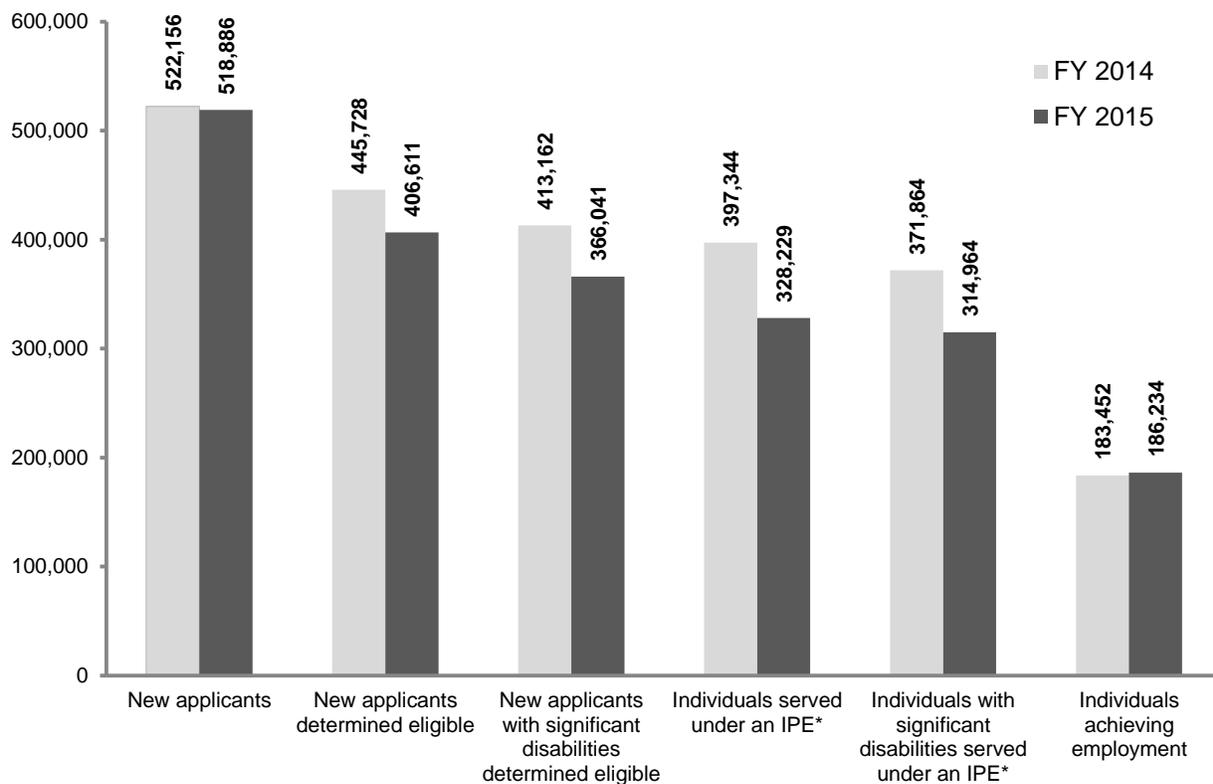
- individuals with significant disabilities served under an IPE
- individuals achieving employment

Data from the Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113) were used to analyze the status of individuals being served by the VR program. The RSA-113 provides for the quarterly collection of information on persons with disabilities in their rehabilitation process at State VR agencies.

In FY 2014, 522,156 individuals with disabilities applied for services to the VR program. Of this number, 445,728 (85.4 percent) were determined eligible to participate. Of the individuals who applied for VR services and were determined eligible in FY 2014, 413,162 (92.7 percent) were individuals with significant disabilities.

In FY 2015, 518,886 individuals with disabilities applied to the VR program for services. Of this number, 406,611 (78.4 percent of the applicants) were determined eligible to participate. Of the individuals who applied for VR services and were determined eligible in FY 2015, 366,041 (90 percent) were individuals with significant disabilities.

Figure 3. Number of individuals with disabilities who applied for or participated in the 80 vocational rehabilitation programs, by factor: FYs 2014 and 2015

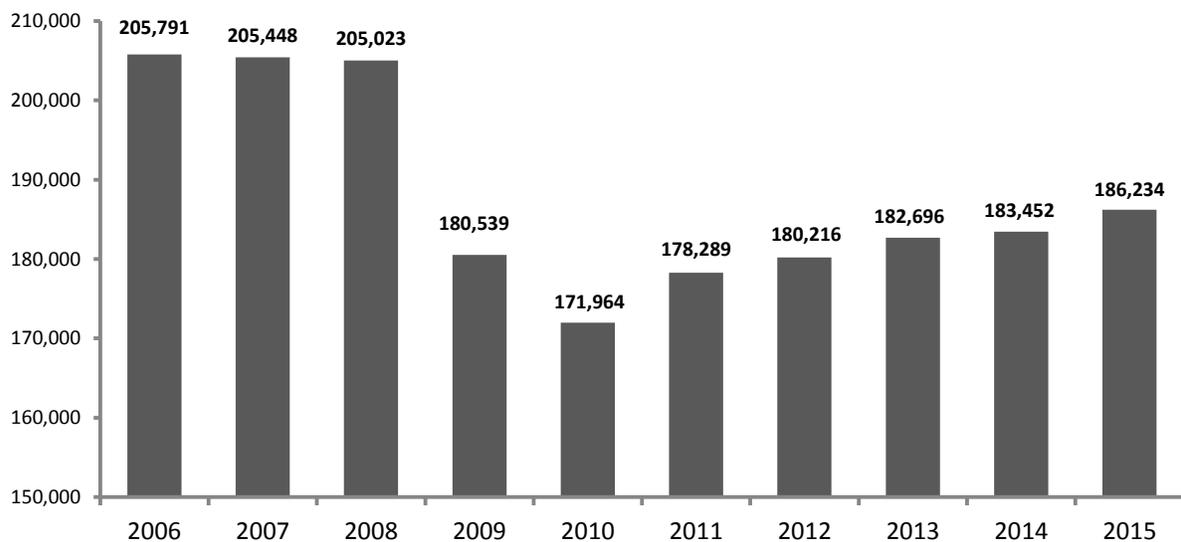


Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113), FYs 2014 and 2015

Figure 4 shows the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes after receiving VR services for FYs 2006 through 2015. In FY 2009, there was a large drop (12 percent) in the overall number of employment outcomes from the previous three years. Although employment outcomes continued to decline in FY 2010, the decline from FY 2009 was limited to 6 percent. This decline was widespread, with 78 percent of the 80 State VR agencies reporting a decrease in employment outcomes. This decrease in employment outcomes can be attributed, at least in part, to the general decline in available employment opportunities. For example, many VR agencies in States experiencing high rates of unemployment for the general population have had a difficult time assisting the individuals with disabilities they serve to obtain employment.

Data for employment outcomes used in figures 4 and tables 3 and 4 were derived from the Case Service Report (RSA-911) for the applicable years.

Figure 4. Number of vocational rehabilitation program participants achieving employment outcomes after receiving services, by year: FYs 2006–2015



Source: U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2006 through 2015

The general decline in employment outcomes beginning in FY 2009 is the result of several factors that have had an effect on the VR program, including

- RSA policies that encouraged VR agencies to serve individuals with significant disabilities, especially those with the most significant disabilities, and focused efforts on assisting these individuals to achieve high-quality employment outcomes that are consistent with their aspirations and informed choices;
- VR agencies' implementation of an order of selection (agencies operating under an order of selection policy must give priority to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities—for example, in FY 2010, of the 80 State VR agencies,

35 reported that they could not serve all eligible individuals and implemented an order of selection);

- increases in cost of services, such as tuition costs, which reduced the availability of resources for individuals with disabilities for other services that lead to employment outcomes; and
- employment outcomes that began increasing each year starting in 2011 but remained below the FY 2008 level (employment outcomes for FYs 2014 and 2015 totaled 183,452 and 186,234, respectively).

Table 3 shows the number and percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities⁵ exiting vocational rehabilitation with an employment outcome. The percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who obtain employment outcomes has remained fairly constant, between 92.9 and 94.6 percent from FY 2009 through 2015.

Table 3. Number and percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities obtaining employment after exiting vocational rehabilitation, by year: FY 2006–2015

Fiscal Year	Individuals With Significant Disabilities	Individuals Without Significant Disabilities	Percentage With Significant Disabilities	Percentage Without Significant Disabilities
2006	189,709	16,082	92.2	7.8
2007	188,399	17,049	91.7	8.3
2008	187,766	17,257	91.6	8.4
2009	168,794	11,745	93.5	6.5
2010	160,238	11,726	93.2	6.8
2011	166,376	11,914	93.3	6.7
2012	167,421	12,795	92.9	7.1
2013	170,209	12,487	93.2	6.8
2014	172,137	11,294	93.8	6.2
2015	176,251	9,983	94.6	5.4

Source: U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2006 through 2015

⁵ *Individual with a significant disability* is defined in 34 CFR §361.5(b)(30), for the time period covered by this report, as “an individual with a disability

- Who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, and work tolerance or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;
- Whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and
- Who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo-skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), spinal cord conditions (including paraplegia and quadriplegia), sickle cell anemia, intellectual disability, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

Table 4 shows the percentage of individuals with and without a significant disability exiting a VR program who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment. The percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who obtained an employment outcome in competitive employment has remained fairly constant, between 94.8 and 96.9 percent in FYs 2006 to 2015.

The increase between FY 2014 and FY 2015 can likely be attributed to the passage of *WIOA*, which now requires individuals to achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes, except those with the most significant disabilities who may achieve supported employment in an integrated setting while working toward competitive wages on a short-term basis.⁶

Table 4. Percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment, by year: FYs 2006–2015

Fiscal Year	Percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment	Percentage of individuals without significant disabilities* who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment
2006	95.8	96.0
2007	96.0	96.2
2008	95.0	95.2
2009	94.8	95.1
2010	95.4	95.6

⁶ *The Rehabilitation Act*, as amended by *Title IV of WIOA*: Section 7(5), provides this definition of competitive integrated employment: COMPETITIVE INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT.—The term “competitive integrated employment” means work that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis (including self-employment)—

(A) for which an individual—

(i) is compensated at a rate that—

(l)(aa) shall be not less than the higher of the rate specified in section 6(a)(1) of the *Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938* (29 U.S.C. 206(a)(1)) or the rate specified in the applicable State or local minimum wage law; and

(bb) is not less than the customary rate paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by other employees who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills; or

(ll) in the case of an individual who is self-employed, yields an income that is comparable to the income received by other individuals who are not individuals with disabilities, and who are self-employed in similar occupations or on similar tasks and who have similar training, experience, and skills; and

(ii) is eligible for the level of benefits provided to other employees;

(B) that is at a location where the employee interacts with other persons who are not individuals with disabilities (not including supervisory personnel or individuals who are providing services to such employee) to the same extent that individuals who are not individuals with disabilities and who are in comparable positions interact with other persons; and

(C) that, as appropriate, presents opportunities for advancement that are similar to those for other employees who are not individuals with disabilities and who have similar positions.

Table 4. Percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment, by year: FYs 2006–2015, *continued*

Fiscal Year	Percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment	Percentage of individuals without significant disabilities* who achieved an employment outcome in competitive employment
2011	95.9	96.1
2012	96.4	96.5
2013	96.6	96.8
2014	95.8	96.0
2015	96.9	98.0

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2006 through 2015

An important aspect of employment for anyone, particularly individuals with disabilities, is employment with some type of medical benefits. In FY 2014, 116,482 individuals with disabilities obtained competitive jobs with medical benefits, of whom 109,984 were individuals with significant disabilities. In FY 2015, 126,292 individuals with disabilities obtained competitive employment with medical benefits, of whom almost 120,000 were individuals with significant disabilities.

Appendix B provides a detailed, State-by-State breakdown of statistical information regarding the VR program for FYs 2014 and 2015.

WIOA Performance Accountability Measures

After *WIOA* passed in 2014, the standards and indicators required by Section 106(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act* became subject to the common performance accountability measures established in Section 116(b) of *Title I* of *WIOA* for all core programs in the workforce development system, including the VR program. This change negated the use of the standards and indicators established through VR program regulations in FY 2000.

LICENSING AND OPERATION OF BLIND VENDORS UNDER THE RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD ACT

As authorized under Section 103(b)(1) of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education

Section 103(b)(1) of the *Rehabilitation Act* states that VR services, when provided to groups, can include management, supervision, and other services to improve businesses operated by individuals with significantly disabilities. State VR agencies, therefore, are authorized to use funds under the VR program to support the blind vendors to operate vending facilities on Federal and other properties, which is authorized under the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*. The intent of the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* is to enhance employment opportunities for blind individuals who are trained and licensed to operate vending facilities.

The licensing and operation of vending facilities by blind vendors under the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* is supported by a combination of VR program funds, State appropriations, Federal vending machine income, and levied set-asides from vendors. It provides persons who are blind with remunerative employment and self-support through the operation of vending facilities on Federal and other property. The program recruits qualified individuals who are blind, trains them on the management and operation of small business enterprises, and then licenses qualified blind vendors to operate the facilities.

At the outset, the program placed sundry stands in the lobbies of Federal office buildings and post offices, selling such items as newspapers, magazines, candies, and tobacco products. Through the years, the program has grown and broadened from Federal locations to also include State, county, municipal, and private installations, as well as interstate highway rest areas. Operations have expanded to include military mess halls, cafeterias, snack bars, and miscellaneous shops and facilities comprised of vending machines.

RSA administers the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* in accordance with the goals of providing blind individuals with remunerative employment, enlarging the economic opportunities of blind persons and encouraging blind individuals to strive to become self-supporting. To this end, RSA has established standards and performance indicators to encourage State agencies to increase average earnings of individuals in the program.

The data in table 5 were obtained from the Vending Facility Program Report (Form RSA-15) for FYs 2014 and 2015 (users require permission to access).

The total gross income for the program was about \$693.6 million in FY 2014 and almost \$700 million in FY 2015. The total earnings of all vendors were \$124.3 million in FY 2014 but down to \$118.2 million in FY 2015. The national average annual net earnings of vendors were \$59,012 in FY 2014 and up by \$177 to \$59,189 in FY 2015. The number of vendors at the end of FY 2014 was 2,108 and at the end of FY 2015 was

1,997, a decrease of 111 vendors. The total number of vending facilities at the end of FY 2014 was 2,389 and at the end of FY 2015 was 2,310, a decrease of 79 facilities.

Table 5. Vendor income and earnings, the number of vendors by type of location, and the number of facilities by the type of location for the Randolph-Sheppard vending facility program: FYs 2014–2015

	FY 2014	FY 2015
Income and Earnings		
Gross Income	\$693,592,939	\$697,004,935
Vendor Earnings	\$124,397,876	\$118,200,186
Average Earnings	\$59,012	\$59,188.88
Number of Vendors		
Federal Locations	736	691
Non-Federal Locations	1,372	1,306
Total Vendors	2,108	1,997
Number of Vending Facilities		
Federal Locations	861	829
Non-Federal Locations	1528	1,481
Total Facilities	2,389	2,310

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Report of Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program (Form RSA-15), FYs 2014 and 2015

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

Authorized under Sections 621–628 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
 Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
 U.S. Department of Education

The Supported Employment Services program provides supplemental funds to State VR agencies, in conjunction with *Title I* VR State Grant funds, and provides supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Supported employment is recognized as an effective strategy in assisting individuals who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need ongoing support services to engage in and maintain competitive integrated employment. Such supports may include monthly monitoring at the worksite from the time of job placement until transition to extended services.⁷

⁷ *Extended services* is defined in 34 CFR §361.5(b)(20) as “ongoing support services and other appropriate services that are needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment and that are provided by a State agency, a private nonprofit organization, employer or any other appropriate resource, from funds other than funds received under this part and 34 CFR part 363 after an individual with a most significant disability has made the transition from support provided by the designated State unit.”

Under the Supported Employment Services program, State VR agencies collaborate with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services. Prior to the passage of *WIOA*, State VR agencies were authorized to provide eligible individuals with disabilities supported employment services for a period not to exceed 18 months unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization had been established in the IPE. The IPE is “a description of the specific employment outcome that is chosen by the eligible individual and is consistent with the individual’s unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interests, and informed choice” (34 CFR §361.45). Additionally, once the supported employment period ended, the State VR agency was required to arrange for extended services to be provided by other appropriate State agencies, private nonprofit organizations, or other sources for the duration of that employment.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA amended *Title VI* of the *Rehabilitation Act*, changing significantly provisions of Supported Employment Services. *WIOA* clarified the definition of supported employment to make clear that it is competitive integrated employment, including customized employment in an integrated work setting in which an individual with a most significant disability, including a youth with a most significant disability, is working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment.

Other significant changes to the Supported Employment Services program enhanced services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities, to achieve competitive integrated employment. Specifically, *WIOA*

- extended the period for providing supported employment services from 18 to 24 months;
- required VR agencies to reserve 50 percent of their supported employment allotment for providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities and required VR agencies to match 10 percent of that reserved 50 percent share;
- expanded the use of supported employment funds to allow VR agencies to provide extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities up to four years; and
- limited the amount of supported employment funds that can be used for administrative costs from 5 percent to 2.5 percent.

WIOA was implemented on July 22, 2014, during the third quarter of FY 2014. Collaboration at the Federal and State levels and implementation of the VR specific requirements began immediately after *WIOA* was enacted. ED exercised its transition authority to allow State VR agencies to modify their data collection systems to comply

with the new requirements under *WIOA*. Therefore, data for FYs 2014 and 2015 were collected under data collection requirements in place prior to *WIOA*.

Performance Data

An individual's potential need for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine eligibility for the VR program. The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the *Title I* VR program and the *Title VI-B* Supported Employment Services program. A State VR agency may support an individual's supported employment services solely with VR program (*Title I*) grant funds, or it may fund the cost of supported employment services in whole or in part with Supported Employment Services (*Title VI-B*) grant funds. *Title VI-B* supported employment funds may only be used to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement *Title I* funds.

Data from the FY 2014 Case Service Report (RSA-911) was used to provide all information on program participation. It shows that a total of 40,902 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at some time during their participation in the VR program. About 95 percent of those individuals had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at the time their service record was closed.

In FY 2014, 25,941 individuals who had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at some time during their participation in the VR program achieved an employment outcome, as that term was defined during the time period covered by this report. Of those individuals, 15,510 had a supported employment outcome: 12,718 whose initial IPE identified supported employment as the employment goal; 2,070 whose IPE was amended during the VR process to change the goal to supported employment; 20 whose IPE was amended during the VR process to change the goal from supported employment to another employment goal; and 702 whose amended or final IPE identified supported employment as the employment goal only at the time the service record was closed. In addition, 5,674 individuals for whom a supported employment goal was not reported were nonetheless reported to have achieved a supported employment outcome.

Of the 21,184 individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome in FY 2014, 20,073, or 95 percent, were in competitive employment. In FY 2014, the mean hourly wage for individuals with supported employment outcomes who had achieved competitive employment was \$9.12. Because supported employment services are also allowable costs under the *Title I* VR program, the supported employment services provided to achieve the outcomes were funded using *Title I* dollars, *Title VI* dollars, or both.

Data from the FY 2015 RSA-911 shows that a total of 43,678 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at some time during their participation in the VR program. About 96 percent of those individuals had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at the time their service record was closed.

Further, of the 43,678 individuals who reported supported employment as a goal on their IPE while participating in the VR program, 24,310 achieved an employment outcome. Of those individuals, 16,579 had a supported employment outcome: 14,329 whose initial IPE identified supported employment as the employment goal; 1,701 whose IPE was amended during the VR process to change the goal to supported employment goal; one whose IPE was amended during the VR process to change the goal from supported employment to another employment goal; and 548 whose amended or final IPE identify supported employment as the employment goal only at the time the service record was closed. In addition, 3,759 individuals whom a supported employment goal was not reported were nonetheless reported to have achieved a supported employment outcome.

Of the total 20,388 individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome in FY 2015, 19,411, or 95.4 percent, were in competitive employment, as that term was defined during the time period covered by this report. In FY 2015, the mean hourly wage for individuals with supported employment outcomes who had achieved competitive employment was \$9.27.

Amendments made to the *Rehabilitation Act* by *WIOA* reinforce Congress' expectation that individuals with the most significant disabilities working in supported employment can achieve competitive integrated employment (with wages at or above minimum wage). While not all individuals in supported employment achieve competitive wages initially, a small number of individuals achieve supported employment in an integrated setting while working toward competitive wages on a short-term basis.

Specifically, the amendment to the definition of "supported employment" clarifies that if an individual is not currently working in an integrated setting, he or she must be working on a short-term basis toward competitive integrated employment.

RSA has a long-standing policy of encouraging State agencies to help individuals with disabilities in supported employment to achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes. Measures established for the Supported Employment Services program pursuant to the *Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)* reflect this policy. The measures assess both the effectiveness of State agency efforts to increase the competitive employment outcomes of individuals with the most significant disabilities who have received supported employment services and the earnings of these individuals. The measure is the percentage of individuals with a supported employment outcome goal achieving an employment outcome that obtains competitive employment. The specific measures, including performance on these measures in FY 2015 and previous fiscal years, are presented in table 6.

Table 6 shows the target and actual percentages of individuals with the most significant disabilities who had a supported employment goal and achieved a competitive employment outcome under the VR State Grants program, the Supported Employment State Grants program, or both.

Table 6. The target and actual percentages of individuals with the most significant disabilities who had a supported employment goal and achieved a competitive employment outcome under the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program, the Supported Employment State Grants program, or both, by year: FYs 2010–2015

Year	Target percentage of individuals who achieved competitive supported employment outcomes	Actual percentage of individuals who achieved competitive supported employment outcomes
2010	94%	92%
2011	94%	93%
2012	94%	94%
2013	94%	95%
2014	94%	93%
2015	95%	93%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014 and 2015

Individuals with a supported employment goal who achieve an employment outcome may be working in competitive integrated employment (employment at least at minimum wage in an integrated setting) or may be working in an integrated setting toward competitive employment at or above the minimum wage.

Updated RSA-911 data show that in FY 2014, approximately 24,525 individuals who had a goal of supported employment on their IPE at the time their case service record was closed achieved an employment outcome. In FY 2015, there were 22,952 of these individuals. These numbers include both consumers who received supported employment services from funds provided under the VR State grants and under the Supported Employment State Grants programs. Of those who achieved an employment outcome in FYs 2014 and 2015, about 93 percent achieved a competitive employment outcome, but the performance target was not met. Note that data for FYs 2014 and 2015 are not comparable to data from previous years due to changes in the RSA-911 implemented in FY 2014. Targets for these years were set before the reporting changes were implemented.

However, of the individuals with a supported employment goal who obtained a supported employment outcome, 94 percent and 95 percent did achieve a competitive employment outcome in supported employment in FY 2014 and FY 2015, respectively.

Table 7 shows the target goals and the amounts for the average weekly earnings for individuals with the most significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome.

Table 7. Target for and actual average weekly earnings of individuals with the most significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome, by year: FYs 2010–2015

Year	Target average weekly earnings	Actual average weekly earnings
2010	\$203	\$208
2011	\$203	\$205
2012	\$203	\$211
2013	\$205	\$207
2014	\$208	\$211
2015	\$208	\$215

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014 and 2015

Performance data for this measure are calculated by dividing the average weekly earnings for all individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings by the total number of individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the blind.

FY 2014 data from the RSA-911 show that the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome was \$211, exceeding the FY 2014 performance target that was increased to \$208. For the performance group, FY 2015 data show that the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome increased to approximately \$215, which exceeded the FY 2015 performance target. The average hours worked per week have remained consistent for the last three years, about of 22.75 hours, at the time the individual’s service record was closed.

AMERICAN INDIAN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM

**Authorized under Section 121 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
 Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
 U.S. Department of Education**

The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program provides grants to governing bodies of Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations (and consortia of such governing bodies) to deliver VR services to American Indians with disabilities who live on or near such reservations.

Awards are made through the competitive process for a period of up to five years to provide a broad range of VR services—including, where appropriate, services traditionally used by Indian tribes—designed to assist American Indians with disabilities to prepare for and engage in gainful employment. Applicants assure that the broad scope of rehabilitation services provided will be, to the maximum extent feasible, comparable to the rehabilitation services provided by the State VR agencies and that

effort will be made to provide VR services in a manner and at a level of quality comparable to those services provided by the State VR agencies.

The AIVRS program is supported through an allocated mandatory set-aside under section 110(c) of the *Rehabilitation Act*, which requires not less than 1 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the VR program be reserved for carrying out the AIVRS program. As the statute authorized annual inflationary increases for the VR program, the funds available for grants under the AIVRS program has gradually increased.

Section 121(b)(4) of the *Rehabilitation Act* requires that projects previously funded under the program be given preference in competing for a new grant award. Previously funded projects that re-compete for new grants often request higher levels of funding because they have increased their capacity to effectively serve more individuals with disabilities. As a result, both the total number of grants funded under the AIVRS program and the amount of the average award (both new and continuation) have increased over time.

Table 8 shows the total number of grant awards and the amount of funds awarded to support AIVRS tribal projects under Section 121(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act* in FYs 2006 through 2015. The total number of grants awarded increased from 74 in FY 2007 to 79 in FY 2009. However, in FYs 2010 and 2011, additional funds were provided to the AIVRS program from VR funds that remained available after the re-allotment of unmatched funds to State VR agencies in the fourth quarter of the fiscal year. These funds enabled ED to fully fund five additional projects for a five-year period, bringing up the total number of projects to 85. There were no new grant competitions in FYs 2012 and 2013, and AIVRS funds were used to support continuation costs for the other 80 projects.

In FY 2014, there was a slight decrease in the total funds provided for the VR State grants program due to the negative net impact of the sequester of mandatory programs pursuant to the *Budget Control Act of 2011* (P.L. 112-25) and the inflation adjustment for that year. Thus, while the commissioner reserved the same portion of funds for the AIVRS set-aside as in the previous year, the amount of funds to support the AIVRS set-aside also decreased. FY 2014 funds were used to support a new grant competition, under which 46 five-year service grants were awarded, and to provide continuation funding for 37 service grants, for a total of 83 projects.

Table 8. Number of grants awarded and total amounts awarded to support American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services tribal projects, by year: FYs 2006–2015

Fiscal year	Total grants	Total award amounts
2006	73	\$32,999,370
2007	74	\$34,409,233
2008	77	\$34,839,212
2009	79	\$36,045,354
2010	79	\$42,822,202
2011	82	\$43,522,764
2012	85	\$37,898,000
2013	85	\$37,223,576
2014	83	\$37,189,184
2015	84	\$38,447,920

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Annual Performance Report for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, FYs 2006 through 2015

Amendments made to Section 121 of the *Rehabilitation Act* by *WIOA* require the RSA commissioner to reserve funds set aside for the AIVRS program to provide training and technical assistance to governing bodies of Indian tribes that have received AIVRS grants (see further information on *WIOA* amendments affecting the AIVRS program below). To lessen the resulting impact in the reduction of funds available for AIVRS tribal projects, the commissioner increased the amount of the FY 2015 set-aside for the total AIVRS program to \$39.16 million, an increase of nearly \$2 million from 2014 to 2015. In FY 2015, ED awarded 29 new five-year grants for tribal service projects and provided continuation funding for 55 projects, for a total of 84 grants. In addition, to comply with the new training and technical assistance requirement, ED published a notice inviting applications for a grant under this new authority and awarded \$704,880 in FY 2015 to the Northern Arizona University for an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Training and Technical Assistance Center.

In FY 2014, 67 percent of American Indians with disabilities who received services and exited the program achieved an employment outcome. In FY 2015, 68.16 percent of American Indians with disabilities who received services and exited the program achieved an employment outcome. For FYs 2014 and 2015, the number served calculation in table 9 includes the number of individuals who received services under an IPE during the fiscal year or a prior fiscal year or who were carried forward under a previous grant cycle.

The *GPRRA* program goal is to improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities who live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal VR services. The AIVRS grantees report data on the number of eligible individuals served, the number of individuals who exited the program after receiving services, and the number of individuals

that achieved an employment outcome. This program outcome data extrapolated from the AIVRS annual program performance database are provided in table 9.

Table 9. Number of individuals with disabilities served, exiting program after receiving services, and achieving employment through the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services program, by year: FYs 2006–2015

Fiscal year	Number served ^a	Total number exiting after receiving services	Number achieving employment
2006	5,829	2,339	1,576
2007	6,592	2,494	1,663
2008	7,676	2,447	1,609
2009	7,621	2,769	1,690
2010	8,395	2,868	1,778
2011	8,081	2,737	1,724
2012	8,044	2,977	1,856
2013	7,800	2,912	1,964
2014	8,185	3,139	2,102
2015	6,634	2,692	1,835

^a The number served calculation includes the number of individuals who received services under an IPE during the fiscal year, in a prior fiscal year, and/or who were carried forward under a previous grant cycle.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Annual Performance Report for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, FYs 2006 through 2015

In addition, ED established two efficiency measures for the AIVRS program to examine the cost per employment outcome and cost per participant. The cost per employment outcome measure examines the percentage of projects whose average annual cost per employment outcome is no more than \$35,000. Under this measure, the cost per employment outcome is calculated by dividing a project’s total Federal grant by the number of employment outcomes reported. In FY 2014, 79.8 percent of projects met the \$35,000 criterion for this measure. In FY 2015, 67.9 percent of projects met the \$35,000 criterion for this measure.

The cost per participant measure examines the percentage of projects whose average annual cost per participant is no more than \$10,000. Under this measure, the average cost per participant is calculated by dividing the project’s total Federal grant by the number of participants served under an IPE. The baseline performance level for this measure, 78 percent, was established using FY 2007 data. In FY 2014, 83.3 percent of projects met the \$10,000 criterion for this measure. In FY 2015, 71.4 percent of projects met the \$10,000 criterion.

The implementation of the AIVRS annual performance reporting form on the RSA MIS database has assisted RSA in providing project data effectively and consistently. The FYs 2014 and 2015 data were examined for reporting inconsistencies and guidance was provided to grantees to ensure accurate reporting. In addition, the MIS database

was upgraded to clarify data collection elements and provide a customer-friendly presentation. Through monthly teleconferences with grantees and distribution of the minutes from these meetings, RSA staff provided guidance on entering data into this information collection instrument.

Technical assistance to the tribal VR projects is provided by a variety of sources, including RSA, State VR agencies, Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) centers, and the capacity-building grantees funded under Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. Tribal VR projects are building strong relationships with the State VR agencies. These relationships are promoting cross training in which State VR agencies are sharing techniques of VR service delivery with tribal VR staff members, and tribal project staff persons are sharing techniques on delivering VR services designed for diverse cultures with VR agency staff members. As another example, a project director's meeting was convened through George Washington University in FY 2014 and included AIVRS and other discretionary programs that focused on training and networking. Other grantees funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* participate in the conferences as both trainers and learners, further promoting strong partnerships within the program and among RSA grantees.

RSA continues to monitor tribal VR projects, including periodic on-site reviews. In addition, the Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Continuous Improvement of Rehabilitation Counselors, Leaders, and Educators (TVR Circle) program was funded to provide culturally appropriate training and technical assistance for AIVRS programs. The TVR Circle uses a peer-to-peer model to assist the grantees in areas such as case management, fiscal management, organizational change, human resource development, and leadership development.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The definition of *Indian tribe* was amended by *WIOA* to include "a tribal organization (as defined in section 4(1) of the *Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act* (25 U.S.C. §450(b)(1)). The AIVRS regulations were amended to account for the change in the eligibility for applicants.

Section 121(c) of the *Rehabilitation Act* was amended by *WIOA* to require the RSA commissioner to reserve not less than 1.8 percent and not more than 2 percent of the funds set aside from the VR program (Section 110(d) of the *Rehabilitation Act*) for the AIVRS program to provide training and technical assistance to governing bodies of Indian tribes that have received AIVRS grants under Section 121(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

DEMONSTRATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMS

Authorized under Section 303 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education

The Demonstration and Training programs provide competitive grants to—and authorize RSA to enter into contracts with—eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*. The grants and contracts are to further the purposes and policies of the *Rehabilitation Act* and to support activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope, and quality of rehabilitation services under the *Rehabilitation Act*, including related research and evaluation activities. In FYs 2014 and 2015, the appropriation for this program was \$5.8 million.

The Demonstration and Training programs also authorizes activities that were formerly conducted under the Evaluation and Program Improvement programs. These included small scale, short duration evaluation and data analysis projects, program improvement activities, and evaluation activities.

Section 303(b) of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes the support of projects that provide activities to demonstrate and implement methods of service delivery for individuals with disabilities and includes activities such as technical assistance, service demonstrations, systems change, special studies and evaluation, and the dissemination and use of project findings. Entities eligible for grants under Section 303(b) include State VR agencies, community rehabilitation programs, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and other public and nonprofit agencies or organizations. Competitions may be limited to one or more type of entity. The program supports projects for up to five years. During that period, many projects provide comprehensive services that may demonstrate the application of innovative procedures that could lead to the successful achievement of employment outcomes.

Section 303(b) projects develop strategies that enhance the delivery of rehabilitation services by community-based programs and State VR agencies to meet the needs of underserved populations or underserved areas. Projects have been successful in creating intensive outreach and rehabilitation support systems, including benefits counseling, career development, and job placement assistance.

Special Demonstration projects supported in FYs 2014 and 2015 included the following:

- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Demonstration.** In FY 2014, RSA provided continuation funding for one grant under this program to the Institute on Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts–Boston in the amount of \$4.025 million. In FY 2015, RSA approved a no-cost extension for this grant. The purpose of this project is to identify, develop, and implement a model demonstration project to improve outcomes for individuals receiving SSDI who

are served by State VR agencies. The project consists of a number of distinct phases including the following:

1. The identification of high-performing State VR agencies and “candidate factors and practices” by State VR agencies leading to in-depth case studies of the high-performing State VR agencies and their agencies’ factors and practices.
2. The creation of a demonstration laboratory for evaluating the intervention model with a core component being the provision of substantive training and technical assistance and in which selected State VR agencies serve as “incubators” for the intervention model.
3. Dissemination and replication including developing training materials, curricula, procedures, and on-demand technical assistance initiatives.

FY 2014 was the fourth year of operation of the grant, and the ICI formalized contracts with two State VR agencies to participate in the model evaluation. Kentucky and Minnesota agreed to participate, implement the model in offices, participate in evaluation activities, share data, and participate in technical assistance and training activities.

The major activities of FY 2014 were to

- a. create implementation teams in participating States;
- b. build infrastructure in order to host the intervention;
- c. discover needed policy, procedure, and process changes (such as early identification of SSDI customers, presumptive eligibility policies, ability to convene job placement personnel before developing the IPE, etc.);
- d. identify vendor contracting changes;
- e. complete human subjects applications;
- f. identify data-collection needs that take advantage of the VR agency’s case management system;
- g. customize the model to fit within the State VR agency’s activities;
- h. determine unit of randomization and sort locations;
- i. identify personnel training and technical assistance needs; and
- j. launch the intervention.

Both Kentucky and Minnesota accomplished significant changes and invested heavily in creating fertile ground for the intervention. Several significant vendor

contracting changes were required and multiple policy and procedural changes were implemented. Both States had minimal financial education and work incentives counseling capacities. Kentucky adopted a model that identified a provider with ongoing capacity and contracted with the provider to recruit, hire, train, and supervise certified work incentive counselors to work alongside Kentucky VR personnel. Minnesota launched its own request for bidding to vendors able to provide work incentive counseling. Other major changes were required, including contracting arrangements with job placement specialists, process changes to implement a faster paced rehabilitation process, and changes in data systems.

In FY 2015, the ICI began implementing the project model in Kentucky and Minnesota, as agreed in FY 2014. The ICI continued to meet with multiple State VR agencies to determine whether they had the infrastructure, political stability, minimum capacities, and willingness to participate in an intensive evaluation of the model.

The major activities of FY 2015 were to

- a. support implementation teams in participating States;
 - b. continue to build infrastructure in order to host the intervention;
 - c. assist States to make needed policy, procedure, and process changes (such as early identification of SSDI customers, presumptive eligibility policies, ability to convene job placement personnel before the development of the IPE, etc.);
 - d. identify and make needed vendor contracting changes;
 - e. complete human subjects applications;
 - f. identify data collection needs that take advantage of the VR agency's case management system;
 - g. customize the model to fit within the State VR agency's activities;
 - h. determine unit of randomization and sort locations;
 - i. identify personnel training and technical assistance needs; and
 - j. launch the intervention.
- Both Kentucky and Minnesota accomplished significant changes. Minnesota hired staff dedicated to the implementation of the project. Both States had minimal financial education and work incentives counseling capacities. Kentucky adopted a model similar to that used by Nebraska (a case study State) that identified a provider with ongoing capacity. Kentucky contracted with the provider

to recruit, hire, train, and supervise certified work incentive counselors to work alongside Kentucky VR personnel. Meanwhile, Minnesota launched its own request for bidding to vendors able to provide work incentive counseling.

The Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) began implementation on April 1, 2015, and to date have reached 100 Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) Project participants across the eight sites (i.e., branch offices). Despite several major internal changes that year, Kentucky OVR continued to support the project and maintained a strong commitment. The internal changes included an abrupt change in director, reorganization of central office leadership, centralization and oversight of information technology and case management systems across the State government, and the restructure of field services to include an additional layer of supervision (i.e., branch managers report to newly created and newly hired regional managers). The Kentucky SGA project liaison left for graduate school and several central office personnel jumped in to fill the role. Kentucky OVR implemented changes because of the reorganization of its umbrella agency (Department of Labor), begun approximately six months prior to the SGA implementation. RSA was impressed with the significant commitment of field services staff to “make it work” despite some of these rather major changes in the agency.

- Minnesota VR officially launched the SGA Project on August 3, 2015, with the enrollment of SSDI-only applicants in the eight innovation sites. Minnesota agreed to participate in the project in January 2014 and engaged in multiple meetings to ascertain the scope of implementation and preparation work. The ICI and Minnesota VR negotiated the contract for October 1, 2014, through September 30, 2015, with multiple amendments, for a total of \$1,296,773.

Early reports by Minnesota VR indicate that the innovation sites were enrolling approximately 10 to 15 SGA applicants per week in the innovation sites. Should that rate remain constant, Minnesota VR would reach the goal of 500 SGA project participants in less than one year.

Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities. In FY 2015, RSA funded four new demonstration projects in Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, and Nebraska for a total of \$3,273,211. The purpose of these projects is to demonstrate promising practices in the use of career pathways to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Specifically, these model demonstration projects are designed to promote State VR agency partnerships in the development of and the use of career pathways to help individuals with disabilities eligible for VR services to acquire marketable skills and recognized postsecondary credentials. A “career pathway” is a set of sequential, industry-aligned education and training credentials enabling individuals to obtain employment and pursue careers in high quality, high demand occupations and industries.

Sections 303(c) and (d) of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorize projects designed specifically to make information and training available to parents of individuals with disabilities and to provide braille training.

- **Braille Training.** In FY 2014, three new braille training grants received funding totaling \$328,586. In FY 2015, these grants received funding for a second year totaling \$328,374. These projects provide training in the use of braille for personnel providing vocational rehabilitation services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind, thereby building the capacity of service providers who work with those individuals.
- **Parent Training and Information (PTI) Projects.** These projects provide training and information to enable individuals with disabilities and the parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives of the individuals to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities. The regional grants are designed to meet the unique training and information needs of those individuals who live in the area to be served, particularly those who are members of populations that have been unserved or underserved by programs under the *Rehabilitation Act*. The national center assists in establishing, developing, and coordinating the technical assistance provided by the PTI centers funded under Section 303(c) of the *Rehabilitation Act*. All of these centers coordinate with PTI centers funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP).

In FY 2014, RSA funded six new regional PTI projects totaling \$783,814 and one new national project in the amount of \$250,000. In FY 2015, the sixth PTI project received a second year of funding in the amount of \$783,906. In addition, a seventh regional PTI project received its initial funding in December 2014 and its second year of funding in late FY 2015 (\$130,929 each year for its first and second years of operation). Finally, the national PTI project received its second year of funding in the amount of \$250,000.

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT). This center is jointly funded by OSEP and RSA. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to establish and operate a national technical assistance center on improving transition to postsecondary education and employment for students with disabilities. NTACT assists State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), State VR agencies, and other VR service providers to implement evidence-based and promising practices and strategies to ensure that students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills, and supports needed for success in postsecondary education and employment. In FY 2014 and in FY 2015, RSA contributed \$400,000 to the center's operation.

Projects funded under the Special Demonstration and Training programs authority vary in their objectives. The objective for most of the special demonstration projects is to provide comprehensive services for individuals with disabilities that lead to successful

employment outcomes. However, the immediate outcomes of some projects funded are not directly related to the employment of individuals with disabilities. For example, PTI projects focus on training parents of youth with disabilities. While these projects will ultimately affect employment and entry into the VR program, such outcomes may occur only indirectly or many years after the projects end. For this reason, the program's performance measure is broader: "The percentage of projects that met their goals and objectives as established in their original applications, or as modified during the first year." This broader measure allows each project to be included in any evaluation of the Demonstration and Training programs.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA made no major changes to this program.

MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKERS PROGRAM

**Authorized under Section 304 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education**

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program made comprehensive VR services available to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. Projects under the program developed innovative methods for reaching and serving this population. For these projects, emphasis was placed on reaching out to migrant camps, providing bilingual rehabilitation counseling to this population, and coordinating VR services with services from other sources. Projects provided VR services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and to members of their families when such services contributed to the rehabilitation of the worker with a disability. The goal of the MSFW program was to ensure that eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities received rehabilitation services and increased employment opportunities.

Migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities and their families are faced with many obstacles in securing employment. They are in need of highly individualized services to meet specific employment needs. They face significant barriers to securing employment, such as language barriers, culturally diverse backgrounds, and relocation from State to State, making tracking individuals difficult if not impossible.

The program was administered in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under *Title I* of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965*, Section 330 of the *Public Health Service Act*, the *Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act*, and, prior to the passage of WIOA, which superseded WIA. In addition, RSA participates as a member of the Federal Migrant Interagency Committee to share information and develop strategies to improve the coordination and delivery of services to this population.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The MSFW program was one of the programs that were repealed by *WIOA*. As a result, the MSFW program no longer exists. FY 2014 was the last year this program received funding. No data could be collected because the data elements were eliminated from the Case Service Report (RSA-911).

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAMS

The purpose of the Independent Living (IL) programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. *Title VII, Chapter 1* of the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes financial assistance to provide, expand, and improve IL services; to develop and support statewide networks of centers for independent living (CILs); and to improve working relationships among State IL programs, CILs, statewide independent living councils (SILCs), other programs authorized by the *Rehabilitation Act*, and other Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental programs. *Title VII, Chapter 2* authorizes Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA included significant changes to *Title VII* of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. These changes include the following:

- *WIOA* transferred the Independent Living programs under *Title VII, Chapter 1* from RSA to the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (HHS/ACL), specifically the
 - State Independent Living Services (SILS), which was renamed the Independent Living Services (ILS) program, and
 - Centers for Independent Living program.
- Under *WIOA*, RSA retained administration of the *Title VII, Chapter 2* program, Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind.
- Section 751A(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended by *WIOA*, requires the RSA commissioner to reserve not less than 1.8 percent and not more than 2 percent of the funds set aside from the funds appropriated to carry out *Chapter 2* activities to provide training and technical assistance to State agencies, or other providers of independent living services for older individuals who are blind, that are funded under *Chapter 2*.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES PROGRAM

Authorized under *Title VII, Chapter I, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Administration for Community Living,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The State Independent Living Services (SILS) program, which *WIOA* renamed the Independent Living Services (ILS) program, provides formula grants, based on population, to States for the purpose of funding, directly and through grant or contractual arrangements, one or more of the following activities:

- supporting the operation of SILCs
- demonstrating ways to expand and improve IL services
- providing IL services
- supporting the operation of CILs
- increasing the capacity of public or nonprofit organizations and other entities to develop comprehensive approaches or systems for providing IL services
- conducting studies and analyses, developing model policies and procedures, and presenting information, approaches, strategies, findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Federal, State, and local policymakers to enhance IL services
- training service providers and individuals with disabilities on the IL philosophy
- providing outreach to populations that are unserved or underserved by IL programs, including minority groups and urban and rural populations

To be eligible for financial assistance, States are required to establish a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and to submit a State plan for independent living jointly developed and signed by the SILC chairperson and the designated State unit director. States participating in this program must match every \$9 of Federal funds with \$1 in non-Federal cash or in-kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA transferred the SILS program to HHS/ACL and renamed it the ILS program.

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

Authorized under Title VII, Chapter I, Part C, of the *Rehabilitation Act*

The Centers for Independent Living (CIL) program provided grants to consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability,⁸ nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies for the provision of IL services to individuals with significant disabilities. During the period covered by this report, at a minimum, centers funded by the program were required to provide the following IL core services: information and referral, IL skills training, peer counseling, and individual and systems advocacy. Centers might also provide psychological counseling, assistance in securing housing or shelter, personal assistance services, transportation referral and assistance, physical therapy, mobility training, rehabilitation technology, recreation, and other services necessary to improve the ability of individuals with significant disabilities to function independently in the family or community and to continue in employment.

In FY 2014, CILs nationwide served 222,295 individuals with significant disabilities. These are a few examples of the program accomplishments and their benefits:

- individuals relocated from nursing homes or other institutions to community-based living arrangements **4,002**
- individuals receiving assistive technology or rehabilitation services **44,282**
- Individuals receiving IL skills training and life skills training **74,346**
- individuals receiving IL services related to securing housing or shelter **39,860**
- individuals receiving services related to transportation **22,594**
- individuals receiving personal assistance services **39,650**

The *Rehabilitation Act* establishes a set of standards and assurances that eligible centers are required to meet. To continue receiving CIL program funding, during the period covered by this report, centers must have demonstrated minimum compliance with the following evaluation standards: promotion of the IL philosophy, provision of IL services on a cross-disability basis, support for the development and achievement of IL goals chosen by the consumer, efforts to increase the availability of quality community options for IL, provision of IL core services, resource development activities to secure other funding sources, and community capacity-building activities.

A population-based formula determines the total funding available for discretionary grants to centers in each State. Subject to the availability of appropriations (prior to *WIOA*), the RSA commissioner was required to fund centers that existed as of FY 1997 at the same

⁸ *Cross-disability* means (according to the program regulations that were in effect during the period covered by this report at 34 CFR §364.4), with respect to a CIL, that a center provides IL services to individuals representing a range of significant disabilities and does not require the presence of one or more specific significant disabilities before determining that an individual is eligible for IL services.

level of funding they received the prior fiscal year and provide them with a cost-of-living increase priority designation of unserved or underserved areas and the availability of funds within the State. In FY 2014, there were 354 CILs operating nationwide that received funds under this program. If a State's funding for the CIL program exceeded the Federal allotment to the State, it could apply for the authority to award grants and administer this program through its designated State unit. Two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, chose to exercise this authority.

CILs were required to submit an annual performance report. The report tracked sources, amounts, and allocation of funds; numbers and demographic breakdowns of consumers served; services rendered and consumer outcomes achieved; and major accomplishments, challenges, opportunities, and other IL program activities within the State.

RSA also provided training and technical assistance services to CILs and SILCs nationwide through a portion of the CIL program funds, in accordance with Section 721 of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

The CIL program is currently maintained and the data archived at HHS/ACL, Administration on Disabilities.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA)

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (ARRA) authorized CILs to expend \$87.5 million in ARRA funds over a five-year period. In FY 2014, these funds continued to enable CILs to create or expand IL programs to help individuals with significant disabilities to transition from institutions to their communities; pursue postsecondary education, employment, and independent living opportunities; improve their quality of life through assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services; and achieve their life goals through increased availability of information and referral, IL skills, peer counseling, and individual and systems advocacy services. In addition, the *ARRA* funds enabled 20 newly competed CILs to begin providing IL services to individuals with significant disabilities in nine States. All *ARRA* funds for CILs expired on or before September 30, 2015.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA transferred the CILs program from ED/RSA to HHS/ACL.

INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES FOR OLDER INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE BLIND PROGRAM

Authorized under *Title VII, Chapter 2, of the Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education

The Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (IL-OIB) program delivers training and independent living (IL) services to individuals who are 55 years of age or older and whose significant visual impairment makes competitive integrated employment difficult to attain but for whom IL goals are feasible. These services promote adjustment to vision loss and assist older individuals who are blind with managing activities of daily living and increasing their functional independence by providing adaptive aids and services, orientation and mobility training, training in communication skills and braille instruction, information and referral services, peer counseling, and individual advocacy instruction. Through such services, the IL-OIB program preserves or increases independence and extends the quality of life for older Americans with visual impairments, while offering alternatives to costly long-term institutionalization and care.

The *Rehabilitation Act* provides that, in any fiscal year in which appropriations to this program exceed \$13 million, grants will be made on a formula basis rather than on a discretionary basis. Since FY 2000, formula grants have been made to all State VR agencies serving individuals who are blind. States participating in this program must match every \$9 of Federal funds with \$1 in non-Federal cash or in-kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated.

This funding promotes the sustainability of the State-operated programs nationwide and builds the capacity of States to address the vastly growing numbers of older individuals with blindness and visual impairments.

In FY 2014, the total *Title VII, Chapter 2* grant awards made to States was \$32,983,830. In addition to receiving Federal funding under *Title VII, Chapter 2*, the IL-OIB program received non-Federal support. In FY 2014, the total of non-Federal sources of funding and in-kind support for the 56 IL-OIB grantees was \$16,255,670. In FY 2014, expenditures under the IL-OIB program from all funding sources, including Federal IL-OIB funds, other Federal funds, non-Federal funds, and in-kind, totaled \$58,090,147, a 1.9 percent decrease from the total amount expended in FY 2013.

In FY 2014, 59,892 older individuals who are blind or visually impaired nationwide benefited from the IL services provided through the IL-OIB program, down 1.4 percent from FY 2013. The IL-OIB program continued to see an increase in services delivered to consumers who have other severe or multiple disabilities in addition to a significant visual impairment.

In FY 2015, the *total Title VII, Chapter 2* grant awards made to States was \$32,384,124. In addition to receiving Federal funding under *Title VII, Chapter 2*, the IL-OIB program

received non-Federal support. In FY 2015, the total of non-Federal sources of funding and in-kind support for the 56 IL-OIB grantees was \$14,304,710.

In FY 2015, expenditures under the IL-OIB program from all funding sources, including Federal IL-OIB funds, other Federal funds, non-Federal funds, and in-kind, totaled \$59,598,331, a 2.6 percent increase from the total amount expended in FY 2014.

Nationwide in FY 2015, 60,435 older individuals who are blind or visually impaired benefited from the IL services provided through the IL-OIB program, up 0.9 percent from FY 2014. The IL-OIB program continued to see an increase in services delivered to consumers that have other severe or multiple disabilities in addition to a significant visual impairment.

To maximize program performance and accountability, RSA has developed outcomes-based performance indicators.⁹ These indicators will help RSA to track the percentage of consumers reporting increased independence and community integration and to provide the necessary recommendations and technical assistance to achieve continuous improvements in the IL-OIB program.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

While *WIOA* transferred the Independent Living programs under *Title VII, Chapter 1* from ED/RSA to HHS/ACL, the IL-OIB program remained with RSA.

WIOA added a new section, Section 751A(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act*, that requires the RSA commissioner to reserve not less than 1.8 percent and not more than 2 percent of the funds appropriated to carry out *Chapter 2* to provide training and technical assistance to State agencies or other providers of IL services for older individuals who are blind.

⁹ These performance indicators can be found at <http://www.rsa.ed.gov/display.cfm?pageid=73>.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT

RSA operates and provides funding for a number of programs that support the central work of the VR program. These are primarily discretionary programs that were established to provide funding for addressing new and emerging needs of individuals with disabilities. They may, for example, provide technical assistance for more efficient management of service provision, open opportunities for previously underserved populations, initiate partnerships with the business community, and help promote independence and self-confidence among individuals with disabilities that foster competitive integrated employment. They include training efforts designed to increase qualifications of new personnel and expand the knowledge and skills of current professionals through recurrent training, continuing education, and professional development.

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR TRADITIONALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

**Authorized under Section 21 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education**

The *Rehabilitation Act* requires that at least one percent of funds appropriated each year for programs under *Titles II, III, VI, and VII* be reserved to carry out activities under Section 21. These funds are to be used either to make awards to minority entities and American Indian tribes to carry out activities under the *Rehabilitation Act* or to make awards to States or public or private nonprofit agencies to support capacity-building projects designed to provide outreach and technical assistance to minority entities and American Indian tribes to promote their participation in activities under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Amendments made to the *Rehabilitation Act* by WIOA in 2014 transferred administration of the NIDILRR, authorized under *Title II*, to the Administration for Community Living (ACL) within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and no longer authorize NIDILRR to reserve funds for Section 21 activities.

In FY 2014, the 1 percent reservation for Section 21 from *Titles III, VI, and VII* amounted to \$2,026,970. Some extra funds became available through the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program, totaling \$220,030. Therefore, the total amount RSA obligated for the purposes of carrying out Section 21 in FY 2014 was \$2,247,000. In FY 2015, the total amount reserved for this purpose was \$1,980,320.

The *Rehabilitation Act* defines *minority entities* as historically black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions of higher education, American Indian tribal colleges or universities, and other institutions of higher learning whose minority student enrollment is at least 50 percent. This definition did not change under WIOA. Capacity-building projects are designed to expand the service-providing capabilities of these entities and American Indian tribes and increase their participation in activities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Training and technical assistance activities funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* may include training on RSA's mission, RSA-funded programs,

disability legislation, and other pertinent subjects to increase awareness of RSA and its programs.

In FY 2014, RSA awarded three continuation grants under the RSA Rehabilitation Capacity-Building program under one priority area: establishing new Rehabilitation Training Programs (CFDA [Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance] 84.315C). Three grants (Winston-Salem State University, University of the District of Columbia, and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University) were awarded under this priority. This was the fifth and final year of funding for these grants.

In addition, in FY 2014, RSA used Section 21 funds to award several long-term training grants to minority-serving institutions: three years of funding for two CFDA 84.129H grants (South Carolina State University and the University of Arizona), three years of funding for one CFDA 84.129P grant (University of Massachusetts-Boston), and one CFDA 84.129Q grant (Winston-Salem State University).

In FY 2015, RSA awarded a new grant to the Northwest Indian College (NWIC), working in partnership with Western Washington University (WWU), to develop an American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Training Institute (Institute) to meet the VR training needs in American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Service (AIVRS) programs. The grant was funded for its first three years with FY 2015 funds, and the grantee was awarded \$1,427,377 to cover the first three years of operation. Section 21 funds were also used to cover the peer-review costs for this competition. The purpose of this grant is to establish a new institute to meet the VR training needs in AIVRS programs. The NWIC partnership will develop a structured program of training for AIVRS project personnel with limited knowledge or experience in the VR field to improve the delivery of VR services to American Indians with disabilities. The training focuses on foundational VR knowledge and skills that will lead to AIVRS personnel earning a VR certificate. The training topics must include, at a minimum, vocational assessment, determination of applicant eligibility, development of an IPE, the acquisition and use of assistive technology, and obtaining and using up-to-date labor market information to understand the local economy and effectively match the skills of AIVRS consumers with the needs of employers. The NWIC partnership is delivering this training primarily through distance learning with some face-to-face discussions. The Institute expects 200 participants will complete one or more modules during the funding period. The Institute will also provide technical assistance to 35 participants after they have completed training.

In addition, in FY 2015, RSA used Section 21 funds to front-load three rehabilitation counseling long-term training grants to minority-serving institutions under CFDA 84.129B: Western Oregon University (\$200,000), Winston-Salem State University (\$199,216), and Georgia State University Research Foundation (\$148,327).

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA transferred NIDRR from ED/RSA to HHS/ACL and renamed it the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). NIDILRR submits its portion of the annual report separately. Therefore, NIDILRR's

activities under *Title II* are not included in this report. NIDILRR will submit a separate report on its activities under the *Rehabilitation Act*.

REHABILITATION TRAINING PROGRAM

**Authorized under Section 302 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education**

The purpose of the Rehabilitation Training program is to ensure that skilled personnel are available to serve the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities assisted through VR, supported employment, and IL programs. To that end, the program supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel trained in providing rehabilitation services. In FY 2014, the appropriation for this program was \$33,657,000. In FY 2015, the appropriation for this program was \$30,188,000.

Grants and contracts under this program authority are awarded to States and to public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education, to pay part of the cost of conducting training programs. Awards can be made in any of 31 long-term training fields, in addition to awards made for continuing education, short-term training, experimental and innovative training, and training interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard-of-hearing and persons who are deaf-blind. These training programs vary in terms of content, methodology, and audience.

In FY 2014, RSA funded 193 training grants. These grants cover a broad array of areas, including 91 long-term training grants, 94 in-service training grants to State VR agencies, six grants to provide quality educational opportunities for interpreters at all skill levels, one grant providing technical assistance on job-driven strategies for State VR agencies and their partners, and one grant to train Client Assistance Program (CAP) personnel. Together, these grants support the public rehabilitation system through recruiting and training well-qualified staff and maintaining and upgrading their skills once they begin working within the system.

In FY 2015, RSA funded 121 training grants. These grants cover a broad array of areas, including 109 long-term training grants, six grants to provide quality educational opportunities for interpreters at all skill levels, one grant providing technical assistance on job-driven strategies for State VR agencies and their partners, one grant to provide training and technical assistance on program evaluation, one grant to provide State VR agencies with technical assistance on the new provisions of *WIOA*, one grant to provide technical assistance to State VR agencies on serving youth with disabilities, one grant to provide technical assistance to State VR agencies on serving unserved or underserved populations, and one grant to train CAP personnel.

WIOA made several changes to the Rehabilitation Training program:

- eliminated the In-Service Training program
- added CSPD requirements:
 - Section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii)(I)(aa) requires that personnel have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities, including requirements for the attainment of a baccalaureate degree in a field of study reasonably related to vocational rehabilitation, to indicate a level of competency and skill demonstrating basic preparation in a field of study such as vocational rehabilitation counseling, social work, psychology, disability studies, business administration, human resources, special education, supported employment, customized employment, economics, or another field that reasonably prepares individuals to work with consumers and employers.
 - Section 101(a)(7)(A)(v)(I) requires the designated State unit to describe in its CSPD the continuing education of rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals, particularly with respect to rehabilitation technology, including training implemented in coordination with entities carrying out State programs under Section 4 of the *Assistive Technology Act of 1998* (29 U.S.C. §3003).
- eliminated Section 101(a)(7)(B)(ii). As a result, the requirement in the VR portion of the State plan, in which VR agencies describe the steps needed to retrain or hire personnel to meet the appropriate professional requirements in the State, was removed.

Rehabilitation Long-Term Training

The Long-Term Training program supports academic training grants that are awarded to colleges and universities with undergraduate and graduate programs in the field of rehabilitation. Grantees must direct 75 percent of their total project costs to trainee scholarships. The statute requires trainees who receive assistance either to (1) work two years for every year of assistance in public or private nonprofit rehabilitation or related agencies, including professional corporations or professional practice groups that have service arrangements with a State agency, or (2) pay back the assistance they received. Grant recipients under the Long-Term Training program are required to build closer relationships between training institutions and State VR agencies, promote careers in VR, identify potential employers who would meet the trainee's payback requirements, and ensure that data on the employment of students are accurate.

In FY 2014, RSA funded 66 new and 25 continuation grants in 10 specialty areas with \$14,133,753 in funds from this program. In addition, 13 of the new long-term training grants were front-loaded to cover their second year of funding and another long-term training grant received a front-loaded amount to cover partial funding for its second year

for a total of \$2,738,245. Finally, four additional new long-term training grants received funding from the Section 21 set-aside, totaling \$1,647,230.

In FY 2015, RSA funded 40 new and 69 continuation grants in six specialty areas with \$16,579,723 in funds from this program. Three new long-term training grants were also frontloaded with Section 21 funds for their second year in the amount of \$547,543.

In-Service Training

Prior to the enactment of *WIOA*, 15 percent of the funds appropriated for the Rehabilitation Training program were required to be used to support in-service training. In FY 2014, the Rehabilitation Training program made 75 basic in-service training awards and 19 quality in-service training awards to State VR agencies, totaling \$5,048,550. These grants supported projects for training State VR agency personnel in program areas essential to the effective management of the VR programs under the *Rehabilitation Act* and in skill areas that enabled VR personnel to improve their ability to provide VR services leading to employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. In addition, these grants helped State VR agencies to develop and implement their Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standards for hiring, training, and retaining qualified rehabilitation professionals; provided for succession planning; provided leadership development and capacity-building; and provided training on the *Rehabilitation Act* in their respective States. *WIOA* repealed the statutory authority for the In-Service Training program. As a result, the In-Service Training grants that existed were terminated as of September 30, 2015.

Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD)

Under *Title I* of the *Rehabilitation Act*, each State is required to develop the CSPD. The CSPD requirements include establishing procedures to ensure that there is an adequate supply of qualified staff for the State agency, assessing personnel needs and making projections for future needs, and addressing current and projected personnel training needs. States are further required to develop and maintain policies and procedures for job-specific personnel standards that are consistent with national or State-approved certification, licensure, and registration requirements or, in the absence of these requirements, other State personnel requirements for comparable positions. If a State's current personnel do not meet the highest requirements for personnel standards within the State, the CSPD must identify the steps the State will take to upgrade the qualifications of its staff through retraining or hiring.

Prior to the enactment of *WIOA*, State VR agencies had three sources of assistance to help meet the CSPD requirements: 1) the In-Service Training program; 2) CSPD grants under the Long-Term Training program; and 3) funds under the *Title I* VR program. After the enactment of *WIOA*, State VR agencies have two sources of assistance to help meet the CSPD requirements: 1) CSPD grants under the Long-Term Training program and 2) funds under the *Title I* VR program.

In FY 2014, RSA awarded \$299,957 for three continuation CSPD grants under the Long-Term Training program to help retrain VR counselors to meet the state degree standard. These three CSPD grants are among the 91 Long-Term Training grants that RSA awarded in FY 2014.

In FY 2015, RSA awarded \$1,595,624 for eight new CSPD grants. These grants were among the 109 long-term training grants awarded in FY 2015.

Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind

In FY 2014, RSA continued support for six grants to provide quality educational opportunities for interpreters at all skill levels under the Training Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program. One grant supported a national center, which ensured that there were quality educational opportunities available, focusing specifically on interpreting for consumers of VR services. Five grants supported regional centers, which continued to train enough qualified interpreters to meet the needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are deaf-blind. The regional centers provided these opportunities in collaboration with local partner networks (i.e., formal networks of individuals, organizations, and agencies including consumers, consumer organizations, community resources, service providers (especially VR agencies), VR State coordinators for the deaf, rehabilitation counselors for the deaf, and other appropriate individuals and entities), and with substantial involvement from deaf consumers. The regional centers coordinated and collaborated with each other and with the national center for the purposes of implementing effective practices in interpreter education, incorporating products developed by the national center, implementing and delivering the specific educational activities identified in the education needs assessments, implementing program quality indicators identified for this program, and promoting the educational activities of the national center.

RSA extended the project periods of these grants through FY 2015 to allow time to develop new priorities.

In FY 2014, RSA awarded \$599,988 for one continuation grant to the national center and \$1,499,947 for six continuation grants under the Training Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program. In FY 2015, RSA awarded \$480,000 for one continuation grant to the national center and \$1,499,947 for six continuation grants under the Training Interpreters for Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing and Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind program.

Technical Assistance

In FY 2014, a presidential memorandum directed Federal agencies to take action to address job-driven training for the nation's workers. Consequently, RSA funded the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center (JDVRTAC). It provides technical assistance to State VR agencies to help them develop training and

employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities that meet the needs of today's employers in the following four job-driven topic areas:

1. Use of labor market data and occupational information to provide individuals with disabilities with the best information regarding job demand, skills matching, supports, and education, training, and career options
2. Disability-related consultation and services to employers related to competitive employment of individuals with disabilities and strategies to recruit, train, and serve employees with disabilities for the purposes of hiring, job retention, or return to work
3. Building and maintaining relationships with employers
4. Services to providers of customized training and other types of training that are directly responsive to employer needs and hiring requirements

RSA funded this center through a cooperative agreement with the University of Massachusetts-Boston for three years for a total amount of \$9,000,000; funding for all three years came from FY 2014 appropriations.

In FY 2015, RSA awarded a supplement to this grantee in the amount of \$600,000 to develop resources to assist State VR agencies to develop on-the-job training activities (e.g., internships, apprenticeships, and other paid work experiences).

In FY 2015, RSA funded the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) at the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University to provide training and technical assistance to State VR agencies on the new statutory requirements contained in *WIOA*. Through universal, targeted, and intensive technical assistance, the center addressed the following topics: (1) provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and supported employment services to youth with disabilities; (2) implementation of the requirements in Section 511 of the *Rehabilitation Act* that are under the purview of the Department of Education related to work below the minimum wage; (3) provision of resources and strategies to help individuals with disabilities achieve competitive integrated employment, including customized employment and supported employment; (4) integration of the State VR program into the workforce development system; and (5) transition to the new common performance accountability system under section 116 of *WIOA*, including the collection and reporting of common data elements. In FY 2015, RSA funded this center at \$3,499,131 for the first year and partially front-loaded the second year at \$890,645.

In FY 2015, RSA funded the Technical Assistance Center on Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance at the University of Wisconsin-Stout to support a cooperative agreement for a training and technical assistance center to assist State VR agencies to improve performance management by building their capacity to carry out high-quality program evaluations and quality assurance practices that promote continuous program improvement. The center assists State VR agencies in building capacity through professional education and training of VR evaluators. To this end, the center educates VR

staff who wish to become program evaluators through a basic certificate program and educates current program evaluators who need advanced studies in special topical areas. In FY 2015, RSA funded the first three years of this five-year grant at \$500,000 annually.

In FY 2015, RSA also funded a cooperative agreement to establish a Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Targeted Communities (VRTAC-TC) at Southern University and A&M College to provide technical assistance and training to upgrade and increase the competency, skills, and knowledge of VR counselors and other professionals to assist economically disadvantaged individuals with disabilities to achieve competitive integrated employment outcomes. Over the course of five years, 12 proposals will be funded representing diverse geographical areas and populations served. Each model will represent a collaboration of the VR agency and many other partners at the local level in order to leverage resources to provide a network of services to address the multiplicity of unique needs of the disadvantaged population targeted by the proposed model. The models of service delivery developed will then be disseminated throughout the country for replication by other VR agencies. In FY 2015, the center received \$2.5 million to support the first year of project operations.

In FY 2015, RSA funded a cooperative agreement to establish a Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center - Youth with Disabilities (VRTAC-Y) at the Institute for Educational Leadership. This center provides technical assistance to State VR agencies to improve services to and outcomes of (1) students with disabilities, as defined in Section 7(37) of the *Rehabilitation Act*, who are in school and who are not receiving services under the *IDEA*, and (2) youth with disabilities, as defined in Section 7(42) of the *Rehabilitation Act*, who are no longer in school and who are not employed, often referred to as dropouts. This center assists State VR agencies to improve postsecondary education and employment outcomes for these two groups. This center received \$1,499,997 in FY 2015 to fund its first year of operation.

In FY 2015, RSA funded one project at \$200,000 under the Short-Term Training program to enable Client Assistance Program (CAP) personnel, on an as-needed basis, to receive five types of training:

1. management training, to develop skills needed for strategic and operational planning and direction of CAP services
2. advocacy training, to learn skills and knowledge needed to assist persons with disabilities to gain access to and to use the services and benefits available under the *Rehabilitation Act* with particular emphasis on new statutory and regulatory requirements
3. systemic advocacy training, to acquire skills and knowledge needed to address programmatic issues of concern
4. training and technical assistance on CAP best practices
5. training to acquire skills and knowledge needed to perform additional responsibilities required by *WIOA*.

In FYs 2014 and 2015, training funds were also used to fund the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM); a description of this center can be found in the section of this document entitled, "Evaluation, Research and Information Dissemination."

National Council on Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) Annual Conference

The Rehabilitation Training program participated in planning the NCRE 2014 annual conference of rehabilitation educators and State agencies to discuss human resource issues and solutions. This conference took place in Arlington, Virginia, on November 2–4, 2014, with the theme, "Back to the Future, Embracing the Journey."

Program Performance Data

For FY 2014, the following data are available to measure the performance of the Rehabilitation Training program:

- In FY 2014, the percentage of master's-level counseling graduates who received assistance under the Rehabilitation Long-Term Training program and who reported fulfilling their payback requirements through qualifying employment was 77.5 percent. This figure represents a decrease from the 80.5 percent who reported achieving qualifying employment in FY 2013.
- In FY 2014, the percentage of master's-level counseling graduates who received assistance under the Rehabilitation Long-Term Training program and who reported fulfilling their payback requirement through employment in State VR agencies was 31.2 percent. This figure represents a decrease from the 33.3 percent who reported being employed in State VR agencies in FY 2013.
- In FY 2014, 5,004 RSA-supported scholars graduated, representing a decrease from the 5,028 scholars who graduated in FY 2013.
- In FY 2014, there were 1,235 current scholars supported by RSA scholarships, a substantial decrease from 1,942 in FY 2013.

For FY 2015, the following data are available to measure the performance of the Rehabilitation Training program:

- In FY 2015, the percentage of master's-level counseling graduates who received assistance under the Rehabilitation Long-Term Training program and who reported fulfilling their payback requirements through qualifying employment was 74.3 percent. This figure represents a decrease from the 77.5 percent who reported achieving qualifying employment in FY 2014.
- In FY 2015, the percentage of master's-level counseling graduates who received assistance under the Rehabilitation Long-Term Training program and who reported fulfilling their payback requirement through employment in State VR

agencies was 29.4 percent. This figure represents a decrease from the 31.2 percent who reported being employed in State VR agencies in FY 2014.

- The number of RSA-supported scholars who graduated in FY 2015 was 4,580, representing a decrease from the 5,004 scholars who graduated in FY 2014.
- The number of current scholars supported by RSA scholarships in FY 2015 was 1,363, an increase from 1,235 in FY 2014.

Allocations

The allocation of rehabilitation training grant funds for FYs 2014 and 2015 is shown in that order in table 10. Funds were shifted to programs designed to meet the critical need to train current and new counselors to meet State agency personnel commitments as retirement levels increased. All data was pulled from ED's grant management system, called G5 (user registration is required to use the G5 system for limited purposes, <https://www.g5.gov>).

Table 10. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FYs 2014

	Number of awards FY 2014	Grant amount
Continuation grants		
Rehabilitation Counseling	3	\$206,475.00
Rehabilitation Administration	1	\$100,000.00
Rehabilitation Technology	2	\$199,979.00
Vocational Evaluation/Adjustment	1	\$100,000.00
Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill	6	\$596,452.00
Rehabilitation Psychology	2	\$199,742.00
Rehabilitation of the Blind	2	\$199,967.00
Rehabilitation of the Deaf	3	\$296,762.00
Job Development/Placement	2	\$199,975.00
CSPD Priority	3	\$299,957.00
Long-Term Training continuation subtotal	25	\$2,399,309.00
Regional Interpreter Training	5	\$1,499,947.00
National Interpreter Training	1	\$599,988.00
Interpreter Training total	6	\$2,099,935.00
In-Service Training (Basic)	75	\$3,989,876.00
In-Service Training (Quality)	19	\$1,058,674.00
In-Service Training total	94	\$5,048,550.00
CAP Training Grant	1	\$200,000.00
Continuation total	126	\$9,747,794.00
New grants		
Rehabilitation Counseling	43	\$8,319,711.00
Rehabilitation Counseling Front-Loading ^a	14	\$2,738,245.00
Vocational Evaluation/Adjustment	2	\$299,240.00
Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill	11	\$1,635,529.00
Rehabilitation of the Blind	8	\$1,181,472.00
Rehabilitation of the Deaf	2	\$298,492.00

Table 10. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FYs 2014, *continued*

	Number of awards FY 2014	Grant amount
Long-Term Training new subtotal	66	\$14,472,689.00
JDVRTAC	1	\$3,000,000.00
JDVRTAC Front-Loading ^b		\$6,000,000.00
JDVRTAC total	1	\$9,000,000.00
New grants total	67	\$23,472,689.00
Grants total (cont. & new)	193	\$33,220,483.00
National Clearinghouse Contract	1	\$394,917.00
Peer Review		\$41,600.00
Section 21 set-aside ^c		\$0.00
Grand total		\$33,657,000.00

^a In FY 2014, \$2,738,245 was used to front load 14 of the 43 new Rehabilitation Counseling grants.

^b In FY 2014, \$6 million was used to fund the second and third years of the JDVRTAC.

^c In FY 2014, the Section 21 set-aside for the Rehabilitation Training program was taken from moneys made available through the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, G5 grant management system, FYs 2014–15.

Table 11. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FY 2015

	Number of awards FY 2015	Grant amount
Continuation grants		
Rehabilitation Counseling	43	\$5,681,923.00
Vocational Evaluation/Adjustment	2	\$299,090.00
Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill	12	\$1,489,757.00
Rehabilitation of the Blind	9	\$1,036,621.00
Rehabilitation of the Deaf	3	\$301,082.00
Long-Term Training continuation subtotal	69	\$8,808,473.00
Regional Interpreter Training	5	\$1,499,947.00
National Interpreter Training	1	\$480,000.00
Interpreter Training total	6	\$1,979,947.00
JDVRTAC	1	\$0
Continuation total	76	\$10,788,420.00
New grants		
Rehabilitation Counseling	31	\$6,025,626.00
Rehabilitation of the Deaf	1	\$150,000.00
CSPD Priority	8	\$1,595,624.00
Long-Term Training new subtotal	40	\$7,771,250.00
CAP Training Grant	1	\$200,000.00
Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance	1	\$500,000.00
Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance Front Loading ^a		\$1,000,000.00
VRTAC Targeted Communities	1	\$2,500,000.00
VRTAC Youth	1	\$1,499,997.00
WINTAC	1	\$3,499,131.00
WINTAC Front Loading ^b		\$890,645.00
IRI Supplement		\$600,000.00
Technical Assistance new subtotal	5	\$10,689,773.00
New grants total	45	\$18,461,023.00

Table 11. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FYs 2015, *continued*

	Number of awards FY 2015	Grant amount
Grants total (cont. & new)	122	\$29,249,443.00
National Clearinghouse Contract		\$396,277.00
Employer Roundtables Contract		\$212,000.00
Peer Review		\$28,400.00
Section 21 set-aside		\$301,880.00
Grand total		\$30,188,000.00

^a The program evaluation and quality assurance technical assistance center was front loaded for its second and third years with FY 2015 funds.

^b The WINTAC was front loaded for part of its second year with FY 2015 funds.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, G5 grant management system, FYs 2014–15

INSTITUTE ON REHABILITATION ISSUES

The Rehabilitation Training program supports the Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI) to discuss and debate contemporary VR service delivery challenges and then to develop and disseminate publications. These publications are used in training VR professionals and as technical assistance resources for VR professionals and other stakeholders in the VR program. In FY 2014, the grant supporting the IRI operated under a no-cost extension. Since its inception, the IRI has served to exemplify the unique partnerships among the Federal and State governments, the university training programs, and persons served by the VR agencies. The IRI publications are currently posted on the on the IRI forum website <http://www.iriforum.org> and will be transferred to RSA's National Clearinghouse for Rehabilitation Training Materials (<https://ncrtm.ed.gov>) where they will continue to be available for persons interested in the topics. VR counselors obtain continuing education credits applicable to maintaining their certification as certified rehabilitation counselors by completing a questionnaire based on the content in an IRI publication.

In FYs 2014 and 2015, three IRI documents were in various stages of completion:

1. A publication related to return on investment and economic impact began in FY 2013, was substantially revised in FY 2014, and was approved and disseminated in FY 2015.
2. A publication related to serving underserved populations, including individuals who are deaf-blind, was developed in FY 2014 and disseminated in FY 2015 as a monograph.
3. A publication related to the *Affordable Care Act* was revisited in FY 2015 and revisions were begun.

First, a properly developed return on investment (ROI) is a powerful tool that a VR director can use to defend and demonstrate the efficiency of a program that assists in employing people with disabilities, especially in an environment that emphasizes performance-based budgeting. [*Return on Investment and Economic Impact: Determining and Communicating the Value of Vocational Rehabilitation*](#) was prepared to assist VR executives and professionals in calculating a credible ROI for agencies and agency programs and services. Hard copies were disseminated to all State VR agencies in FY 2015.

Second, practical guidance and concrete recommendations on how to begin to change the status quo for people of color with disabilities and people who are deaf-blind would benefit professionals at all levels within the VR system. [*Assume Nothing! A Monograph To Address Underserved Populations, Including Individuals Who Are Deaf-Blind*](#) was developed as a monograph to address the shared needs and experiences of both groups, while recognizing that there are also significant differences. Hard copies were disseminated to all State VR agencies in FY 2015.

Third, VR counselors need information on how the changes in our health care system can provide additional opportunities to eliminate barriers to employment for people and businesses. In FY 2015, the IRI revisited its work that began shortly after the *Affordable Care Act* was signed into law. In FY 2015, the IRI designed a user-friendly resource for VR counselors that outlined the provisions of the *Affordable Care Act* as they apply to individuals with disabilities.

Finally, in FY 2015, the IRI assembled a work group to explore how State VR agencies intended to respond to various possibilities for changes in their Comprehensive System for Personnel Development (CSPD) plans in response to *WIOA*. The work group provided input to RSA in terms of how training funds could be used to better assist State VR agencies in meeting their staffing needs.

EVALUATION, RESEARCH, AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

To improve the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities, the *Rehabilitation Act* requires the distribution of practical and scientific information regarding state-of-the-art practices, scientific breakthroughs, and new knowledge regarding disabilities. To address those requirements, RSA funds and promotes a variety of research and demonstration projects, training programs, and a range of information dissemination projects designed to generate and make available critical data and information to appropriate audiences.

THE NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE OF REHABILITATION TRAINING MATERIALS

**Authorized under Section 15 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education**

The National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM), located at Utah State University (USU) in Logan, Utah, responded to inquiries and provided the public with information about events and resources of interest to the rehabilitation community. Inquiries came from individuals with disabilities, their families, national organizations, other Federal and State agencies, academia, students, information providers, the news media, and the general public. Most inquiries were related to rehabilitation training and technical assistance materials, research, curricula, promising practices in rehabilitation training, and other resources and materials related to the field of vocational rehabilitation.

The information provided is varied. The NCRTM digital library is an archive of historical and contemporary documents. These documents are white papers, conference proceedings, books, journals, assessment tools, manuals, training modules, training programs, slide presentations, memos, maps and tables, audio and video recordings of educational or historical events, and research findings and tools. Virtually it encompasses any information that serves practitioners, educators, researchers, managers, or consumers under the aegis of the *Rehabilitation Act*. The website, <https://ncrtm.ed.gov>, provides additional information including job openings, a calendar of events, links to partner sites, and open forums on topics of interest.

Historically, NCRTM disseminated materials by sending copies to customers who were charged copy and mailing costs. Since moving to USU, the dissemination process has been digitized, making materials available free of charge via the internet. The NCRTM also developed a digital infrastructure for distance instruction. This strategy served two purposes. First, it met the mission of dissemination of training materials inherent within the NCRTM. Second, it allowed the NCRTM to partner with the individuals developing the training, thereby increasing USU's ability to secure and deliver new and innovative training materials.

The website usage for the grant cycle was 232,185 visits, with 149,727 of those being visits from unique users. (“Visits” refers to the number of times a site is visited, no matter how many visitors make up those visits. “Unique visitors” refers to the number of distinct individuals requesting pages from the website during a given period, regardless of how often they visit.)

At the conclusion of the grant cycle, there were 9,201 individual items in the NCRTM library. This number includes written and video materials developed as part of grant projects funded by RSA and all of the submissions to the NCRTM library over the course of the project. Analysis of the website indicates that during the grant cycle, there were 11,016 downloads of materials from the library. This result is an average of 306 items downloaded from the library per month for the grant cycle. This total does not include the use of the webinar services.

The NCRTM also hosted technical assistance and training webinars for RSA and other rehabilitation partners. Live training webinars were hosted on an accessible web conferencing platform and then archived on the NCRTM website. During the funding cycle for this grant, the NCRTM facilitated the provision of 69 training webinars (47 for RSA and 22 for other programs and partners within the field of vocational rehabilitation). With each webinar, the NCRTM provided the technology to conduct the training, technical assistance during the training, support in posting materials (e.g., PowerPoint slides, training recordings, transcripts of the training), and a follow-up survey to participants immediately after the webinar. This level of support allowed each individual to learn during the webinar training, as did downloading slides, transcripts, and recordings of the webinar trainings.

From October 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014, NCRTM operated under a no-cost extension. In May 2014, RSA entered into a fixed-price contract with New Editions, Inc. New Editions, Inc.: (1) conducted web-based technical assistance and training through interactive webinars; (2) hosted RSA’s central repository of technical assistance and training materials, the NCRTM, that migrated from an existing server to a new server that New Editions, Inc. operated and maintained; (3) improved and enhanced the overall functions of the NCRTM; and (4) improved and enhanced access to interpreter training materials (i.e., materials developed by the Training of Interpreters for Individuals Who are Deaf, Deaf-blind, Hard of Hearing, and Late Deafened grant projects) contained on the NCRTM. The contract base period was from May 1, 2014, to November 30, 2014, and the option year was from December 1, 2014, to November 30, 2015.

In FY 2015, the contract awarded to New Editions, Inc. focused largely on transferring data from the prior grantee and developing a new website to host the material. As part of this process, the contractor analyzed existing materials. Upon review of the 9,201 individual items transferred from the former grantee, the contractor found that the majority of records did not meet Section 508 guidelines and were outdated. RSA determined that the new NCRTM would host records post-1989. A total of 1,915 records were transferred to the new NCRTM at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov>, which officially launched in November 2015. The remaining records are available through a secondary archive. In

addition to migrating the materials and designing a new site, NCRTM conducted 22 training webinars in FY 2015 under the new contract.

**NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND REHABILITATION RESEARCH
NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY, INDEPENDENT LIVING AND
REHABILITATION RESEARCH**

***Authorized under Title II of the Rehabilitation Act
Managed by the Administration for Community Living,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services***

Created in 1978, the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), now named the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), conducts comprehensive and coordinated research programs to assist individuals with disabilities. NIDILRR activities are designed to improve the economic and social self-sufficiency of these individuals, with particular emphasis on improving the effectiveness of services authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act*.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA transferred NIDRR from ED/RSA to HHS/ACL and renamed it the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). NIDILRR submits its portion of the annual report separately.

ADVOCACY AND ENFORCEMENT

Through the programs and activities described in this report, Congress and the Federal government are doing much to improve opportunities for employment and community integration for persons with disabilities. However, full independence cannot be achieved if individuals are not able to protect their rights under the law. Recognizing this need, Congress has created a number of programs to assist and advocate on behalf of individuals with disabilities. RSA administers several of these programs, which include the Client Assistance Program (CAP), the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program, and, until its transfer to HHS/ACL, the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program. Each of these programs directs its advocacy efforts to a particular group of persons with disabilities or to a specific issue. This section of the annual report provides data and information concerning the activities and performance of the CAP and PAIR programs. Information pertaining to the PAAT program is contained in the annual report to Congress prepared in accordance with Section 7 of the *Assistive Technology Act of 1998*, as amended, and is submitted by HHS/ACL.

Requirements under the *Rehabilitation Act* call for the continuous review of policies and practices related to the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment of individuals with disabilities and their access to facilities and information. To carry out the responsibilities stemming from those requirements, the *Rehabilitation Act* authorizes a number of advocacy and advisory programs operating at national and State levels. Such programs conduct periodic reviews of existing employment policies and practices. In addition, these programs develop and recommend policies and procedures that facilitate the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment of individuals who have received rehabilitation services to ensure compliance with standards prescribed by Federal legislation.

Some of the advocacy programs also develop advisory information and provide appropriate training and technical assistance, as well as make recommendations to the president, the Congress, and the secretary of ED.

Several Federal agencies have been given enforcement authority to ensure that government agencies and private entities that receive Federal assistance subscribe to and implement legislative provisions related to the employment of individuals with disabilities. These enforcement agencies review complaints, conduct investigations, conduct outreach and technical assistance activities to promote compliance, conduct public hearings, attempt to obtain voluntary compliance with civil rights laws, and pursue formal administrative and court enforcement where necessary. These agencies participate, when necessary, as *amicus curiae* in any United States court in civil actions. They also design appropriate and equitable remedies. Formal enforcement action may lead to the withholding of or suspension of Federal funds.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Authorized under Section 112 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) informs and advises all clients and client applicants of all available benefits under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Upon request of those individuals, the CAP assists and advocates for them in their relationships with projects, programs, and services provided under the *Rehabilitation Act*. This includes providing assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal, administrative, or other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of the rights of such individuals and facilitating access to the services funded under the *Rehabilitation Act* through individual and systemic advocacy. The CAP is also authorized to provide information on clients' rights under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. Primarily, CAPs assist individuals in their relationships with the VR program.

Each governor designates a public or private agency to operate a CAP. This designated agency must be independent of any agency that provides services under the *Rehabilitation Act*, except in those cases where the *Rehabilitation Act* "grandfathered" CAPs already housed within State agencies providing services. In the event that one of these State agencies providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act* restructures, the *Rehabilitation Act* requires the governor to redesignate the CAP in an agency that does not provide services under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Currently, only a few "internal" CAPs (e.g., those housed within a State VR agency or other agency providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act*) remain.

Overall, according to FY 2014 data collected through the Annual Client Assistance Program Report (RSA-227), CAPs nationwide responded to 39,654 requests for information and provided extensive services to 5,415 individuals. Slightly more than 96 percent of those cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for or recipients of services from the VR program. In 89 percent of all cases, issues were related to the VR process or delivery of VR services. Of the 4,391 individual cases, 1,820 cases (or 41 percent) were resolved through the CAP explaining the controlling policies to the individual; 16 percent resulted in developing or implementing an IPE; and 15 percent resulted in reestablishing communication between the individuals and other parties. In addition, 71 percent of the cases requiring action by the CAP on behalf of the individual were resolved in the individual's favor.

Examples of CAP activities in FY 2014 include the following:

- In the District of Columbia, CAP represented a consumer with autism and learning disabilities who was denied college tuition by the VR agency to a college in Connecticut that specializes in educating students with significant learning disabilities. Due to the consumer's significant learning disability, the consumer required intensive supports while attending college to be successful. The VR agency questioned whether the consumer needed to attend college to meet his vocational goal, which was to be a criminal investigator. Because college classes

were starting soon, CAP filed for an expedited hearing before the District of Columbia's Office of Administrative Hearings, seeking college tuition, room and board, tutoring support, transportation, a computer, and software.

During the administrative hearing, CAP presented four witnesses, which included the consumer, his mother, his high school guidance counselor, and the psychologist at his high school. After the first day of a three-day trial, the VR agency agreed to settle the case and fund the consumer's tuition for all four years, including the costs for tuition, room, and board. In addition, the VR agency agreed to provide the consumer with a computer, needed software, and all transportation costs to and from the college.

- In Louisiana, a consumer diagnosed with quadriplegia following an all-terrain vehicle accident required an electric wheelchair for mobility, as well as assistance through personal care services for most of her personal needs. The consumer requested CAP's representation to resolve a dispute she was having with the VR agency.

The VR agency conducted a vocational evaluation and found the consumer to be "an excellent candidate for vocational rehabilitation" and "capable of college study." As the consumer began her college education, the consumer arranged to purchase a van and requested that the VR agency provide the necessary funding for her van modification. The VR agency denied the consumer's request for the modifications and offered no other alternative means of transportation for her to attend college.

CAP filed a request for a hearing on the consumer's behalf and submitted a pre- and post-hearing memorandum. The hearing officers determined, "[the VR agency] acted contrary to the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* in its revision in not providing [the consumer] van modifications as those are necessary for her to obtain her education which, in turn, is paramount for her to be able to work." As a result, the VR agency was ordered to provide the necessary van modifications to the consumer at once. The consumer is attending college and excelling in her classes.

- In Maryland, a consumer who is deaf asked for assistance in appealing a decision by the VR agency related to services under his IPE. Specifically, the VR agency denied the consumer's request to attend an out-of-state community college with a program designed specifically for the deaf. The consumer stated the VR agency had offered to provide funding for him to attend school, but would provide only the same level of funding for an in-state community college because the VR agency believed he could receive the needed accommodation at a local school.

CAP evaluated the consumer's request for additional funding to attend an out-of-state school, along with the policies of the VR agency, to determine if the case had merit. These concerns were discussed with the individual. After consultation,

CAP agreed to represent the consumer in a formal appeal of the VR agency's determination to deny the necessary funding to attend an out-of-state college.

This individual was represented by CAP's attorney at the appeal hearing held before an administrative law judge with the Maryland Office of Administrative Hearings. This hearing resulted in a favorable ruling for the individual, and the VR agency was required to fund the costs associated with attending an out-of-state community college. The VR agency appealed, and the circuit court affirmed.

- In Massachusetts, an individual with a disability related to her spinal cord had requested assistance from CAP following the VR agency's denial of her desired vocational goal. The VR counselor denied the consumer's request for funding required for a real estate course noting multiple barriers to achieving the vocational goal of a real estate agent, including disability-related limitations, financial difficulties, lack of a vehicle, and technological illiteracy. In addition, the consumer did not have any recent work history and very little financial means. The VR counselor suggested the consumer work in a paid internship in a different, unrelated field, and to take computer courses. The consumer was not interested in pursuing these options and was adamant about her chosen vocational goal.

CAP agreed to represent her in an administrative review with the goal of assisting her to achieve her vocational goal. All parties agreed on an administrative review. Following the administrative review, the VR agency committed to assisting the consumer achieve her vocational goal by finding an on-the-job training opportunity within a local real estate agency so that she could learn particulars about the job functions and begin her career in real estate.

According to data reported in the FY 2015 Annual Client Assistance Program Report (RSA-227), CAPs nationwide responded to 35,609 requests for information and provided extensive services to 5,397 individuals. Slightly more than 95 percent of those service cases involved applicants for, or recipients of, services from the VR program. In 92 percent of all cases, issues were related to the VR process or delivery of VR services. Of the 4,168 cases closed, 1,710 cases (41 percent) were resolved through CAP explaining the controlling policies to the individual; 765 cases (18 percent) resulted in the development or implementation of an IPE; and 654 cases (15 percent) of these cases resulted in the reestablishment of communication between the individuals and other parties. In addition, 70 percent of the cases closed were resolved in the individual's favor.

Examples of CAP activities in FY 2015 include the following:

- In California, a consumer with a learning disability and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder contacted the VR agency in pursuit of becoming an attorney. The VR agency reportedly had agreed to help him obtain his bachelor's degree as a prerequisite. The consumer's initial IPE was developed with an employment goal of administrative services manager, with the understanding that

once he completed his undergraduate studies VR would fund his law school training.

Before he graduated, the consumer's rehabilitation counselor left the agency and the new counselor refused to acknowledge the agreement made with the previous counselor. Although the consumer was accepted into law school, the VR agency continued to deny his multiple requests for an IPE amendment.

CAP filed for an administrative hearing on the consumer's behalf. The judge ordered VR to reimburse the consumer for the first two years of law school and related expenses. The consumer has since successfully completed law school and has taken the California State Bar Exam.

- In the District of Columbia, a 42-year-old man with learning disabilities and a visual impairment requested CAP services because the VR agency had denied him funding to attend the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). He had attended UDC in the past, funded by VR, but because his GPA was under 2.0 and he was on academic probation, the VR agency refused to fund his tuition. The VR agency wanted him to take out a loan and pay for the semester himself and, if his GPA improved, VR would reconsider its decision. CAP learned that VR did not provide the consumer with the tutoring he requested when he previously attended UDC. In addition, CAP identified other potential barriers, such as his VR counselor being unresponsive to his needs and not completing an assistive technology assessment as recommended due to his visual impairment.

CAP represented the consumer in his appeal of the VR agency's decision at an informal administrative review. CAP presented his case and showed how committed the consumer was to finishing his education and how the VR agency had failed to provide the necessary supports while he was a student at UDC that would allow him to succeed. VR agreed to fund one semester at UDC with the necessary supports and to re-evaluate further funding at that point. As a result, the consumer was able to successfully continue his college education and pursue his vocational goal.

- In Louisiana, CAP represented a transition student receiving SSI benefits during his junior year of high school. The student has a physical disability and uses a power wheelchair. Early in his junior year, the student expressed a desire to work and he volunteered at Walgreens a couple of hours per week. CAP helped the student request pre-employment transition services, which the VR agency approved while he remained a student in high school.

To pursue this opportunity, the student needed assistance obtaining reliable transportation to the job site. To address his transportation issue, CAP advocated for van modifications on a van purchased by his family. CAP worked in conjunction with the State's Work Incentives Planning and Assistance Program funded by the Social Security Administration (SSA), the student's mother, the VR agency, and the SSA Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS) cadre for about nine

months to write a successful SSA PASS. As a result, the student was able to obtain the necessary funding for his van modifications and was able to get to school and his volunteer job. Within two months, the student secured a job at a large grocery store.

- In New Jersey, CAP intervened on behalf of a 42-year-old consumer with dyslexia, apraxia, and central auditory processing disorder. The consumer receives SSI and Medicaid. She worked as a daycare assistant for many years but resigned from the position because the work was too physically demanding. She had been having allergy-related asthma attacks, and her medication was causing her to become dizzy and sleepy around the children. She contacted the VR agency, seeking its help to become an administrative assistant at a nonprofit organization. A psychological assessment conducted through VR indicated that the consumer may have new disabilities that would require her to do a job outside of the daycare field, but that an office setting would be difficult for her. VR stated that the consumer should return to a daycare assistant position because she had no other skills. Despite this report, the consumer wanted to pursue administrative assistant work and requested a new counselor. CAP assisted the consumer to obtain a new VR counselor and advocated for the amendment of her IPE. The VR agency agreed to provide career assessments, a volunteer position in an office setting, and computer training necessary to become an administrative assistant. The consumer is now pursuing her chosen vocational goal.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA expanded the scope of the program's activities by authorizing CAPs to inform and advise clients and client applicants of the benefits available under Sections 113 (pre-employment transition services) and 511 (subminimum wage) of the *Rehabilitation Act*. *WIOA* also requires that funds be set aside under this program for these two activities before awarding grants to eligible States and outlying areas.

The first set-aside reserves funds at the same amount as provided to outlying areas for an award to the eligible system established under the *Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act* to serve the American Indian Consortium. In addition, if the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$14 million, the secretary of ED must set aside between 1.8 percent and 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to CAPs established under this program.

PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY OF INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS PROGRAM

Authorized under Section 509 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration,
U.S. Department of Education

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program is a mandatory component of the protection and advocacy (P&A) system, established in each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories, as well as in the P&A system that serves the American Indian consortium pursuant to Part C of the *Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act)*. The 57 PAIR programs provide information, advocacy, and legal representation to individuals with disabilities who are not eligible for other P&A programs serving persons with developmental disabilities and mental illness or whose issues do not pertain to programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. Of all the various P&A programs, the PAIR program has the broadest mandate and potentially represents the greatest number of individuals. Through the provision of information and the conduct of advocacy, PAIR programs help to ensure the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities under Federal and State law in a wide variety of areas, including employment, access to public accommodations, education, housing, and transportation. PAIR programs investigate, negotiate, or mediate solutions to problems expressed by individuals with disabilities. Grantees provide information and technical assistance to requesting individuals and organizations. PAIR programs also provide legal counsel and litigation services.

Before allotments are made to the individual grantees, a portion of the total appropriation must be set aside for each of the following two activities: (1) During any fiscal year in which the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$5.5 million, the secretary of ED must first set aside not less than 1.8 percent and not more than 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to eligible systems established under this program. (2) In any fiscal year in which the total appropriation exceeds \$10.5 million, the secretary must award \$50,000 to the eligible system established under the *DD Act* to serve the American Indian Consortium. The secretary then distributes the remainder of the appropriation to the eligible systems within the States on a population basis after satisfying minimum allocations of \$100,000 for States except for the territories of Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the Northern Marianas Islands, which receive \$50,000 each.

Each year, PAIR programs must develop a statement of objectives and priorities, with public comment, including a rationale for the selection of the objectives and priorities and a plan for achieving them. These objectives and priorities define the issues that PAIR will address during the year, whether through individual or systemic advocacy.

According to data reported in the FY 2014 Protection & Advocacy of Individual Rights Program Performance Report (RSA-509), PAIR programs reported representing 12,904 individuals and responded to 43,196 requests for information or referral during FY 2014. Of the cases the PAIR programs handled that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved government benefits and services (19 percent), education (17 percent),

employment (13 percent), health care (13 percent), and housing (12 percent). Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities, using negotiations and class action litigation. In FY 2014, 53 of the 57 PAIR programs (93 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities.

Examples of PAIR activities in FY 2014 include the following:

- Disability Law Center of Massachusetts assisted a 15-year-old student who is deaf and immigrated to the United States the previous year. At the time, the school district placed him in a classroom with students who could hear and with a teacher who did not know American Sign Language (ASL). The school administrators provided only general services under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*, despite that the student did not have any language skills. Several months later, after being contacted by the student's parents, the P&A coordinated a meeting with school representatives and an in-house expert from a neighboring children's hospital to develop a more specialized Individualized Education Program (IEP). The P&A also advocated for a different educational placement that would allow the student to learn ASL. As a result of these advocacy efforts, the student was enrolled at a new school that teaches ASL and has been reported to be thriving socially in the new learning environment with other students in the classroom who are also deaf.
- Disability Rights California provided assistance to a 20-year-old man with multiple disabilities, including an acquired brain injury that significantly limits his independence in activities of daily living. Because his brain injury manifested shortly after he turned 18, he was found not eligible for supported living and other services that are available through the State Medicaid program for persons with developmental disabilities. The P&A reviewed the case and discovered that the individual had spent years in a series of inappropriate restrictive and sometimes abusive living situations, including a State hospital stay where he was restrained for almost three weeks. The P&A filed several Medicaid fair hearings with the State and negotiated with the State's health office on the individual's behalf. As a result of these legal and advocacy efforts, the P&A secured a unique Medicaid waiver placement that allows the individual to live in his home near his family with supportive services that he needs to maintain his highest possible level of independence. This one case of direct representation will have a systemic impact for others in similar situations in California.
- The Arizona Disability Law Center assisted a 58-year-old woman with a visual impairment who requested accommodations for her computer after her State agency employer updated the computer system. Her requests were not successful, and she was not able to meet work deadlines. She subsequently filed a complaint of discrimination with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and used the services of the P&A for legal representation during

mediation and for guidance on a settlement offer. Consequently, the parties reached an agreement that the employer provide the individual with effective assistive technology, training in its use, and ongoing work-site evaluations. The State agency was also required to provide training on disability awareness to all personnel within the individual's unit.

- Disability Rights New Jersey assisted a 48-year-old man with traumatic brain injury who was living in a nursing facility. The individual's mother alleged that the facility provided deficient care for her son and would not recognize her as the legal health care agent so that she could make improvements to his quality of care. The P&A investigated and filed a complaint with the State health agency, which found that there was a deficient practice. As a result, the nursing facility will be monitored until it can demonstrate compliance with State guidelines on standards of care. In addition, the individual successfully transferred to a community brain injury rehabilitation home, and both he and his mother are pleased with the quality of care being provided by the new facility.

In the FY 2015 Protection & Advocacy of Individual Rights Program Performance Report (RSA-509), PAIR programs reported representing 12,418 individuals and responded to 37,973 requests for information or referral. Of the cases handled by PAIR programs that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved education (16 percent), government benefits and services (14 percent), health care (12 percent), employment (12 percent), and housing (11 percent). Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities through negotiation and class action litigation. In FY 2015, 53 out of the 57 PAIR programs (93 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities.

Examples of PAIR activities in FY 2015 include the following:

- Ohio Disability Rights Law and Policy Center (Disability Rights Ohio – DRO) assisted a military veteran who worked at and received services at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The veteran was devastated when the VA medical center banned her service dog from the premises due to a policy requiring the dog to be on a leash when entering the facility. At this time, the service dog was being trained and this interfered with the dog's training, so the client contacted DRO for assistance in helping her to find a solution so that she could return to work and resume therapy services.

A DRO attorney contacted the VA hospital multiple times in an attempt to work out a solution informally, but the VA refused to modify its leash policy or change its position toward the dog's return to the facility. With the help of co-counsel, DRO filed a complaint with the U.S. District Court, Southern District of Ohio. Under the pressure of this complaint, the VA eventually agreed to have the dog evaluated, which ultimately showed that he was not a threat when he was off leash.

Due to the assistance from DRO, the VA agreed to allow the client to return to the facility and to work with her dog. The VA also changed its policy to allow service animals in the facility.

- disAbility Law Center of Virginia (dLCV) assisted a client with a local Amtrak station that was inaccessible to him and other deaf or hard-of-hearing individuals. The client traveled to the Philadelphia area roundtrip at least six times a year. The station's lack of TTY telephones and captioning of its televisions or station announcements was discriminatory, and the client sought relief. In addition, the client reported that the train cars lacked captioned announcements, which meant that he needed to stay awake and alert during his travels so that he could see train station signs at every stop.

In response to the client's inquiry, dLCV staff surveyed the Staples Mill Amtrak Station, filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and demanded remedies. DOT investigated and issued a findings letter, requiring the Staples Mill station to provide captions on its TV displays, add an improved public information display system, address the TTY deficiency, ensure accessibility of its announcements, and expand training and education for its service personnel to assist individuals with vision and hearing disabilities appropriately. Amtrak is creating onboard information displays on intercity rail cars as well.

- A Disability Rights NC (North Carolina) class action lawsuit challenged the changes to the State's new Personal Care Services (PCS) under the State's Medicaid plan. The suit alleged that the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services violated the *ADA* and *Olmstead v. L.C. and E.W.* by increasing the eligibility criteria for in-home PCS while leaving the criteria for adult-care home personal care unchanged, thus forcing people into adult-care homes in order to receive any services at all.

In December 2011, a judge granted the plaintiffs' motion for a preliminary injunction, forcing the State to restore services to the recipients of in-home PCS. The State appealed, and in March 2013, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmed the injunction prohibiting the State from enforcing the new PCS policy. *Pashby v. Delia*, 709 F.3d 307 (4th Cir. 2013).

Services have been restored for nearly 5,500 class members as a result of the 2013 injunction. In FY 2015, more than 5,000 notices were sent to new class members, informing them that they should request restoration of their services.

Disability Rights NC subsequently reached a tentative settlement with the State achieving the goal of evenhanded administration of assessments to determine eligibility criteria for adult-care homes and in-home PCS.

- Utah Disability Law Center (DLC) received a report that a local Utah bank was physically inaccessible. It opened a project to conduct surveys of the location and at four other bank locations in Utah to determine if the inaccessibility was a more

prevalent issue. A number of significant violations were found at those sites. An *Americans with Disabilities Act* Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) violation notice and recommendations demand letter was sent to each branch manager and to the national corporation headquarters. In-house counsel for the bank's headquarters contacted the DLC attorney working on this project with a positive response and stated the bank would bring those facilities into compliance. The bank's property development team commenced plans for updates (some are significant due to issues with slope of cement ramps and property line concerns). By the end of FY 2015, four of the five banks had begun working with contractors to complete the necessary upgrades to ensure the buildings are accessible. The fifth bank had some additional difficulties, but in-house counsel informed the DLC that they were working through the building's management company to ensure necessary upgrades would be made as soon as possible.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

WIOA made no major changes to this program that would affect the information contained in this report now or in the future.

EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**Authorized under Section 501 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**

The Rehabilitation Act authorizes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to enforce the nondiscrimination and affirmative employment provisions of laws and regulations concerning the employment of individuals with disabilities. As part of its oversight responsibilities, the EEOC conducts on-site reviews of Federal agency affirmative action employment programs. Based on these reviews, the EEOC submits findings and recommendations for Federal agency implementation. The EEOC then monitors the implementation of these findings and recommendations by performing follow-up on-site reviews. For more information, visit <http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc>.

ARCHITECTURAL AND TRANSPORTATION BARRIERS COMPLIANCE BOARD

(Access Board)

Authorized under Section 502 and Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*

Section 502 of the *Rehabilitation Act* created the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, also known as the Access Board. Section 502 lays out the duties of the board under the *Architectural Barriers Act (ABA)*, which include ensuring compliance with standards issued under the *ABA*, developing and maintaining guidelines for complying with *ABA*, and promoting access throughout all segments of society. The Access Board also has the primary responsibility for developing and maintaining accessibility guidelines and providing technical assistance under the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* with respect to overcoming architectural, transportation and communication barriers. The Access Board

is responsible for developing and periodically updating guidelines under the *Telecommunications Act of 1996* that ensure access to various telecommunications telecommunication products.

The Access Board is structured to function as a coordinating body among Federal agencies and to directly represent the public, particularly people with disabilities. Half of its members are representatives from most of the Federal departments. The other half is comprised of members of the public appointed by the President, a majority of whom must have a disability. Key responsibilities of the Access Board include developing and maintaining accessibility requirements for the built environment, transit vehicles, telecommunications equipment, and electronic and information technology; providing technical assistance and training on these guidelines and standards; and enforcing accessibility standards for federally funded facilities.

The 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* expanded the Access Board's role and gave it responsibility for developing access standards for electronic and information technology under Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*. The description of the Access Board in Section 508 provides information regarding its expanded role and those standards. The Access Board provides training and technical assistance on all its guidelines and standards.

With its publications, hotline, and training sessions, the Access Board provides a range of services to private and public organizations. In addition, the board enforces accessibility provisions of *ABA*, *ADA*, and the *Telecommunications Act* through the investigation of complaints. The Access Board conducts its investigations through the responsible Federal agencies and strives for amicable resolution of complaints. For more information, visit <http://www.access-board.gov>.

ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Authorized under Section 508 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Activities Conducted by the Assistive Technology Team,
Office of the Chief Information Officer,
U.S. Department of Education**

Section 508 requires that when Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology they must ensure that the electronic and information technology allows Federal employees with disabilities to have access to and use of information and data that are comparable to the access to and use of information and data by Federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency. Section 508 also requires that individuals with disabilities who are members of the public seeking information or services from a Federal agency have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of information and data by members of the public who are not individuals with disabilities unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency. The intention is to eliminate barriers in accessing information technology, make new opportunities available for individuals with disabilities, and encourage

development of technologies that will help achieve a more accessible society. The 1998 amendments to the *Rehabilitation Act* significantly expanded and strengthened the technology access requirements in Section 508.

The Department's Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) plays a lead role in implementing Section 508 through such activities as product performance testing and the provision of technical assistance to government agencies and vendors on the implementation of the Section 508 standards. The OCIO Assistive Technology Team delivers assistive technology workshops, presentations, and demonstrations to other Federal agencies, to State and local education institutions, and at assistive technology and information technology industry seminars and conferences, and conducts numerous conformance tests of high-visibility e-government-sponsored websites.

The OCIO, in conjunction with the Access Board, the General Services Administration (GSA), and a number of other government agencies, also participates in the Interagency Section 508 Working Group, an effort coordinated by GSA and the Office of Management and Budget, to offer technical assistance and to provide an informal means of cooperation and information sharing on implementation of Section 508 throughout the Federal government. For more information, visit <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocio/ocio.html>.

EMPLOYMENT UNDER FEDERAL CONTRACTS

**Authorized under Section 503 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Managed by the Employment Standards Administration,
U.S. Department of Labor**

The DOL Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program (OFCCP) is responsible for ensuring that employers with Federal contracts or subcontracts in excess of \$10,000 take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities. OFCCP investigators conduct at least several thousand compliance reviews and investigate hundreds of complaints each year. OFCCP also issues policy guidance to private companies and develops innovative ways to gain compliance with the law. For more information, visit: <http://www.dol.gov/ofccp>.

NON-DISCRIMINATION IN PROGRAMS THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

**Authorized under Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
Enforced by the
Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice, and the
Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education**

Section 504 prohibits discrimination by recipients of Federal financial assistance on the basis of disability. This provision of the *Rehabilitation Act* is designed to protect the rights of any person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, and performing manual tasks.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division (CRD), has overall responsibility for coordinating Federal agencies' implementation and enforcement of Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

Through its Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the Department of Education enforces Section 504 with respect to State and local educational agencies and public and private elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools that receive Federal financial assistance from the Department. In addition, OCR and CRD both have enforcement responsibilities under the *ADA*. In the education context, OCR enforces *Title II* of the *ADA*, which prohibits disability discrimination by State and local government entities, including public elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools. CRD enforces *Title III* of the *ADA*, which prohibits disability discrimination by private entities in places of public accommodation, including private elementary, secondary, and postsecondary schools.

Examples of the types of discrimination prohibited by Section 504 and its implementing regulations include improperly denied access to educational programs and facilities, improper denials of a free appropriate public education for elementary and secondary students, and improper denials of academic adjustments and auxiliary aids and services to postsecondary students. Section 504, the *ADA*, and their implementing regulations also prohibit employment discrimination and retaliation for filing or participating in any manner in an OCR complaint or proceeding or for advocating for a right protected by these laws. For information on OCR, visit the website at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON DISABILITY

**Authorized under Section 400 of the *Rehabilitation Act*
An Independent Federal Agency**

As an independent agency, the National Council on Disability (NCD) promotes policies, programs, practices, and procedures that guarantee equal opportunity for all individuals with disabilities and that empower people with disabilities to achieve economic self-sufficiency, independent living, and inclusion and integration into all aspects of society. More specifically, NCD reviews and evaluates laws, policies, programs, practices, and procedures conducted or assisted by Federal departments or agencies to see if they meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. The council makes recommendations based on those evaluations to the president, the Congress, the secretary of ED, the RSA commissioner, the director of NIDILRR, and officials of Federal agencies.

REFERENCES

- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration (2014–15), *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended.
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- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113), FYs 2014 and 2015
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- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Report of Randolph Sheppard Vending Facility Program (Form RSA-15), FYs 2014 and 2015
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Annual Performance Report for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, FYs 2006 through 2015
- U.S. Department of Education, G5 grant management system, FYs 2014–15.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration Supported Employment State Grants.
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/rsasupemp>

APPENDIX A

Table A-1. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Arkansas	22	76.09	83.99	100.00	0.629	29.50	5	3
Connecticut	3	82.25	90.31	100.00	0.613	17.07	5	3
Delaware	-18	82.54	88.46	97.83	0.514	32.61	4	2
Florida	-19	55.62	97.17	100.00	0.645	40.85	4	3
Idaho	15	71.54	95.45	97.62	0.761	18.45	5	3
Iowa	2	74.09	86.89	100.00	0.800	33.33	6	3

^a Minimum performance-level criteria for each standard and indicator were established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^b Separate agencies in 24 States provided specialized services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

^c To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero. Thus, seven of the 24 agencies for individuals who are blind or visually impaired did not pass the indicator.

^d Percentage who have received employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^e Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP, also known as the Vending Facility Program) with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^f Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR over an extended period of time.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15

Table A-1. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)

State Agency	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Kentucky	-94	76.83	90.00	100.00	0.643	30.97	5	3
Maine	0	69.23	36.44	100.00	0.800	46.34	6	3
Massachusetts	12	66.41	60.15	100.00	0.718	24.84	4	3
Michigan	9	42.19	79.22	96.58	0.682	50.95	5	3
Minnesota	35	61.30	94.93	99.51	0.662	32.04	5	3
Missouri	1	72.62	90.76	97.15	0.678	30.14	5	3
Nebraska	9	54.55	93.86	100.00	0.844	28.97	4	3
New Jersey	47	70.15	94.76	91.02	0.514	34.72	5	2
New Mexico	-9	29.71	100.00	100.00	0.940	46.34	4	3
New York	47	72.01	83.49	97.93	0.606	36.67	6	3
North Carolina	-2	72.86	97.50	63.59	0.559	35.81	3	1
Oregon	-22	78.02	62.68	100.00	0.974	44.94	5	3
South Carolina	-101	60.06	79.40	100.00	0.615	35.31	4	3
South Dakota	1	75.63	97.11	95.32	0.658	36.17	6	3
Texas	8	70.46	92.17	92.20	0.563	37.28	5	2
Vermont	6	78.69	67.36	100.00	0.815	26.80	5	3
Virginia	-9	61.65	90.70	99.04	0.677	44.87	4	3
Washington	46	56.12	96.47	99.00	0.744	37.87	5	3

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Arkansas	39	76.70	83.74	100.00	0.612	32.54	6	3
Connecticut	2	74.84	86.03	100.00	0.670	22.34	5	3
Delaware	4	81.16	89.29	100.00	0.601	32.00	6	3
Florida	81	58.95	96.45	100.00	0.651	43.36	5	3
Idaho	5	74.49	93.92	98.82	0.769	15.29	5	3
Iowa	2	73.71	85.41	100.00	0.812	32.91	6	3
Kentucky	-54	82.13	85.97	100.00	0.650	33.26	5	3
Maine	-20	69.97	36.59	100.00	0.761	44.00	5	3
Massachusetts	5	63.49	61.67	100.00	0.764	26.46	4	3

^a Minimum performance-level criteria for each standard and indicator were established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^b Separate agencies in 24 States provided specialized services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

^c To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero. Thus, seven of the 24 agencies for individuals who are blind or visually impaired did not pass the indicator.

^d Percentage who have received employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^e Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP, also known as the Vending Facility Program) with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^f Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR over an extended period of time.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5) ^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Michigan	4	41.18	70.83	98.74	0.702	52.52	5	3
Minnesota	42	66.24	91.12	99.58	0.726	35.59	5	3
Missouri	2	72.21	88.21	98.12	0.694	36.33	6	3
Nebraska	8	53.28	92.62	100.00	0.813	38.05	5	3
New Jersey	16	68.90	94.58	91.23	0.526	31.20	5	2
New Mexico	5	33.33	100.00	100.00	0.955	56.52	5	3
New York	33	74.86	84.19	99.34	0.616	34.25	6	3
North Carolina	-143	72.30	98.20	61.27	0.536	35.45	3	1
Oregon	66	75.36	44.23	100.00	0.873	45.65	6	3
South Carolina	-110	53.66	80.20	100.00	0.643	34.47	4	3
South Dakota	2	74.62	97.95	91.21	0.662	38.49	6	3
Texas	254	75.20	87.39	91.86	0.541	39.27	5	2
Vermont	20	72.89	65.85	99.07	0.787	30.56	6	3
Virginia	5	59.25	91.12	99.69	0.650	51.57	5	3
Washington	53	55.73	95.07	100.00	0.741	41.79	5	3

Table A-3. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Alabama	8	69.08	93.54	75.92	0.496	80.53	5	2
Alaska	2	62.42	98.84	94.30	0.563	65.10	6	3
American Samoa	-14	95.00	57.89	63.64	N/A	81.82	4	2
Arizona	74	49.33	99.51	99.67	0.487	69.87	4	2
Arkansas	127	65.79	98.55	97.93	0.613	53.37	6	3
California	203	58.13	89.51	99.50	0.420	67.64	5	2
Colorado	-1,253	43.59	91.55	95.19	0.471	69.49	3	2
Connecticut	64	61.44	100.00	95.52	0.585	39.02	5	3
Delaware	16	65.50	100.00	93.98	0.404	64.91	5	2
District of Columbia	23	58.08	95.96	91.90	0.295	70.83	5	2

^a Minimum performance-level criteria for each standard and indicator were established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^b Separate agencies in 24 States provided specialized services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

^c To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero. Thus, seven of the 24 agencies for individuals who are blind or visually impaired did not pass the indicator.

^d Percentage who have received employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^e Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP, also known as the Vending Facility Program) with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^f Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR over an extended period of time.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15

Table A-3. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Florida	418	29.89	99.24	97.47	0.507	66.17	4	2
Georgia	-2,033	64.75	92.27	94.71	0.452	76.56	4	2
Guam	5	60.87	89.29	96.00	N/A	80.00	6	3
Hawaii	-61	29.95	95.06	99.20	0.554	58.80	4	3
Idaho	151	58.23	98.08	98.51	0.622	61.80	6	3
Illinois	-25	51.77	87.04	100.00	0.419	55.96	3	2
Indiana	-275	59.50	96.98	85.11	0.583	49.80	4	3
Iowa	20	59.66	98.78	97.57	0.587	61.43	6	3
Kansas	-213	40.55	87.35	95.17	0.496	58.70	3	2
Kentucky	283	53.76	99.47	100.00	0.619	59.15	5	3
Louisiana	54	68.99	99.26	99.52	0.540	72.62	6	3
Maine	89	56.39	100.00	83.76	0.641	53.66	6	3
Maryland	12	59.09	92.81	100.00	0.400	67.61	5	2
Massachusetts	94	59.81	96.88	99.61	0.416	59.42	5	2
Michigan	-63	55.99	97.22	83.74	0.529	69.27	5	3
Minnesota	131	61.43	99.86	100.00	0.445	66.60	5	2
Mississippi	0	73.43	97.99	79.85	0.657	61.49	6	3
Missouri	363	61.74	97.03	96.85	0.490	68.53	5	2
Montana	-36	42.22	97.67	84.17	0.633	53.81	4	3
Nebraska	127	66.32	92.80	66.88	0.549	60.51	6	3

Table A-3. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Nevada	189	56.24	94.99	92.82	0.553	67.79	6	3
New Hampshire	-70	57.78	95.88	95.42	0.539	57.02	5	3
New Jersey	371	64.43	99.09	97.09	0.423	71.97	5	2
New Mexico	28	40.92	96.61	90.84	0.585	55.39	5	3
New York	34	58.58	96.95	98.58	0.354	59.64	5	2
North Carolina	-413	58.06	96.83	81.19	0.443	63.54	4	2
North Dakota	-37	62.94	99.49	93.37	0.545	64.29	5	3
Northern Mariana Islands	1	58.73	64.86	50.00	N/A	16.67	3	1
Ohio	866	43.01	93.17	100.00	0.464	68.22	4	2
Oklahoma	-41	54.86	95.91	94.03	0.530	81.61	4	3
Oregon	63	62.44	95.96	99.43	0.551	55.66	6	3
Pennsylvania	-1,404	56.14	97.05	100.00	0.512	52.11	3	2
Puerto Rico	36	66.16	98.73	89.25	0.691	92.76	6	3
Rhode Island	5	59.61	99.34	100.00	0.487	64.40	5	2
South Carolina	1,141	56.08	98.53	91.70	0.546	69.97	6	3
South Dakota	1	70.25	96.29	99.16	0.526	63.25	6	3
Tennessee	193	58.13	91.43	96.40	0.459	56.89	5	2
Texas	850	66.26	99.32	86.33	0.482	52.82	4	2
Utah	34	52.38	94.24	98.34	0.566	65.40	5	3
Vermont	52	57.90	93.91	99.60	0.574	52.13	5	3

Table A-3. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2014, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Virginia	946	61.77	94.69	99.90	0.389	58.71	5	2
Virgin Islands	7	70.97	79.55	100.00	0.631	54.29	6	3
Washington	75	62.15	96.88	98.17	0.456	54.19	5	2
West Virginia	-1,242	68.11	99.77	85.21	0.656	43.40	4	3
Wisconsin	575	60.94	100.00	99.77	0.551	65.23	6	3
Wyoming	17	60.08	100.00	88.39	0.561	61.26	6	3

Table A-4. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Alabama	6	65.87	94.02	88.01	0.499	81.79	5	2
Alaska	-27	59.14	97.74	93.07	0.558	53.64	5	3
American Samoa	6	96.15	68.00	82.35	N/A	29.41	3	1
Arizona	115	51.09	97.83	99.69	0.494	67.10	4	2
Arkansas	33	72.40	98.12	97.95	0.595	56.81	6	3
California	974	49.86	86.91	99.68	0.426	68.20	4	2
Colorado	-18	58.68	95.37	98.51	0.443	56.41	4	2
Connecticut	53	62.37	98.77	96.60	0.589	38.97	5	3
Delaware	92	53.10	94.99	94.26	0.415	60.22	4	2

^a Minimum performance-level criteria for each standard and indicator were established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^b Separate agencies in 24 States provided specialized services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

^c To pass this indicator, the number of individuals exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program securing employment during the current performance period must be at least the same as the number of individuals exiting the VR program employed during the previous performance period and, hence, comparison of the two elements must yield a number greater than or equal to zero. Thus, 15 of the 24 agencies for individuals who are blind or visually impaired did not pass the indicator.

^d Percentage who have received employment outcomes after provision of VR services.

^e Percentage of employed individuals that exit the VR program and are placed in an integrated setting, self-employment, or Business Enterprise Program (BEP, also known as the Vending Facility Program) with earnings equivalent to at least the minimum wage.

^f Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple VR over an extended period of time.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15

Table A-4. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
District of Columbia	27	28.99	91.04	92.62	0.335	67.70	4	2
Florida	-2,177	37.35	98.23	99.15	0.508	65.24	3	2
Georgia	1,308	66.20	97.61	87.99	0.436	76.23	5	2
Guam	1	65.91	96.55	92.86	N/A	53.57	6	3
Hawaii	2	44.46	95.47	99.60	0.544	80.24	5	3
Idaho	208	56.60	98.72	89.76	0.636	55.05	6	3
Illinois	437	50.40	88.06	100.00	0.400	58.21	4	2
Indiana	-274	58.59	97.39	85.64	0.579	47.62	4	3
Iowa	116	57.35	98.79	98.74	0.560	61.32	6	3
Kansas	-151	42.77	92.03	96.93	0.488	59.87	3	2
Kentucky	541	60.47	99.27	100.00	0.690	49.12	5	3
Louisiana	58	64.00	97.74	99.78	0.536	72.01	6	3
Maine	122	58.02	100.00	79.51	0.669	53.80	6	3
Maryland	14	59.65	90.11	100.00	0.402	69.12	5	2
Massachusetts	45	49.05	98.42	99.22	0.409	59.40	4	2
Michigan	35	57.94	89.27	83.03	0.563	70.03	6	3
Minnesota	235	61.86	99.45	100.00	0.450	64.30	5	2
Mississippi	38	61.13	97.83	82.07	0.669	62.13	6	3
Missouri	189	60.99	99.25	97.00	0.484	63.06	5	2
Montana	-131	37.48	97.53	87.34	0.611	50.35	3	3

Table A-4. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Nebraska	154	66.50	99.40	71.37	0.544	59.54	6	3
Nevada	-52	53.63	94.58	91.89	0.551	66.71	4	3
New Hampshire	-50	40.94	96.45	96.42	0.519	43.48	2	2
New Jersey	-582	62.67	95.76	100.00	0.412	75.08	4	2
New Mexico	10	38.53	97.56	92.36	0.574	49.93	4	3
New York	-775	59.40	97.64	98.91	0.357	57.85	4	2
North Carolina	7	55.07	96.91	83.70	0.428	66.53	4	2
North Dakota	137	71.37	99.44	90.91	0.527	58.52	6	3
Northern Mariana Islands	-15	56.41	68.18	66.67	N/A	13.33	3	2
Ohio	982	46.20	95.09	97.69	0.464	57.57	4	2
Oklahoma	99	49.52	95.74	91.64	0.542	81.78	5	3
Oregon	347	65.13	97.28	99.70	0.536	52.74	5	3
Pennsylvania	233	58.23	98.78	99.99	0.500	49.33	4	2
Puerto Rico	-119	64.85	97.76	86.83	0.720	94.37	5	3
Rhode Island	36	69.10	99.69	100.00	0.500	64.17	5	2
South Carolina	129	60.29	98.87	94.95	0.539	68.63	6	3
South Dakota	-93	68.54	100.00	99.35	0.530	58.52	5	3
Tennessee	199	53.97	93.04	97.17	0.457	55.33	4	2
Texas	105	65.79	99.64	88.04	0.493	54.61	5	2
Utah	-197	58.85	95.55	94.32	0.567	67.45	5	3

Table A-4. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Indicator and State: Fiscal Year 2015, *continued*

Must Pass at Least Four of Six Indicators and Two of Three Primary Indicators (1.3, 1.4, 1.5)^a

State Agency ^b	Indicator 1.1: Change in Total Employment Outcomes ^c (> 0)	Indicator 1.2: Percentage of Employment Outcomes after Services ^d (> 68.9%)	Indicator 1.3: Percentage of Employment Outcomes for Individuals Who Achieved Competitive Employment ^e (> 35.4%)	Indicator 1.4: Percentage of Competitive Employment Outcomes Achieved by Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^f (> 89.0%)	Indicator 1.5: Ratio of Average Vocational Rehabilitation Wage to Average State Wage (> .59)	Indicator 1.6: Difference Between Self- Support at Application and Closure (> 30.4)	Number of Indicators in Standard 1 That Were Passed	Number of Primary Indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 That Were Passed
<i>Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.</i>								
Vermont	49	51.68	96.72	99.68	0.570	46.53	4	3
Virginia	-55	57.32	95.71	100.00	0.395	59.45	4	2
Virgin Islands	4	64.86	83.33	100.00	0.740	40.00	5	3
Washington	311	66.04	92.38	97.93	0.466	60.45	5	2
West Virginia	-499	57.98	99.81	86.67	0.628	52.01	4	3
Wisconsin	460	58.60	100.00	99.88	0.538	65.52	6	3
Wyoming	-53	58.74	95.02	87.60	0.552	62.80	5	3

Table A-5. Evaluation Standard 2: Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2014

State Agency ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Arkansas	0.905	163
Connecticut	0.839	39*
Delaware	0.585	34*
Florida	0.908	840
Idaho	1.108	12*
Iowa	0.558	23*
Kentucky	1.161	55*
Maine	0.651	6*
Massachusetts	0.950	138
Michigan	0.937	219
Minnesota	0.675	79*
Missouri	0.844	150
Nebraska	1.014	27*
New Jersey	0.868	343
New Mexico	0.738	66*
New York	0.834	565
North Carolina	0.880	503
Oregon	0.896	33*
South Carolina	0.912	273
South Dakota	0.771	33*
Texas	1.040	1811
Vermont	1.182	26*
Virginia	0.927	209
Washington	0.842	146

^a Separate agencies in 24 States providing specialized services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

^b Minority service rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance-level criterion for this standard and indicator (as shown in parenthesis) was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^c Total number of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15.

Table A-6. Evaluation Standard 2: Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2015

State Agency ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Arkansas	1.027	195
Connecticut	0.915	79
Delaware	1.100	40
Florida	0.928	890
Idaho	1.149	12
Iowa	0.992	28
Kentucky	1.018	89
Maine	0.583	8
Massachusetts	1.033	124
Michigan	0.880	265
Minnesota	0.876	95
Missouri	0.869	136
Nebraska	0.847	29
New Jersey	1.051	349
New Mexico	0.940	50
New York	0.891	495
North Carolina	0.882	454
Oregon	0.958	62
South Carolina	0.893	232
South Dakota	0.885	43
Texas	0.931	1868
Vermont	0.929	7
Virginia	0.821	309
Washington	0.971	130

^a Separate agencies in 24 States providing specialized services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

^b Minority service rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance-level criterion for this standard and indicator (as shown in parenthesis) was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^c Total number of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15.

Table A-7. Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies—General and Combined, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2014

State Agency— General and Combined ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Alabama	0.953	4,472
Alaska	0.944	672
American Samoa	0.000	38*
Arizona	0.895	2,002
Arkansas	0.879	2,682
California	1.006	19,339
Colorado	0.962	2,247
Connecticut	0.819	1,333
Delaware	0.968	1,306
District of Columbia	0.802	2,809
Florida	0.989	14,870
Georgia	0.901	4,116
Guam	0.586	126
Hawaii	0.918	1,087
Idaho	0.754	657
Illinois	0.925	6,378
Indiana	0.872	2,636
Iowa	0.843	817
Kansas	0.829	2,104
Kentucky	0.880	2,157
Louisiana	0.890	3,349
Maine	0.767	214
Maryland	0.842	4,541
Massachusetts	0.921	2,920
Michigan	0.871	6,620

^a General agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness and other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals with disabilities including individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

^b Minority service rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance-level criterion for this standard and indicator (as shown in parenthesis) was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^c Total number of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15.

Table A-7. Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies—General and Combined, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2014, continued

State Agency— General and Combined ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Minnesota	0.852	1,761
Mississippi	0.872	4,481
Missouri	0.932	4,175
Montana	0.887	641
Nebraska	0.845	1,138
Nevada	0.901	1,222
New Hampshire	0.848	172
New Jersey	0.867	7,160
New Mexico	0.963	2,118
New York	0.852	15,529
North Carolina	0.970	10,926
North Dakota	0.771	297
Northern Mariana Islands	0.782	117
Ohio	0.884	7,455
Oklahoma	0.930	2,965
Oregon	0.952	1,454
Pennsylvania	0.840	5,830
Puerto Rico	1.280	7,232
Rhode Island	0.799	888
South Carolina	0.984	9,436
South Dakota	0.846	507
Tennessee	0.928	3,425
Texas	0.956	17,613
Utah	0.891	2,328
Vermont	0.966	353
Virginia	0.933	4,548
Virgin Islands	0.691	99*
Washington	0.879	2,845
West Virginia	0.845	506
Wisconsin	0.729	4,487
Wyoming	0.847	302

Table A-8. Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies—General and Combined, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2015

State Agency— General and Combined ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Alabama	0.998	4,624
Alaska	0.884	708
American Samoa	1.000	52
Arizona	0.871	2,377
Arkansas	0.912	2,540
California	1.011	23,102
Colorado	0.938	2,511
Connecticut	0.846	1,333
Delaware	0.995	1,596
District of Columbia	1.048	3,767
Florida	0.987	12,597
Georgia	0.766	4,891
Guam	0.484	129
Hawaii	0.910	1,017
Idaho	0.801	886
Illinois	0.946	6,723
Indiana	0.899	2,511
Iowa	0.840	923
Kansas	0.920	1,648
Kentucky	0.876	2,286
Louisiana	0.954	3,683
Maine	0.766	250
Maryland	0.895	4,504
Massachusetts	0.936	3,288
Michigan	0.836	6,550
Minnesota	0.846	1,909
Mississippi	0.871	5,015

^a General agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness and other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals with disabilities including individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

^b Minority service rate ratio is the ratio of the percentage of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program who received services to the percentage of nonminorities exiting the program who received services. Minimum performance-level criterion for this standard and indicator (as shown in parenthesis) was established by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and published in the *Federal Register* on June 5, 2000 (34 CFR part 361).

^c Total number of individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the VR program during the performance period.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15.

Table A-8. Equal Access to Service for Individuals from Minority Backgrounds Reported by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies—General and Combined, by Minority Service Rate Ratio and State: Fiscal Year 2015, continued

State Agency— General and Combined ^a	Indicator 2.1: Service Rate Ratio for Individuals from a Minority Background ($\geq .80$) ^b	Individuals from a Minority Background Exiting the Vocational Rehabilitation Program ^c <i>*Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.</i>
Missouri	0.925	4,214
Montana	0.882	616
Nebraska	0.875	1,222
Nevada	0.958	1,259
New Hampshire	0.902	222
New Jersey	0.873	6,602
New Mexico	0.899	2,282
New York	0.819	15,583
North Carolina	0.968	12,224
North Dakota	0.717	273
Northern Mariana Islands	1.091	77
Ohio	0.884	7,147
Oklahoma	0.942	3,310
Oregon	0.933	1,565
Pennsylvania	0.858	5,902
Puerto Rico	1.166	7,785
Rhode Island	0.836	704
South Carolina	1.017	8,734
South Dakota	0.863	551
Tennessee	1.068	3,307
Texas	0.934	18,772
Utah	0.936	2,083
Vermont	1.056	318
Virginia	0.988	4,509
Virgin Islands	0.818	97
Washington	0.928	3,041
West Virginia	0.883	588
Wisconsin	0.775	4,717
Wyoming	0.861	301

APPENDIX B

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
U.S. Total	2015	3,052,453,598	186,234	176,251	94.64
	2014	3,027,104,000	183,432	172,010	93.77
		0.84	1.53	2.47	
Total—General and Combined Agencies^d	2015	2,817,173,739	179,792	169,959	94.53
	2014	2,791,402,811	177,143	166,300	93.88
		0.92	1.50	2.20	
Total—Agencies for the Blind^e	2015	235,279,859	6,442	6,292	97.67
	2014	235,701,189	6,289	5,710	90.79
		-0.18	2.43	10.19	
General/Combined Agencies					
Alabama	2015	59,918,424	4,602	4,048	87.96
	2014	59,629,565	4,596	3,506	76.28
		0.48	0.13	15.46	
Alaska	2015	10,174,845	576	537	93.23
	2014	10,090,347	603	569	94.36
		0.84	-4.48	-5.62	
American Samoa	2015	921,580	25	17	68.00
	2014	921,342	19	10	52.63
		0.03	31.58	70.00	

^a Total number of individuals with disabilities exiting the vocation rehabilitation program securing employment during the current performance period.

^b Significant disabilities are severe physical or mental impairments caused by certain conditions that seriously limit one or more functional capacities and require multiple vocation rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

^c Percentage = Employment outcomes of individuals with significant disabilities divided by total employment outcomes.

^d General agencies serve persons with various disabilities other than blindness and other visual impairments. Combined agencies serve all individuals with disabilities including individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

^e Separate agencies in 24 States providing specialized services to blind and visually impaired persons.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2014–15; Federal Financial Report (SF-425), FYs 2014–15.

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Arizona	2015	65,074,283	1,339	1,335	99.70
	2014	64,197,308	1,224	1,220	99.67
		1.37	9.40	9.43	
Arkansas	2015	32,548,852	3,077	3,013	97.92
	2014	32,363,485	3,044	2,982	97.96
		0.57	1.08	1.04	
California	2015	301,569,474	13,416	13,375	99.69
	2014	298,623,867	12,442	12,383	99.53
		0.99	7.83	8.01	
Colorado	2015	41,576,303	1,686	1,661	98.52
	2014	40,918,495	1,704	1,615	94.78
		1.61	-1.06	2.85	
Connecticut	2015	17,758,059	1,460	1,411	96.64
	2014	17,686,451	1,407	1,344	95.52
		0.40	3.77	4.99	
Delaware	2015	8,750,367	1,138	1,074	94.38
	2014	8,576,795	1,046	983	93.98
		2.02	8.80	9.26	
District of Columbia	2015	13,788,513	670	625	93.28
	2014	13,568,137	643	591	91.91
		1.62	4.20	5.75	
Florida	2015	144,117,852	5,034	4,990	99.13
	2014	142,142,422	7,211	7,030	97.49
		1.39	-30.19	-29.02	
Georgia	2015	104,461,323	2926	2,579	88.14
	2014	103,487,366	1,618	1,529	94.50
		0.94	80.84	68.67	
Guam	2015	2,836,152	29	27	93.10
	2014	2,820,811	28	27	96.43
		0.54	3.57	0.00	
Hawaii	2015	11,555,208	265	264	99.62
	2014	11,436,746	263	261	99.24
		1.04	0.76	1.15	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Idaho	2015	15,747,967	2,186	1,963	89.80
	2014	15,559,926	1,978	1,949	98.53
		1.21	10.52	0.72	
Illinois	2015	109,582,291	5,923	5,923	100.00
	2014	109,170,805	5,486	5,486	100.00
		0.38	7.97	7.97	
Indiana	2015	74,769,663	4,103	3,528	85.99
	2014	74,235,848	4,377	3,742	85.49
		0.72	-6.26	-5.72	
Iowa	2015	25,533,106	2,321	2,290	98.66
	2014	25,355,920	2,205	2,152	97.60
		0.70	5.26	6.41	
Kansas	2015	27,907,803	1,343	1,304	97.10
	2014	27,757,480	1,494	1,429	95.65
		0.54	-10.11	-8.75	
Kentucky	2015	47,391,184	4,498	4,498	100.00
	2014	47,125,958	3,957	3,957	100.00
		0.56	13.67	13.67	
Louisiana	2015	53,471,877	2,347	2,342	99.79
	2014	53,132,592	2,289	2,278	99.52
		0.64	2.53	2.81	
Maine	2015	12,414,046	1,132	900	79.51
	2014	12,382,060	1,010	846	83.76
		0.26	12.08	6.38	
Maryland	2015	39,892,974	2,559	2,559	100.00
	2014	39,553,773	2,545	2,545	100.00
		0.86	0.55	0.55	
Massachusetts	2015	39,670,885	3,789	3,760	99.23
	2014	39,393,629	3,744	3,730	99.63
		0.70	1.20	0.80	
Michigan	2015	93,426,963	6,653	5,611	84.34
	2014	93,023,198	6,618	5,568	84.13
		0.43	0.53	0.77	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Minnesota	2015	38,695,418	3,104	3,104	100.00
	2014	38,359,844	2,869	2,869	100.00
		0.87	8.19	8.19	
Mississippi	2015	41,636,766	4,607	3,788	82.22
	2014	41,450,629	4,569	3,654	79.97
		0.45	0.83	3.67	
Missouri	2015	56,827,495	5,063	4,910	96.98
	2014	56,493,391	4,874	4,724	96.92
		0.59	3.88	3.94	
Montana	2015	11,405,873	729	638	87.52
	2014	11,283,726	860	727	84.53
		1.08	-15.23	-12.24	
Nebraska	2015	15,148,030	2,168	1,550	71.49
	2014	15,023,565	2,014	1,368	67.92
		0.83	7.65	13.30	
Nevada	2015	24,188,896	886	816	92.10
	2014	23,842,499	938	873	93.07
		1.45	-5.54	-6.53	
New Hampshire	2015	11,099,461	1,042	1,005	96.45
	2014	11,048,254	1,092	1,044	95.60
		0.46	-4.58	-3.74	
New Jersey	2015	46,066,991	3,818	3,818	100.00
	2014	45,804,165	4,400	4,272	97.09
		0.57	-13.23	-10.63	
New Mexico	2015	19,597,006	778	720	92.54
	2014	19,531,558	768	700	91.15
		0.34	1.30	2.86	
New York	2015	118,851,132	11,284	11,146	98.78
	2014	118,174,139	12,059	11,882	98.53
		0.57	-6.43	-6.19	
North Carolina	2015	91,459,551	6,317	5,305	83.98
	2014	87,829,581	6,310	5,141	81.47
		4.13	0.11	3.19	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
North Dakota	2015	10,174,845	531	483	90.96
	2014	10,090,347	394	368	93.40
		0.84	34.77	31.25	
Northern Marianas	2015	800,202	22	15	68.18
	2014	800,134	37	22	59.46
		0.01	-40.54	-31.82	
Ohio	2015	128,337,515	5,562	5,440	97.81
	2014	127,715,538	4,580	4,580	100.00
		0.49	21.44	18.78	
Oklahoma	2015	42,579,635	2,299	2,115	92.00
	2014	42,152,656	2,200	2,072	94.18
		1.01	4.50	2.08	
Oregon	2015	34,435,454	2,723	2,715	99.71
	2014	34,099,915	2,376	2,363	99.45
		0.98	14.60	14.90	
Pennsylvania	2015	126,288,054	8,779	8,778	99.99
	2014	125,831,214	8,546	8,546	100.00
		0.36	2.73	2.71	
Puerto Rico	2015	69,178,100	2,943	2,558	86.92
	2014	69,639,720	3,062	2,736	89.35
		-0.66	-3.89	-6.51	
Rhode Island	2015	10,174,845	644	644	100.00
	2014	10,090,347	608	608	100.00
		0.84	5.92	5.92	
South Carolina	2015	49,644,374	6,706	6,368	94.96
	2014	49,074,941	6,577	6,033	91.73
		1.16	1.96	5.55	
South Dakota	2015	8,139,876	769	764	99.35
	2014	8,072,278	862	855	99.19
		0.84	-10.79	-10.64	
Tennessee	2015	72,800,670	2,358	2,296	97.37
	2014	72,233,683	2,159	2,088	96.71
		0.78	9.22	9.96	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Texas	2015	193,482,551	13,241	11,659	88.05
	2014	190,494,856	13,136	11,340	86.33
		1.57	0.80	2.81	
Utah	2015	31,690,616	3,502	3,306	94.40
	2014	31,164,182	3,699	3,638	98.35
		1.69	-5.33	-9.13	
Vermont	2015	8,953,864	1,922	1,916	99.69
	2014	8,879,505	1,873	1,865	99.57
		0.84	2.62	2.73	
Virgin Islands	2015	1,985,438	48	48	100.00
	2014	1,986,289	44	44	100.00
		-0.04	9.09	9.09	
Virginia	2015	57,165,260	4,032	4,032	100.00
	2014	56,599,711	4,087	4,083	99.90
		1.00	-1.35	-1.25	
Washington	2015	46,529,202	3,191	3,127	97.99
	2014	45,967,372	2,880	2,829	98.23
		1.22	10.80	10.53	
West Virginia	2015	25,432,131	2,090	1,812	86.70
	2014	25,366,252	2,589	2,207	85.25
		0.26	-19.27	-17.90	
Wisconsin	2015	59,369,649	4,875	4,869	99.88
	2014	59,057,847	4,415	4,405	99.77
		0.53	10.42	10.53	
Wyoming	2015	10,174,845	662	580	87.61
	2014	10,090,347	715	632	88.39
		0.84	-7.41	-8.23	
Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired					
Arkansas	2015	4,438,480	366	366	100.00
	2014	4,413,203	335	335	100.00
		0.57	9.25	9.25	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Connecticut	2015	3,133,775	115	115	100.00
	2014	3,121,139	114	114	100.00
		0.40	0.88	0.88	
Delaware	2015	1,424,478	29	29	100.00
	2014	1,513,552	27	27	100.00
		-5.89	7.41	7.41	
Florida	2015	29,518,114	771	771	100.00
	2014	29,113,508	721	721	100.00
		1.39	6.93	6.93	
Idaho	2015	2,457,775	85	85	100.00
	2014	2,428,428	96	94	97.92
		1.21	-11.46	-9.57	
Iowa	2015	5,989,247	101	101	100.00
	2014	5,947,685	84	84	100.00
		0.70	20.24	20.24	
Kentucky	2015	7,714,844	282	282	100.00
	2014	7,671,668	274	274	100.00
		0.56	2.92	2.92	
Maine	2015	2,817,912	89	89	100.00
	2014	2,810,652	116	116	100.00
		0.26	-23.28	-23.28	
Massachusetts	2015	7,000,745	265	265	100.00
	2014	6,951,817	262	262	100.00
		0.70	1.15	1.15	
Michigan	2015	16,487,111	182	180	98.90
	2014	16,415,858	154	152	98.70
		0.43	18.18	18.42	
Minnesota	2015	8,494,116	143	143	100.00
	2014	8,420,453	116	115	99.14
		0.87	23.28	24.35	
Missouri	2015	8,491,465	272	266	97.79
	2014	8,441,541	271	267	98.52
		0.59	0.37	-0.37	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Nebraska	2015	2,778,633	50	50	100.00
	2014	2,755,802	72	72	100.00
		0.83	-30.56	-30.56	
New Jersey	2015	11,516,748	296	273	92.23
	2014	11,451,041	331	298	90.03
		0.57	-10.57	-8.39	
New Mexico	2015	4,448,400	20	20	100.00
	2014	4,433,544	26	26	100.00
		0.34	-23.08	-23.08	
New York	2015	22,638,311	542	540	99.63
	2014	22,509,360	533	529	99.25
		0.57	1.69	2.08	
North Carolina	2015	14,888,764	497	428	86.12
	2014	17,355,546	560	217	38.75
		-14.21	-11.25	97.24	
Oregon	2015	4,919,351	129	129	100.00
	2014	4,871,417	79	79	100.00
		0.98	63.29	63.29	
South Carolina	2015	7,418,125	137	137	100.00
	2014	7,333,037	156	156	100.00
		1.16	-12.18	-12.18	
South Dakota	2015	2,034,969	123	113	91.87
	2014	2,018,069	121	110	90.91
		0.84	1.65	2.73	
Texas	2015	48,370,638	1,486	1449	97.51
	2014	47,623,714	1,425	1249	87.65
		1.57	4.28	16.01	
Vermont	2015	1,220,981	90	89	98.89
	2014	1,210,842	74	74	100.00
		0.84	21.62	20.27	

Table B. Grant Awards to State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies and Number and Percentage of Individuals With Disabilities Employed, by Type of Disability and Jurisdiction: Fiscal Years 2014–2015, *continued*

Agency	Fiscal Year	Amount of Grant Award (in Dollars) and Percentage Change	Total Employment Outcomes ^a and Percentage Change	Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Significant Disabilities ^b and Percentage Change	Percentage of Individuals With Employment Outcomes Who Have Significant Disabilities ^c
Virginia	2015	8,541,935	200	200	100.00
	2014	8,457,428	149	146	97.99
		1.00	34.23	36.99	
Washington	2015	8,534,942	172	172	100.00
	2014	8,431,885	193	193	100.00
		1.22	-10.88	-10.88	

APPENDIX C

DEFINITION OF *INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY* AS LISTED IN SECTION 7(20) OF THE *REHABILITATION ACT*

(A) In general

Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (B), the term “individual with a disability” means any individual who—

- (i) has a physical or mental impairment which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and
- (ii) can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services provided pursuant to Title I, III, or VI.

(B) Certain programs; limitations on major life activities

Subject to subparagraphs (C), (D), (E), and (F), the term “individual with a disability” means, for purposes of Sections 2, 14, and 15, and Titles II, IV, V, and VII of this act, any person who—

- (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities;
- (ii) has a record of such an impairment; or
- (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment.

(C) Rights and advocacy provisions

(i) In general; exclusion of individuals engaging in drug use

For purposes of Title V, the term “individual with a disability” does not include an individual who is currently engaging in the illegal use of drugs, when a covered entity acts on the basis of such use.

(ii) Exception for individuals no longer engaging in drug use

Nothing in clause (i) shall be construed to exclude as an individual with a disability an individual who—

- (I) has successfully completed a supervised drug rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs, or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaging in such use;
- (II) is participating in a supervised rehabilitation program and is no longer engaging in such use; or
- (III) is erroneously regarded as engaging in such use, but is not engaging in such use; except that it shall not be a violation of this act for a covered entity to adopt or administer reasonable policies or procedures, including but not limited to drug testing, designed to ensure that an individual

described in subclause (I) or (II) is no longer engaging in the illegal use of drugs.

(iii) Exclusion for certain services

Notwithstanding clause (i), for purposes of programs and activities providing health services and services provided under Titles I, II, and III, an individual shall not be excluded from the benefits of such programs or activities on the basis of his or her current illegal use of drugs if he or she is otherwise entitled to such services.

(iv) Disciplinary action

For purposes of programs and activities providing educational services, local educational agencies may take disciplinary action pertaining to the use of possession of illegal drugs or alcohol against any student who is an individual with a disability and who currently is engaging in the illegal use of drugs or in the use of alcohol to the same extent that such disciplinary action is taken against students who are not individuals with disabilities. Furthermore, the due process procedures at Section 104.36 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (or any corresponding similar regulation or ruling) shall not apply to such disciplinary actions.

(v) Employment; exclusion of alcoholics

For purposes of Sections 503 and 504 as such sections relate to employment, the term “individual with a disability” does not include any individual who is an alcoholic whose current use of alcohol prevents such individual from performing the duties of the job in question or whose employment, by reason of such current alcohol abuse, would constitute a direct threat to property or the safety of others.

(D) Employment; exclusion of individuals with certain diseases or infections

For the purposes of Section 503 and 504, as such sections relate to employment, such terms does not include an individual who has a currently contagious disease or infection and who, by reason of such disease or infection, would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or who, by reason of the currently contagious disease or infection, is unable to perform the duties of the job.

(E) Rights provision; exclusion of individual on basis of homosexuality or bisexuality

For purposes of Sections 501, 503, and 504—

- (i)** for purposes of the application of subparagraph (B) to such sections, the term “impairment” does not include homosexuality or bisexuality; and
- (ii)** therefore the term “individual with a disability” does not include an individual on the basis of homosexuality or bisexuality.

(F) Rights provisions; exclusion of individuals on basis of certain disorders

For the purposes of Sections 501, 503, and 504, the term “individual with a disability” does not include an individual on the basis of—

- (i)** transvestism, transsexualism, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, gender identity disorders not resulting from physical impairments, or other sexual behavior disorders;
- (ii)** compulsive gambling, kleptomania, or pyromania; or
- (iii)** psychoactive substance use disorders resulting from current illegal use of drugs

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