REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

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

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OCTOBER 2019

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

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Contents

Contents iii

Figures v

Tables vi

Acronyms viii

Preface x

The *Rehabilitation Act*: An Overview 1

Programs under The *Rehabilitation Act* 3

Employment Programs 5
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program 5
- Supported Employment Services Program 21
- Licensing and Operation of Blind Vendors under the *Randolph-Sheppard Act* 24
- American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program 26
- Demonstration and Training Programs 30

Independent Living Program 34
- Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program 34

Technical Assistance, Training, and Support 35
- Capacity-Building for Traditionally Underserved Populations 36
- Rehabilitation Training Program 37
- Institute on Rehabilitation Issues 44

Evaluation, Research, and Information Dissemination 45
- The National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials 45

Advocacy and Enforcement 47
- Client Assistance Program 47
- Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights Program 50

Programs under the *Rehabilitation Act* Not Administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration 52
- Employment of People With Disabilities 52
- Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board 53

Electronic and Information Technology 54
Employment under Federal Contracts 55
Nondiscrimination in Programs that Receive Federal Financial Assistance 55
National Council on Disability 56
Independent Living Services Program 56
Centers for Independent Living Program 57

References 59

Appendix A 60

Appendix B 69

FIGURES

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

Figure 2. Evaluation Standard 1: Performance of vocational rehabilitation agencies, by the percentage that met four or more performance indicators or did not meet a minimum of four: FY 2015 and FY 2016 15

Figure 3. Number of individuals with disabilities who applied for or participated in the 80 vocational rehabilitation agencies, by factor: FYs 2015 and 2016 18

Figure 4. Number of vocational rehabilitation program participants achieving employment outcomes after receiving services, by year: FYs 2007–2016 19

TABLES

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that met or did not meet each performance indicator in Standard 1: FY 2016 13

Table 2. Evaluation Standard 2: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies, by performance level, serving individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds: FY 2016 17

Table 3. Number and percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities obtaining employment after exiting vocational rehabilitation, by year: FY 2007–2016 20

Table 4. 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 2010–2016 23

Table 5. Target for and actual average weekly earnings of individuals with the most significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome, by year: FYs 2010–2016 24

Table 6. 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 2016 and 2015 26

Table 7. Number of grants awarded and total amounts awarded to support American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services tribal projects, by year: FYs 2007–2016 27

Table 8. 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 2007–2016 28

Table 9. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FY 2016 42

Table A-1. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the blind and visually impaired, by indicator and state: FY 2016 60

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for general and combined agencies, by indicator and state: FY 2016 62

Table A-3. 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: FY 2016 66

Table A-4. 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: FY 2016 67

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 69

Acronyms

Acronym	Full Term
ABA	*Architectural Barriers Act*
ADA	*Americans with Disabilities Act*
AIVRS	American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ASL	American Sign Language
BCPS	Baltimore County Public Schools
BEP	Business Enterprise Program
CAP	Client Assistance Program
CFDA	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance
CRD	U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division
CSPD	Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
DD Act	*Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000*
DVR	Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
DVRS	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ED	Department of Education
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
FY	Fiscal Year
GPRA	*Government Performance and Results Act*
ICI	Institute on Community Inclusion
IL	Independent Living
IL-OIB	Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind
IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
IRI	Institute on Rehabilitation Issues
JDVRTAC	Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center
NCRTM	National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials
NTACT	National Technical Assistance Center on Transition
NWIC	Northwest Indian College
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OCR	U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

Acronym	Full Term
OFCCP	Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OST	Out of School Time
OVR	Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
P&A	Protection and Advocacy
PAIR	Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights
PEQA-TAC	Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance
PTI	Parent Training and Information
RSA	Rehabilitation Services Administration
SGA	Substantial Gainful Activity
SILC	Statewide Independent Living Council
SMPID	RSA's State Monitoring and Program Improvement Division
SSA	Social Security Administration
SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
TA	Technical Assistance
VR	Vocational Rehabilitation
VR program	Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program
VRTAC-TC	Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center—Targeted Communities
VRTAC-Y	Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center—Youth with Disabilities
WINTAC	Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center
WIOA	*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*

PREFACE

The *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (*Rehabilitation Act*)[1] 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 *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (*WIOA*) (P.L. 113–128) was signed into law. Among other things, *WIOA* superseded the *Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA),* and *Title IV* of *WIOA* amended the *Rehabilitation Act*. *WIOA*—a bipartisan and bicameral effort—reformed the Federal adult education and workforce development system and presented opportunities to change the way these systems operate.

This report to the President and Congress describes the activities of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) (a component of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)) during fiscal year (FY) 2016 (October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016). 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*.

Data used in this report were accessed from Federal, U.S. Department of Education (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.

[1] 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.

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 the needs of veterans with disabilities.

A major event in the history of the Federal rehabilitation program was passage of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (*Rehabilitation Act*), which provides the statutory authority for programs and activities that assist individuals with disabilities[2] 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, Health and Human Services, and Justice; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board; and the National Council on Disability.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) has primary responsibility for administering the *Rehabilitation Act*. The Rehabilitation Services Administration (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*. Portions of *Title V* are administered by ED's Office for 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 conducts monitoring, provides technical assistance, and disseminates information to public and private nonprofit agencies and organizations to facilitate meaningful and

[2] *Individual with a disability* is defined, for purposes of programs funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*, at Section 7(20).

effective participation by individuals with disabilities in employment and in the community.

The largest program RSA administers is the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services program (the VR program). This program funds state vocational rehabilitation (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 95 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 (mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) (Section 7(21)(A)(i)). 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 fiscal year (FY) 2016, 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 Services and Centers for Independent Living; Technical Assistance, Training, and Support; Evaluation, Research, and Information Dissemination; and Advocacy and Enforcement. Within each area, this report describes the discrete program, initiative, or activity. The programs authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act,* 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 Services and Centers for 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

Evaluation, Research, and Information Dissemination

- The National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials

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 five programs that assist individuals with disabilities to achieve employment outcomes. Two of these programs, the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program (VR program) and the Supported Employment Services program, are state formula grant programs. The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services program and the Demonstration and Training programs are discretionary grant programs that make competitive awards for up to a five-year period. RSA also administers the *Randolph-Sheppard Act*, which requires Federal agencies to give a priority to blind vendors to operate vending facilities on Federal and other properties. Under the VR program, state VR agencies for the blind are authorized to use VR program funds to support blind vendors to operate these vending facilities. These programs are 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. In addition, in accordance with Section 113 of the *Rehabilitation Act*, VR agencies must provide or arrange for the provision of pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities, regardless of whether they have applied and been determined eligible for the VR program to assist them with the earliest stages of career exploration and work-based learning experiences, among other activities. Furthermore, Section 511 of the *Rehabilitation Act* requires VR agencies to provide career counseling and information and referral services to all individuals seeking employment or currently employed at subminimum wage, and it requires youth to complete certain activities prior to becoming employed at subminimum wage, including applying for VR services and completing transition services under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* or pre-employment transition services, as appropriate.

The Federal government covers 78.7 percent of the program's total 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 $843,828,698 in FY 2016. This information is based on financial data reported by VR agencies in their SF-425s, Federal Financial Report, for FY 2016.

A VR agency may receive reimbursements from the Social Security Administration (SSA) for individuals served through the VR program who are Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries or Supplemental Security Income recipients who achieve paid employment at a level of earnings high enough to be terminated from receipt of his or her SSDI or Supplemental Security Income benefits.

During FY 2016, state VR agencies received $181,403,973 in reimbursements from the SSA for the rehabilitation of approximately 12,000 individuals with disabilities. This information is provided by the state VR agency to RSA in the Year to Date Report of Clearances Program Counts.

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;" 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 are known as having a "combined agency." Of the 80 VR agencies nationwide in FY 2016, 24 were blind agencies, 24 were general agencies, and 32 were combined agencies.

Structurally, the 80 state VR agencies were located in the following state governmental departments or agencies: education (12), labor and workforce (16), social services (25), disability-related (9), and other (17). 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 disabilities[3] 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

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[3] *Individual with a significant disability* is defined in Section 7(21)(A), as "an individual with a disability—

(i) who has a severe physical or mental impairment which 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, intellectual disability, 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."

individuals with disabilities they serve requires a robust system of collaboration, monitoring, and state improvement plans that address identified needs and goals.

Administering the VR program requires state agencies to manage 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 implementing 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.

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 services portion of the Unified or Combined 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 2016, RSA conducted targeted fiscal technical assistance visits to the Kentucky blind and general agencies, the New Jersey general agency, and the New Mexico general agency. RSA also conducted programmatic technical assistance visits for the combined agencies in Arizona, Illinois, Nevada, Oklahoma, and Wyoming to address agency needs related to the implementation of *WIOA*.

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 with 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 establish performance benchmarks for employment outcomes under the VR program and the access of minorities to the services of the state VR agencies. ED exercised its transition authority under Section 503(e) of *WIOA* to continue the use of these performance indicators for FY 2016 because state VR agencies had not yet, at that time, been able to start collecting the data necessary to

satisfy the performance accountability system requirements of Section 116 of *WIOA*. In so doing, ED ensured an orderly transition from the requirements of the *Rehabilitation Act*, as amended by *WIA*, to the requirements of the *Rehabilitation Act*, as amended by *WIOA*.

All VR agency performance rates for the performance indicators are calculated using data that were reported in the Case Service Report (RSA-911) for FY 2016. 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 receiving services from a state VR agency, with particular emphasis on individuals who achieved competitive employment.[4] 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 who are blind or visually impaired are based on aggregated data for the current and previous year. For VR agencies serving all disability populations other than those who are blind or visually impaired and for 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 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, as in effect for the period of time covered by this report, establish the minimum performance level for each indicator. The numbers of state VR agencies that met the minimum level for FY 2016 are described as follows. The three primary performance indicators are highlighted by an asterisk (*). To meet evaluation Standard 1, the agency must meet the minimum required performance level for at least four of the performance indicators defined in Standard 1.

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[4]Prior to the regulations that took effect on September 19, 2016, implementing the new requirements of *the Rehabilitation Act as amended by title IV of WIOA, competitive employment* was defined in 34 CFR §361.5(b)(11), for almost all of 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." The regulations that took effect on September 19, 2016, governed only the last 11 days of FY 2016, which ended September 30 of that year.

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 2016 Performance:	Of the 80 state VR agencies, 40, including 9 agencies for the blind and 31 general and combined agencies, or 50 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 2016 Performance:	Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 13, or 54.2 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 31, or 55.4 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 at the time covered by this report, 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 2016 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. 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 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 2016 Performance:	Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 22, or 91.7 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 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 2016 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 2016 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, 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 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 2016 Performance: Of the 24 agencies serving only individuals who are blind or visually impaired, 18, or 75 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level. Of the 56 other agencies, 42, or 75 percent, met or exceeded the minimum required performance level.

In FY 2016, 8 of the 80 state VR agencies, or 10 percent, met the minimum required performance level for all six performance indicators; 27, or 33.8 percent, met the minimum required performance level for five of the performance indicators; and 34, or 42.5 percent, met the minimum required performance level for four of the performance indicators. In total, 69 agencies, or 86.2 percent, met the minimum required performance level for Evaluation Standard 1. The 11 agencies, or 13.8 percent, that failed to meet the minimum required performance level for Evaluation Standard 1 include three agencies that serve only individuals who are blind or visually impaired (Maine, New Jersey, and North Carolina), six agencies that serve all disability populations (Alaska, District of Columbia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, and Pennsylvania), and two agencies that serve all disability populations except individuals who are blind or visually impaired (North Carolina and Vermont).

Table 1 presents the performance rates in FY 2016 of the 80 state VR agencies on the performance indicators for Evaluation Standard 1. For an agency to meet the minimum required performance level for 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 met or did not meet each performance indicator in Standard 1: FY 2016

Performance indicators for Standard 1[a]	General and combined VR[b] agencies met	General and combined VR agencies did not meet	VR agencies serving the blind met	VR agencies serving the blind did not meet
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.	31	25	9	15
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).	31	25	13	11
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 BEP[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	23	1
1.4 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or BEP 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	22	2

Table 1. Evaluation Standard 1: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies that met or did not meet each performance indicator in Standard 1: FY 2016, *continued*

Performance indicators for Standard 1[a]	General and combined VR[b] agencies met	General and combined VR agencies did not meet	VR agencies serving the blind met	VR agencies serving the blind did not meet
1.5 The average hourly earnings of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or BEP 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[e]	25[e]	20	4
1.6 Of all individuals who exited the VR program and entered into competitive, self-, or 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 (calculated as percentage for the standard—not shown as percentage in this table).	42	14	18	6

[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 (BEP) is the entrepreneurial self-employment program under the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facilities Program.

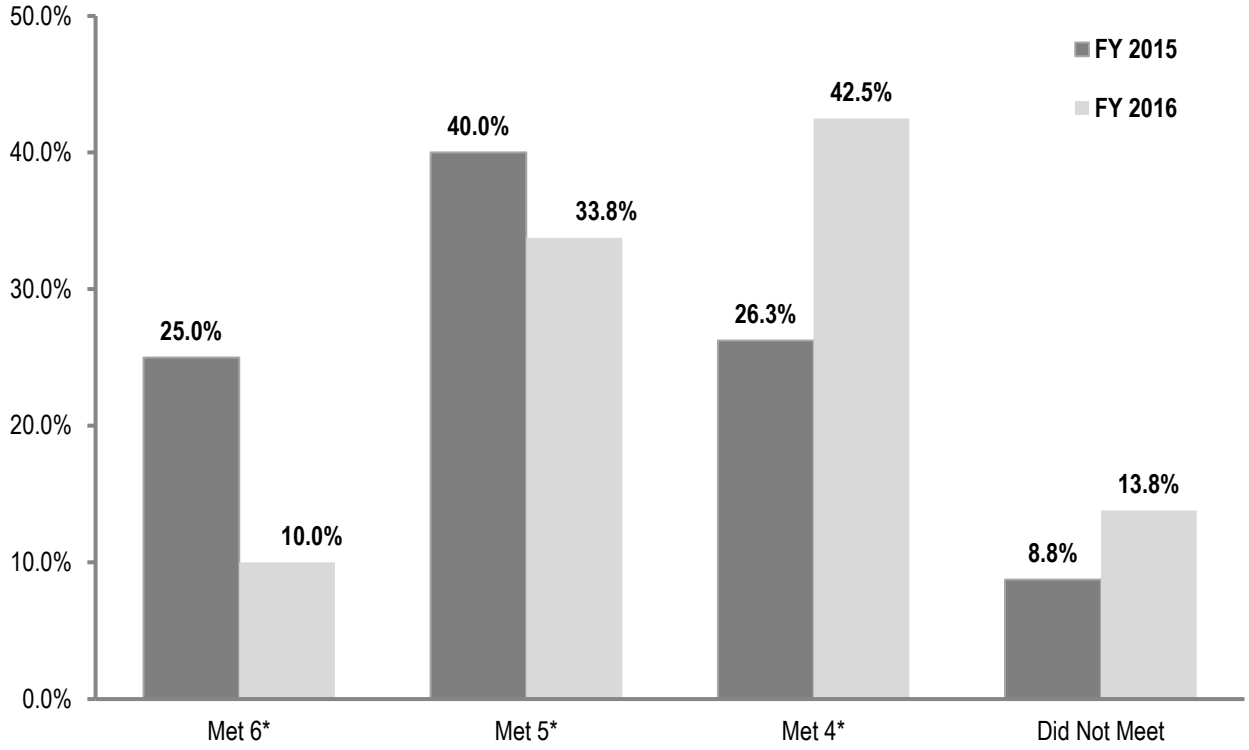
[d] This indicator is a primary indicator that an agency must meet.

[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), FY 2016.

Figure 2 shows the percentages of the 80 state VR agencies (general and combined VR agencies and agencies serving the blind) that met four or more performance indicators and the percentage that failed to meet a minimum of four performance indicators.

Figure 2. Evaluation Standard 1: Performance of vocational rehabilitation agencies, by the percentage that met four or more performance indicators or did not meet a minimum of four: FY 2015 and FY 2016



* Includes at least two of the three primary 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 2015 and 2016

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), as in effect for the period covered by this report.

Performance Indicator 2.1

The service rate[5] 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 2016 Performance:

Of the 66 state VR agencies that served at least 100 individuals from a minority population, 61, or 92.4 percent, met the performance level for Indicator 2.1 of 0.80 or higher. Of the 61 state VR agencies, 12 were agencies for the blind and 49 were general or combined agencies. Of the five 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, three agencies served all disability populations (North Dakota, Virgin Islands, and Wisconsin) and two agencies served all disability populations except individuals who are blind or visually impaired (New York and South Dakota).

Of the 14 state VR agencies that served fewer than 100 individuals from a minority population, 12 served exclusively individuals who are blind or visually impaired (Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, and Vermont), and two served all disability populations (American Samoa and Guam).

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.

[5] 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.

Table 2 presents the performance levels by the number of state VR agencies for FY 2016 on the performance indicator for Evaluation Standard 2. Appendix A provides a state-by-state breakdown of VR agency FY 2016 performance for both evaluation standards.

Table 2. Evaluation Standard 2: Number of vocational rehabilitation agencies, by performance level, serving individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds: FY 2016

Performance levels for Standard 2[a]	General and combined VR agencies	VR agencies serving the blind
FY 2016		
Ratio of 0.80 or higher	49	12
Ratio of less than 0.80	5	0
Fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting the state VR program	2	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), FY 2016

Other Program Performance Information

In FY 2016, about 1.4 million individuals were involved in the public VR process, pursuing the achievement of their employment goals, including 972,155 individuals who were actively receiving services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE). Of the total number of individuals who received services under an IPE in FY 2016, 94.1 percent were individuals with significant disabilities.

Figure 3 compares statistical information from FYs 2015 and 2016 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.

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

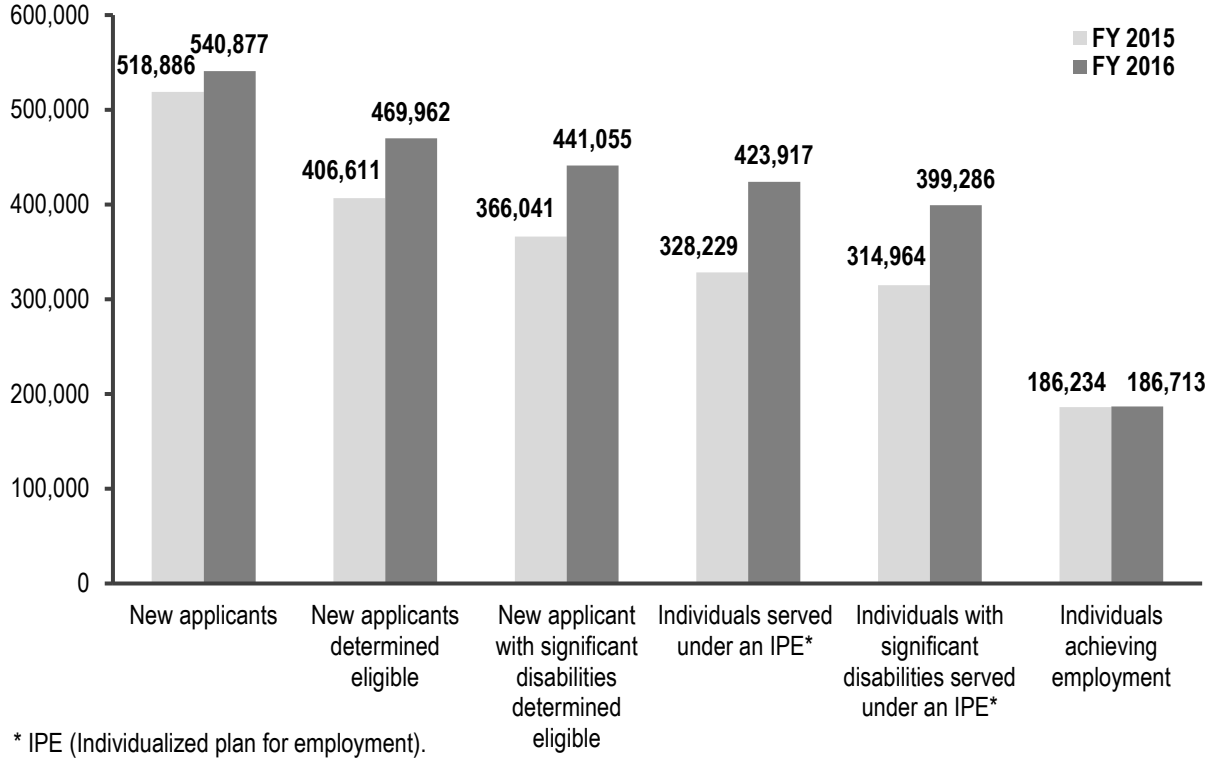
participate. Of the individuals who applied for VR services and were determined eligible in FY 2015, 366,041 (90 percent) were individuals with significant disabilities.

Comparatively, in FY 2016, 540,877 individuals with disabilities applied for services to the VR program. Of this number, 469,962 (87 percent) were determined eligible to participate. Of the individuals who applied for VR services and were determined eligible in FY 2016, 441,055 (93.8 percent) were individuals with significant disabilities.

In FY 2015, 328,229 individuals with disabilities were served under an IPE, of whom 314,964 were individuals with significant disabilities. In FY 2016, 423,917 individuals with disabilities were served under an IPE, of whom 399,286 were individuals with significant disabilities.

In FY 2015, 186,234 individuals achieved employment outcomes, and in FY 2016, 186,713 individuals achieved employment outcomes.

Figure 3. Number of individuals with disabilities who applied for or participated in the 80 vocational rehabilitation agencies, by factor: FYs 2015 and 2016



* IPE (Individualized plan for employment).

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113), FYs 2015 and 2016.

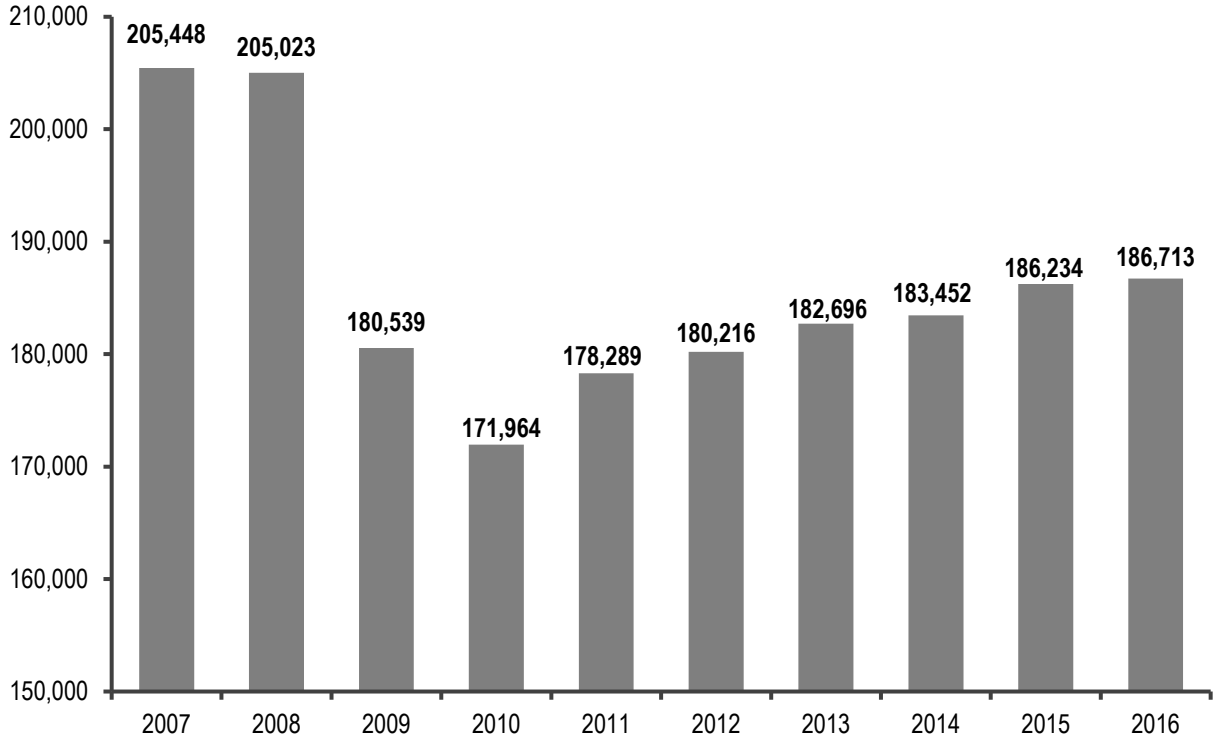
Figure 4 shows the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes after receiving VR services for FYs 2007 through 2016.

- In FY 2015, 186,234 individuals achieved an employment outcome.

- In FY 2016, 186,713 individuals achieved an employment outcome.

In FY 2016, there was a 0.3 percent increase in the overall number of employment outcomes compared to those in FY 2015. This increase was widespread with 50 percent of the 80 state VR agencies reporting a slight increase in employment outcomes. Data for employment outcomes used in figure 4 and table 3 were derived from the Case Service Report (RSA-911) for FYs 2007 through 2016.

Figure 4. Number of vocational rehabilitation program participants achieving employment outcomes after receiving services, by year: FYs 2007–2016



Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2007 through 2016

Table 3 shows the number and percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities exiting the VR program with an employment outcome in FYs 2007 through 2016. The percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who obtained employment outcomes has remained fairly constant, between 92.9 and 94.6 percent from FY 2009 through FY 2016.

Table 3. Number and percentage of individuals with and without significant disabilities obtaining employment after exiting vocational rehabilitation, by year: FY 2007–2016

Fiscal Year	Individuals With Significant Disabilities	Individuals Without Significant Disabilities	Percentage With Significant Disabilities	Percentage Without Significant Disabilities
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
2016	175,676	11,037	94.1	5.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2007 through 2016

An important aspect of employment for anyone, particularly individuals with disabilities, is employment with some type of medical benefits. In FY 2016, 134,580 individuals with disabilities obtained competitive jobs with medical benefits, of whom 126,715 were individuals with significant disabilities.

Appendix B provides a detailed, state-by-state breakdown of statistical information regarding the VR program for FY 2016.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

Authorized under Sections 601–610 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, to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities. Supported employment means 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 (Section 7(38) of the *Rehabilitation Act*). 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 twice monthly monitoring at the worksite from the time of job placement until transition to extended services.[6]

Under the Supported Employment Services program, state VR agencies collaborate with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services. State VR agencies are authorized to provide eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities supported employment services identified in the IPE for a period not to exceed 24 months unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization is needed. The IPE contains a description of the services and 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 (Section 102(b)(4)(A) and (B) of the *Rehabilitation Act*). Once this supported employment period has ended, the state VR agency must arrange for extended services to be provided by other appropriate state agencies, private nonprofit organizations, or other sources for the duration of that employment, except that for youth with the most significant disabilities the VR agency may provide extended services for a period of up to four years or until a youth turns 25, whichever occurs first, as authorized under Section 604(b)(2) of the *Rehabilitation Act*.

The state VR and Blind agencies have been working through the significant fiscal changes made by the *WIOA* amendments to the Supported Employment program. The state must reserve 50 percent of its supported employment allotment for providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities and match 10 percent of that 50 percent share that was reserved to provide supported employment services for youth with the most significant disabilities.

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[6] *Extended services* is defined in Section 7(13) of the *Rehabilitation Act* as "ongoing support services and other appropriate services, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that— (A) are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment; (B) are based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment; and (C) are provided by a state agency, a nonprofit private organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support provided by the designated state unit."

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* 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*) grant funds. *Title VI* supported employment funds may only be used to provide supported employment services and are used to supplement *Title I* funds.

Data from the FY 2016 Case Service Report (RSA-911) was used to provide all information on program participation. The data show that a total of 49,940 individuals whose service records 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 2016, 28,658 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. Of those individuals, 19,592 had a supported employment outcome: 17,083 whose initial IPE identified supported employment as the employment goal, 1,800 whose IPE was amended during the VR process to change the goal to supported employment, and 709 whose amended or final IPE identified supported employment as the employment goal only at the time the service record was closed. Of the 19,592 individuals with a supported employment goal who obtained a supported employment outcome, 18,486, or 94.4 percent, were in competitive employment. In addition, 2,988 individuals for whom a supported employment goal was not reported were nonetheless reported to have achieved a supported employment outcome.

In FY 2016, the mean hourly wage for individuals with supported employment outcomes who had achieved competitive employment was $9.59. 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.

As state VR agencies serve an increasing number of individuals with the most significant disabilities, the number of individuals receiving supported employment services will likely continue to increase. In addition, with *WIOA*'s focus on providing supported employment services to youth with the most significant disabilities, RSA expects the number of youth receiving supported employment services to increase in future years.

Amendments made to the *Rehabilitation Act* by *WIOA* reinforce Congress' expectation that individuals with the most significant disabilities in supported employment should not linger in subminimum wage employment and that state agencies are to assist

individuals with disabilities in supported employment to achieve competitive employment outcomes in integrated settings. Measures established for the Supported Employment Services program pursuant to the *Government Performance and Results Act* (*GPRA*)[7] assess 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 individuals who achieved a supported employment outcome.

Table 4 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 in FYs 2010 through 2016.

Table 4. 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 2010–2016

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%	95%
2015	95%	95%
2016	95%	94%

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2010 through 2016

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 on a short-term basis toward competitive employment at or above the minimum wage.

Table 5 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 in FYs 2010 through 2016.

[7] Pub. L. No. 103-62 (1993).

Table 5. Target for and actual average weekly earnings of individuals with the most significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome, by year: FYs 2010–2016		
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
2016	$208	$219

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2010 through 2016

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 2016 data from the RSA-911 show that the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome increased to about $219, exceeding the FY 2016 performance target of $208.

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 significant 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.

In FY 2016, the total gross income for the program was about $721.4 million; the total earnings of all vendors were $125.8 million, and the national average annual net earnings of vendors were $63,505. At the end of FY 2016, the number of vendors was 1,981 and the total number of vending facilities was 2,278. Table 6 provides the comparison of FY 2016 data to FY 2015 data.

The data in table 6 were obtained from the Vending Facility Program Report (Form RSA-15) for FYs 2015 and 2016 (users require permission to access).

Table 6. 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 2016 and 2015		
	FY 2016	**FY 2015**
Income and Earnings		
Gross Income	$721,385,964	$697,004,935
Vendor Earnings	$125,803,972	$118,200,186
Average Earnings	$63,505	$59,189
Number of Vendors		
Federal Locations	669	691
Non-Federal Locations	1,312	1,306
Total Vendors	1,981	1,997
Number of Vending Facilities		
Federal Locations	797	829
Non-Federal Locations	1,481	1,481
Total Facilities	2,278	2,310

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Vending Facility Program Report (RSA-15), FYs 2015 and 2016.

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 assure 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 has authorized annual inflationary increases for the VR

program, the funds available for grants under the AIVRS program have 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 amounts of some of the awards (both new and continuation) have slightly increased over time. The total amount of funds available for the program increased from FY 2015 to FY 2016

Table 7 presents grant data for FYs 2007 through 2016.

Table 7. Number of grants awarded and total amounts awarded to support American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services tribal projects, by year: FYs 2007–2016

Fiscal year	Total grants	Total award amounts
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	86	$37,189,184
2015	85	$38,447,920
2016	88	$43,000,000

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 2007 through 2016.

The *GPRA* program goal is to improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities who live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal VR services. Based on a comprehensive review by project officers, the data included in the program's Annual Performance Report (APR) has shown that experienced grantees are efficient and effective and continue to show significant improvements in their performance. 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. Table 8 provides the program outcome data extrapolated from the AIVRS annual program performance database for FYs 2007 through 2016.

In FY 2015, 68.2 percent of American Indians with disabilities who received services and exited the program achieved an employment outcome. In FY 2016, 67 percent of American Indians with disabilities who received services and exited the program achieved an employment outcome. The number served calculation in table 8 includes the number of individuals who received services under an IPE during the fiscal year or a prior fiscal year or individuals who were carried forward from a previous grant cycle.

Table 8. 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 2007–2016

Fiscal year	Number served[a]	Total number exiting after receiving services	Number achieving employment
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
2016	7,063	3,203	2,148

[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 2007 through 2016.

ED established two efficiency measures for the AIVRS program to examine the cost per employment outcome and cost per participant with baseline performance levels set using FY 2007 data. 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. The baseline performance level for this efficiency measure is 66 percent. In FY 2016, the efficiency measure for cost per employment outcomes was 73.6 percent.

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 is 78 percent. In FY 2016, the efficiency measure for cost per participant was 77 percent. RSA continues to monitor AIVRS projects.

Section 121(c) of the *Rehabilitation Act* 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 state VR program for the AIVRS program (funded under Section 121(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act*) to provide training and technical assistance (TA) to governing bodies of Indian tribes that have received an AIVRS grant. Under Section 121(c)(3), the RSA commissioner makes grants to, or enters into contracts or other cooperative agreements with, entities that have experience in the operation of AIVRS programs to provide training and technical assistance on developing, conducting, administering, and evaluating these programs.

In FY 2015, Northern Arizona University was awarded a cooperative agreement with RSA to establish a center to provide this training and TA. The center was awarded $704,880 and focused on providing universal general training, targeted specialized training, and intensive technical assistance. For example, the center developed a website for AIVRS programs to request training and TA and to disseminate grant-funded products. In addition, they prepared and delivered two webinars and a short-term community of practice focusing on assistive technology and facilitated four regional "talking circles" in Portland, Oregon; Anchorage, Alaska; Durham, North Carolina; and Albuquerque, New Mexico with 38 AIVRS programs represented. The overarching goal of each meeting was to present the center's purpose, goals, and objectives and to describe the three distinct training and TA methodologies the center would apply (i.e., intensive, targeted, and universal TA). Focus group interviews were conducted to obtain additional information on AIVRS programs' training and TA needs, including a need to identify AIVRS programs interested in on-site intensive TA in year 2. A needs assessment report was prepared and submitted to RSA.

In FY 2016, the center continued universal and targeted training and TA efforts, which included the completion of three regional cluster trainings. The center also began providing intensive TA. This included developing an intensive TA agreement that could be customized by site, conducting on-site visits and preparing summary reports, and developing products to support each site's TA needs, such as new or modified policies and procedures, checklists to support AIVRS program case file reviews for completeness and accuracy, and new or modified memorandums of understanding between the AIVRS program and state VR agency.

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— 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 FY 2016, the appropriation for this program was $5.8 million.

Authorized activities under the Demonstration and Training programs includes 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 projects 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, projects are intended to demonstrate the application of innovative procedures that could lead to an increase in the number of successful 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 vary in their objectives. The objective for a number of the projects funded in the past has been to provide comprehensive services for individuals with disabilities that lead to successful employment outcomes. However, some projects funded under this authority do not relate directly to employment of individuals with disabilities. For example, some projects focus on braille training, and others 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 project ends. For this reason, the program's outcome measure is as follows:

Projects will be judged to have successfully implemented strategies that contribute to the expansion of services for the employment of individuals with disabilities according to the percentage of projects that met their goals and objectives as established in their original applications.

Using this measure allows each project to be included in any evaluation of the Demonstration and Training Programs.

Special Demonstration projects supported in FY 2016 included the following:

- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Demonstration**.
  In FY 2016, RSA approved a second no-cost extension for one grant under this program to the Institute on Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts-Boston to complete services to Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) project participants in Kentucky and Minnesota through FY 2017.

  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: 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; and 3) dissemination and replication, to include the development of training materials, curricula, procedures, and on-demand technical assistance initiatives. The ICI continued to work with Mathematica Policy Research on the development of the research methodology for studying the proposed model developed by the project.

  The major activities of FY 2016 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); 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 and invested heavily in creating fertile ground for the intervention. Minnesota hired staff dedicated to implementing 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.

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) began implementation on April 1, 2015, and completed recruitment of the required sample size of 500 SGA Project participants across the eight sites. Kentucky OVR continued to support the project and maintained a strong commitment. Preliminary evaluation results indicate that the percentage of SGA project participants in the treatment group that achieve an employment outcome earning above SGA is about 8 percent, compared to about 3 percent for the control group. If this result continues through the end of the project, Kentucky OVR will be able to fund the expansion of the model statewide using increased reimbursement payments from the SSA for placing individuals receiving SSDI into employment with earnings above the SGA level.

Minnesota VR officially launched the SGA Project on August 3, 2015, with the enrollment of SSDI-only applicants in the eight sites. Minnesota VR agreed to participate in the project in January 2014 and engaged in multiple meetings to ascertain the scope of implementation and preparation work. Minnesota VR reached the required sample size of 500 SGA project participants during FY 2016 and negotiated with other state agencies to continue the project model statewide beginning in FY 2018. The partners in funding and maintaining the model include Minnesota VR and the Minnesota state welfare and human services agencies. Ongoing benefits counseling will be provided to Minnesota VR participants by the state's network of independent living centers. Preliminary evaluation data for Minnesota has shown increases in employment and in employment with earnings above SGA, but a substantial portion of the Minnesota SGA project participants are still receiving program services, and it is too early to tell whether the differences will reach statistical significance.

Because the terms of the agreements with Kentucky and Minnesota called for support of the project for one year after completing enrollment —enrollment was not complete until the middle of FY 2016— and sufficient funds were available, RSA granted a second no cost extension to allow for the completion of services to SGA participants as promised.

- **Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities.**
  In FY 2015, RSA funded four new demonstration projects in Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, and Nebraska. In FY 2016, these four projects were funded at $3,681,412 for their second year. 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 2016, the three braille training grants received funding for their third year totaling $328,287. 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 2016, RSA funded seven regional PTI projects totaling $914,835. These seven centers were in their third year of operation. The national PTI center, funded at $250,000, was also in its third year of operation in FY 2016.

RSA and OSEP jointly funded one technical assistance center in FY 2016.

- **National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT)**.
  The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to establish and operate a national technical assistance center, jointly funded by OSEP and RSA, for improving transition to postsecondary education and employment for students with disabilities. NTACT assists state educational agencies, local educational agencies, 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. As in FY 2014 and in FY 2015, RSA provided $400,000 to this center in FY 2016. In addition, RSA provided $599,997 in supplemental funding to increase the center's staff capacity to provide

technical assistance to state VR agencies on transition and pre-employment transition services, the latter being a new requirement of the state VR agencies in *WIOA.*

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.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

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 who are blind or visually impaired.

In FY 2016, the total *Title VII, Chapter 2* grant awards made to states was $33,317,000. In addition to receiving Federal funding under *Title VII, Chapter 2*, the IL-OIB program received non-Federal support. In FY 2016, the total of non-Federal sources of funding and in-kind support for the 56 IL-OIB grantees was $16,165,529. In FY 2016, 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 $63,306,927, a 6.2 percent increase from the total amount expended in FY 2015.

In FY 2016, 58,555 individuals age 55 or older who are blind or visually impaired nationwide benefited from the IL services provided through the IL-OIB program, down 3.1 percent from FY 2015. The IL-OIB program did continue to see an increase in services delivered to consumers who have other severe or multiple disabilities in addition to a significant visual impairment.

Section 751A(a) of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended by *Title IV* of *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 to other providers of independent living services for older individuals who are blind that are funded under *Chapter 2*. The recipient of these training and technical assistance funds was Mississippi State University. During its first year, Mississippi State University provided universal training and technical assistance through the development of online training modules and participation in national conferences. In addition, intensive technical assistance, including on-site visits, was provided to three VR agencies in areas of need identified by the IL-OIB grantees.

Technical Assistance, Training, and Support

RSA operates and provides funding for 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 1 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*.

In FY 2016, the 1 percent reservation for Section 21 from *Titles III, VI*, *and VII* amounted to $968,490.

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 2016, during the first year of operation, the Northwest Indian College (NWIC) partnership completed seven three-credit culturally-relevant college courses in tribal VR foundations to help current and future AIVRS personnel gain the fundamental basic aspects of vocational rehabilitation skills and practice necessary to improve and expand services to American Indians with disabilities in tribal communities. The NWIC partnership hired five instructors, a director, a participant coordinator, a training specialist, and an evaluator, and conducted outreach to all 88 AIVRS projects. The NWIC partnership piloted one course titled "Introduction to VR" to eight participants and began enrolling participants. By the end of FY 2016, 11 participants were enrolled in one course and of those participants, three enrolled in two courses.

In addition, in FY 2016, RSA used Section 21 funds support five Rehabilitation Counseling long-term training grants under Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) 84.129B: Thomas University ($199,885), San Diego State University

($173,884), Bayamon Central University ($195,000), Jackson State University ($199,997), and Portland State University ($199,724).

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 2016, 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 30 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 2016, RSA provided five new training grants to provide quality educational opportunities for interpreters at all skill levels. RSA also provided continuation funding to 102 training grants. In addition, five training grants were front loaded in prior years for a total of 112 total training grants. 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.

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 65 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.

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

In FY 2016, RSA funded five new grants under the Training for Interpreters Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind Program. Under CFDA 84.160C, RSA funded one $800,000 grant to St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota, to develop an experiential learning model demonstration center for novice interpreters and baccalaureate degree American Sign Language (ASL)-English interpretation programs. The grant was awarded on September 30, 2016, and officially began on January 3, 2017, with a five-year period of performance. Under CFDA 84.160D, RSA funded four grants to support interpreter training in specialty areas. The grants were awarded on September 30, 2016, and officially began on January 3, 2017, with a five-year period of performance. These grants included: one $400,000 grant to the University of Northern Colorado, Denver, Colorado (Specialty Area: Cultivating Legal interpreters from Minority Backgrounds-referred to as "PROJECT CLIMB"); one $399,965 grant to St. Catherine University, St. Paul, Minnesota (Specialty Area: Training Interpreting Specialists to Work in Behavioral Health Settings); one $399,999 grant to Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts (Specialty Area: Interpreting for consumers with dysfluent language competencies); and one $400,000 grant to Western Oregon University, Monmouth, Oregon (Specialty Area: Enhance communication access for persons who are Deaf-Blind by increasing the number of interpreters able to effectively interpret using tactile and other strategies).

Technical Assistance

In FY 2015, RSA funded one project at $200,000 under the Short-Term Training Program to train CAP personnel on an as-needed basis, including:

1. Management training on skills needed for strategic and operational planning and direction of CAP services;

2. Advocacy training on skills and knowledge needed by CAP staff 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 on skills and knowledge needed by CAP staff to address programmatic issues of concern;

4. Training and technical assistance on CAP best practices; and

5. Training on skills and knowledge needed by CAP staff to perform additional responsibilities required by *WIOA*.

This project was funded at $200,000 in FY 2016 to continue its operation for a second year and was awarded an additional $35,000 supplement.

In FY 2014, a presidential memorandum directed Federal agencies to take action to address job-driven training for the nation's workers.[8]

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; and

4. Services to providers of customized training and other types of training that are directly responsive to employer needs and hiring requirements

RSA funded the JDVRTAC 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. FY 2016 was the second year of this grant's operation. In FY 2015, RSA also awarded a supplement to this grantee in the amount of $600,000 to develop resources to assist state VR agencies to develop 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. Providing pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities and supported employment services to youth with disabilities;

2. Implementing the requirements in Section 511 of the *Rehabilitation Act* that are related to work below the minimum wage and are under ED's purview;

3. Providing resources and strategies to help individuals with disabilities achieve competitive integrated employment, including customized employment and supported employment;

4. Integrating the state VR program into the workforce development system; and

[8] https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/01/30/presidential-memorandum-job-driven-training-workers

5. Transitioning to the new common performance accountability system under Section 116 of *WIOA*, including collecting and reporting common data elements.

In FY 2015, RSA funded the WINTAC at $3,499,131 for the first year and partially front-loaded the second year at $890,645. In FY 2016, RSA continued to fund this grant for its second year; funding was provided in the amount of $2,609,334 to fully fund the grant for a second year. In addition, RSA frontloaded this grant to cover part of its third year with $1,958,539.

In FY 2015, RSA funded the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (PEQA-TAC) 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 PEQA-TAC 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 Agricultural & Mechanical 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 were 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 VRTAC-TC received $2.5 million to support the first year of project operations. This center received $1,750,000 in FY 2016 to continue its work for a second year.

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 *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, 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.

The VRTAC-Y 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. This center received $1,499,933 in FY 2016 to continue its work for a second year.

In FY 2016, 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."

Program Performance Data

For FY 2016, the following data are available to measure the performance of the Rehabilitation Training program:

- In FY 2016, 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 72.8 percent. This figure represents a decrease from the 74.4 percent who reported achieving qualifying employment in FY 2015.

- In FY 2016, 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 30.3 percent. This figure represents a slight increase from the 30.2 percent who reported being employed in state VR agencies in FY 2015.

- In FY 2016, 3,524 RSA-supported scholars graduated, representing a decrease from the 4,580 scholars who graduated in FY 2015.

- In FY 2016, there were 1,445 current scholars supported by RSA scholarships, an increase from 1,363 in FY 2015.

Allocations

The allocation of rehabilitation training grant funds for FY 2016 is shown in table 9. All data were 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 9. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FY 2016		
	Number of awards FY 2016[1]	**Grant amount**
Continuation grants		
Rehabilitation Counseling	68	$13,052,434
Rehabilitation Counseling Front Load		$623,795
Vocational Evaluation/Adjustment	1	$149,440
Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill	10	$1,443,241
Rehabilitation of the Blind	8	$1,182,251
Rehabilitation of the Deaf	3	$449,935
CSPD[2] Priority	7	$1,339,457
Long-Term Training continuation subtotal	**97**	**$18,240,553**
CAP[3] Training Grant	1	$200,000
CAP Supplement		$35,000
JDVRTAC[4]		$0
WINTAC[5]	1	$2,609,334
WINTAC Front Load		$1,958,539
WINTAC Supplement		$436,320
Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance		$0
Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance Supplement	1	$300,000
VRTAC[6]-Targeted Communities	1	$1,750,000
VRTAC-Youth	1	$1,499,933
Technical Assistance continuation subtotal	**5**	**$8,789,126**
Continuation total	**102**	**$27,029,679**

[1] The Number of awards FY 2016 column reflects the number of grants that were provided funding in 2016. Those grants for which the full FY 2016 continuation award amount was front loaded in a prior year are not included in the count.

[2] CSPD—Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

[3] CAP—Client Assistance Program

[4] JDVRTAC—Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center

[5] WINTAC—Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center

[6] VRTAC—Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center

Table 9. Rehabilitation Training Program: Number of grants awarded and grant amounts, by type of grant and by year: FY 2016 (*continued*)		
	Number of awards FY 2016[a]	**Grant amount**
New grants		
Interpreter Training for Novice Interpreters	1	$800,000
Interpreter Training for Specialty Areas	4	$1,599,964
New grants total	**5**	**$2,399,964**
Grants total (cont. & new)	**107**	**$29,429,643**
National Clearinghouse Contract		$433,163
Employer Roundtables Contract		$19,114
Peer Review		$4,200
Section 21 set-aside		$301,880
Grand total		**$30,188,000**

Source: U.S. Department of Education, G5 grant management system, FY 2016.

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 have been transferred from the IRI forum website 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 FY 2016, a final publication related to the *Affordable Care Act* was completed and disseminated.

At the end of FY 2016, the IRI project officially ended.

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

RSA's National Clearinghouse for Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM) is designed to house and facilitate the sharing of training and educational materials for the VR community. These activities support RSA's leadership role in supporting the development of skilled VR personnel. Primary users of the NCRTM include but are not limited to RSA staff, VR administrators, RSA stakeholders, Federal partners, discretionary grantees, educators, non-Federal partners, businesses, VR counselors, interpreter educators, certified interpreters, and others.

In May 2016, RSA competitively awarded a new five-year fixed price contract to New Editions Consulting, Inc. The contract includes a one-year base period and four option years. The new contract builds upon the primary activities identified in the first contract and added site improvements recommended by RSA and subject matter experts, more direct integration with the RSA-funded technical assistance centers, a newsletter, a community of practice, a peer review system, and additional support and technical assistance to ensure that materials are Section 508 accessible. Specifically, the contractor provides services across four primary areas:

- Host RSA's web-based technical assistance and training through interactive webinars;
- Host NCRTM, RSA's central repository of technical assistance and training materials, that will be operated and maintained by the contractor, at https://ncrtm.ed.gov/;
- Improve and enhance the overall functions and content on the NCRTM; and

- Provide technical assistance to ensure all materials on the site are Section 508 compliant and review submissions to the NCRTM for content relevance, completeness, and accuracy.

Key contract deliverables from May 1, 2016, through September 30, 2016, included the following:

- Completed improvements to the webinar delivery process;
- Approved design concepts for the redesigned NCRTM;
- Established a monthly newsletter;
- Developed a plan for a peer review process of product submissions to the NCRTM;
- Added new features to the NCRTM that integrate new RSA-funded technical assistance center information, as well as new RSA discretionary grantees, materials, and events into the NCRTM;
- Convened a group of subject matter experts representing the NCRTM key constituencies;
- Provided accessibility consultation and remediation of materials submitted to the NCRTM; and
- Executed an ED approved plan to use Twitter and YouTube.

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) and the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program. Each of these programs directs its advocacy efforts to a particular group of individuals 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.

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 clients and client-applicants with disabilities of all services and benefits available to them through programs authorized under the *Rehabilitation Act* as amended by *WIOA,* including under *Sections 113 and 511,* and *Title I* of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (*ADA*). The CAP, through individual and systemic advocacy, assists and advocates for individuals, including students with disabilities and individuals with disabilities employed at or seeking employment at subminimum wage, and groups in their relationships with projects, programs, and community rehabilitation programs providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act*. This includes providing assistance and representation in pursuing legal, administrative, or other appropriate remedies to ensure the protection of their legal rights in relationship to those projects, programs, and community rehabilitation programs providing services funded under the *Rehabilitation Act*. CAP grantees primarily assist VR consumers and applicants in their relationships with the VR program. Each governor designates a public or private agency to operate a statewide 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" CAP grantees (e.g., those housed within a state VR agency or other agency providing services under the *Rehabilitation Act*) remain.

Overall, according to FY 2016 data collected through the Annual Client Assistance Program Report (RSA-227), CAP grantees nationwide responded to 28,599 requests for

information and provided extensive services to 5,113 individuals. Slightly less than 96 percent of those cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for or recipients of services from the VR program. In 93 percent of all cases, issues were related to the VR process or delivery of VR services. Of the 3,867 individual cases, 1,603 cases (41 percent) were resolved through the CAP explaining the controlling policies to the individual; 747 cases (19 percent) resulted in developing or implementing an IPE; and 590 (15 percent) resulted in reestablishing communication between the individuals and other parties. In addition, 69 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 2016 include the following:

- The California CAP represented a consumer with mental health disabilities who applied for VR services to become a physical therapist. California requires state licensure and a Doctorate in Physical Therapy for employment as a physical therapist. The consumer was a certified Physical Therapy Aid and a Sports Therapy Aid with a bachelor's degree before applying for VR services. The consumer completed assessments that confirmed her eligibility and ability to benefit from the requested VR services. The VR agency denied the consumer's request to pursue a Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Rather, the VR agency told the consumer that it would provide only the VR services needed to obtain employment at her current level of education because they held the opinion that they were only obligated, per state regulations, to provide training services that help consumers secure entry-level employment at their current level of education. The consumer contacted the CAP because she disagreed with the VR agency's decision. The CAP contacted the district administrator to review the consumer's concerns, interests, skills, assessments, and abilities; to express its opinion that the VR agency was misinterpreting the applicable state regulations; and, to advocate for the development of an IPE based on the consumer's informed choice to become a physical therapist. The VR agency again denied the consumer's requests. The CAP requested mediation and an administrative hearing on the consumer's behalf to appeal the denial. The parties, pursuant to the mediation process, were able to come to an agreement that the consumer's IPE would be developed within 30 days based on her vocational goal of becoming a physical therapist, including training services for a doctorate degree at an approved physical therapy program. The CAP then represented the consumer in informal negotiations with the VR agency to develop her IPE. The consumer obtained an IPE that includes the services and supports needed for her to prepare for her career goal because of the CAP's representation.

- The New Jersey CAP intervened on behalf of a man who was diagnosed with cognitive and visual impairments resulting from brain surgery. The consumer, a teacher with 25 years of classroom experience, contacted the CAP when the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS) informed him that they could not assist him. The CAP attended a DVRS meeting with the consumer and advocated for the provision of appropriate VR services, including a 25-day program to evaluate his ability to work within a competitive integrated

environment. The assessment resulted in a report that recommended an additional 60-day assessment. The consumer advised the CAP of his dissatisfaction with the program's recommendation, citing program goals that were unrelated to his vocational goal. Based on the consumer's concerns, the CAP advocated for a short-term cognitive rehabilitation program to address the consumer's residual memory and organizational deficits. The consumer completed the program and shortly afterwards secured part-time employment as a tutor in the school district where he had been employed.

- The Hawaii CAP assisted a man who required assistive technology to maintain full-time employment. The consumer contacted the CAP when the Hawaii Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) informed him that he was ineligible. The consumer's DVR counselor told the CAP advocate that he was found ineligible not because he did not have a qualifying disability, but because it was determined that he was not at risk of losing his job. When asked, the DVR counselor told the CAP advocate that the counselor had not communicated with the consumer's supervisor. The CAP advocate held a conference call with the consumer's DVR counselor and the DVR supervisor, and they agreed that the counselor would contact the client's work supervisor. Shortly thereafter, the consumer was found eligible for DVR services and a meeting was scheduled for him to develop an IPE to acquire the requisite assistive technology to maintain his employment.

- The Missouri CAP assisted a man diagnosed with brittle bone disease and a hearing impairment to obtain VR services from Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (Missouri VR). The consumer sought job training and certifications that would facilitate employment. Missouri VR had previously assisted this consumer to obtain Associate's and Bachelor's Degrees in Information Technology Project Management. The consumer was unable to find employment in this field and, accordingly, identified additional training and certifications that were needed for employment. The CAP advocated with Missouri VR to develop an IPE that was consistent with the individual's Information Technology Project Management goal. The Missouri VR agency agreed to both assist the consumer to obtain the proper certifications for A+, Networking, and Security, and to assist with job placement.

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 program grantees 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 program grantees help to ensure the protection of the rights of individuals with disabilities under Federal and state law in a wide variety of areas, including employment, access to public accommodations, education, housing, and transportation. PAIR program grantees investigate, negotiate, or mediate solutions to problems expressed by individuals with disabilities. Grantees provide information and technical assistance to requesting individuals and organizations. PAIR program grantees 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 equals or exceeds $5.5 million, the secretary of ED must award 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 equals or exceeds $10.5 million, the secretary must award not less than $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 U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, which receive $50,000 each.

Each year, PAIR program grantees 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 the PAIR grantee will address during the year, whether through individual or systemic advocacy.

According to data reported in the FY 2016 Protection & Advocacy of Individual Rights Program Performance Report (RSA-509), PAIR program grantees reported representing 11,626 individuals and responded to 39,260 requests for information or referral during FY 2016. Of the cases the PAIR program grantees handled that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved education (18 percent), government benefits/services (15 percent), healthcare (15 percent), and employment (13 percent). Because PAIR program grantees 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 2016, 50 of the 57 PAIR program grantees (88 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities.

Examples of PAIR activities in FY 2016 include the following:

- A settlement was reached to improve accessibility to University of Washington's basketball arena. Disability Rights Washington filed a lawsuit alleging noncompliance with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* accessibility requirements against the University of Washington after attempts at negotiation stalled. After the systemic lawsuit was filed, negotiations resumed and parties were able to reach a confidential settlement that remedied accessibility issues related to pricing, parking, seating, and physical accessibility to sporting events at the University of Washington's basketball arena. This settlement resulted in an estimated 880 people with disabilities having their right to access this public accommodation enforced.

- Disability Rights Maryland provided advocacy assistance to a seven-year-old student in West Baltimore whose parent was referred by an Out of School Time (OST) program. The student's disruptive behavior and struggles with learning were red flags to OST program staff that his needs were not met during the school day. Disability Rights Maryland was able to assist the student's parent in filing a state complaint claiming that Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) had violated his education rights by failing to properly and timely refer him to the special education process and develop an appropriate educational plan. An investigation determined that BCPS had indeed violated the student's rights; as a result, BCPS provided needed services and awarded compensatory services. The student is now making progress in school and the OST program.

- A lawsuit was brought on behalf of a woman who is blind and dependent on government benefits. Michigan requires beneficiaries to regularly report income and other information. The forms provided to the beneficiaries are in standard format. The client needed them to be in braille, but Michigan refused to provide braille forms. A suit was then filed, and the state agreed to change its policies; it now provides required state forms to beneficiaries in braille.

Programs under the *Rehabilitation Act* Not Administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration

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 for the purpose of conducting periodic reviews of existing employment policies and practices. In addition, these programs are charged with developing and recommending policies and procedures that facilitate the employment of individuals who have received rehabilitation services to ensure compliance with standards prescribed by law.

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.

As discussed below, several Federal agencies have been given enforcement authority to ensure that government agencies and private entities that receive Federal assistance comply with Federal laws governing the employment of individuals with disabilities. These agencies review complaints, conduct investigations, hold public hearings, conduct outreach to the education community, and provide technical assistance. Enforcement may involve various remedies including potential withholding of Federal funds, among others.

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 the *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 *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 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, including the U.S. Department of Education. 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 the *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 https://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 agencies, and at assistive technology and information technology industry seminars and conferences, and it conducts numerous conformance tests of high-visibility e-government-sponsored websites.

The OCIO, in conjunction with the Access Board, the General Services Administration, and a number of other government agencies, also participates in the Interagency Section 508 Working Group, an effort coordinated by the General Services Administration 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 https://www2.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 U.S. Department of Labor 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 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: https://www.dol.gov/ofccp.

NONDISCRIMINATION 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 the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), ED 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 and CRD both enforce *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 https://www2.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 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, the National Council on Disability 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 the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research, and officials of Federal agencies.

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 program, which *WIOA* renamed the Independent Living Services 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 Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC)
- demonstrating ways to expand and improve IL services
- providing IL services
- supporting the operation of Centers for Independent Living
- 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, gathering information, 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, individuals with disabilities, and other persons 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 SILC and submit a State Plan for independent living jointly developed by the SILC chairperson and the directors of the centers for independent living in the state, which is signed by the chairperson of the SILC, the designated state entity director, and not less than 51 percent of the directors for the centers for independent living in the state. 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.

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

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

The Centers for Independent Living program provides grants to consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies for individuals with significant disabilities (regardless of age or income) that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provide an array of independent living services.

At a minimum, centers funded by the program are required to provide the following IL core services: information and referral, IL skills training, peer counseling, individual and systems advocacy, and services that (i) facilitate the transition of individuals with significant disabilities from nursing homes and other institutions to home and community-based residences, with the requisite supports and services; (ii) provide assistance to individuals with significant disabilities who are at risk of entering institutions so that the individuals may remain in the community; and (iii) facilitate the transition to employment and other post-school activities for youth with disabilities who were eligible for individualized education programs under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)) and who have completed their secondary education or otherwise left school. Centers might also provide, among other services, 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 promote the integration and full inclusion of individuals with significant disabilities into the mainstream of American society.

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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: FY 2016

Must Meet 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Arkansas	-31	72.59	86.42	100.00	0.619	27.63	4	3
Connecticut	-9	69.40	87.27	100.00	0.661	22.40	4	3
Delaware	3	74.68	88.14	98.08	0.514	40.38	5	2
Florida	92	57.62	92.74	100.00	0.634	41.39	5	3
Idaho	-12	73.48	97.04	98.78	0.778	12.80	4	3
Iowa	-16	77.88	89.35	100.00	0.757	34.44	5	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 meet 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 meet the indicator. Relatedly, 25 of the 56 general and combined agencies did not meet 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 services 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), FY 2016

Table A-1. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the blind and visually impaired, by indicator and state: FY 2016, *continued*

Must Meet 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Kentucky	-25	78.43	88.89	100.00	0.647	30.30	4	3
Maine	-4	68.37	28.36	100.00	0.757	42.11	3	2
Massachusetts	4	74.06	61.96	100.00	0.755	30.09	5	3
Michigan	-16	42.38	71.56	99.13	0.715	49.34	4	3
Minnesota	24	62.20	89.40	100.00	0.671	37.55	5	3
Missouri	2	77.41	85.87	98.50	0.669	34.83	6	3
Nebraska	-5	47.95	95.73	100.00	0.760	43.75	4	3
New Jersey	-120	64.02	92.70	85.32	0.555	28.30	1	1
New Mexico	-4	35.00	100.00	100.00	0.943	45.24	4	3
New York	30	72.08	84.52	99.25	0.633	35.33	6	3
North Carolina	-190	73.91	99.31	87.80	0.547	35.89	3	1
Oregon	-19	65.17	56.08	100.00	0.878	45.28	4	3
South Carolina	-51	42.31	84.30	100.00	0.658	41.18	4	3
South Dakota	-6	75.08	100.00	95.38	0.634	31.93	5	3
Texas	31	75.11	82.77	98.40	0.533	36.67	5	2
Vermont	7	75.00	60.82	99.04	0.852	31.73	6	3
Virginia	48	62.32	94.21	99.73	0.626	59.89	5	3
Washington	-28	52.25	96.44	99.08	0.727	42.46	4	3

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for general and combined agencies, by indicator and state: FY 2016

Must Meet 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Alabama	5	67.63	95.31	91.46	0.499	80.73	5	2
Alaska	-22	54.26	98.56	95.42	0.558	49.45	3	3
American Samoa	18	100.00	53.49	86.96	N/A	34.78	4	2
Arizona	137	42.02	93.63	99.35	0.494	64.62	4	2
Arkansas	-665	71.76	95.52	96.96	0.616	54.08	5	3
California	105	57.96	91.70	99.77	0.425	68.06	5	2
Colorado	859	62.68	93.95	93.94	0.450	51.15	4	2
Connecticut	123	57.48	98.48	95.38	0.607	37.59	5	3
Delaware	66	62.35	99.50	97.50	0.411	66.19	5	2
District of Columbia	-47	41.04	91.17	97.54	0.339	66.02	3	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] State vocational rehabilitation agencies for 56 general and combined agencies

[c] To meet 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 meet the indicator. Relatedly, 25 of the 56 general and combined agencies did not meet 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 services 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), FY 2016

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for general and combined agencies, by indicator and state: FY 2016, *continued*

Must Meet 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Florida	413	40.82	93.48	99.47	0.493	60.60	4	2
Georgia	1,130	65.01	97.34	91.57	0.413	74.32	5	2
Guam	-14	46.88	93.33	100.00	N/A	64.29	4	3
Hawaii	176	52.19	86.39	98.16	0.585	75.85	5	3
Idaho	67	57.83	98.49	76.79	0.635	50.88	5	3
Illinois	-226	50.43	88.87	99.98	0.395	58.23	3	2
Indiana	-349	55.04	96.40	75.68	0.613	40.62	3	3
Iowa	-97	52.61	99.51	98.92	0.555	60.64	4	3
Kansas	-209	46.71	93.92	96.15	0.481	58.59	3	2
Kentucky	652	50.58	99.69	100.00	0.722	43.12	4	3
Louisiana	-65	48.87	98.03	99.60	0.544	73.71	4	3
Maine	34	46.62	100.00	81.05	0.669	56.09	5	3
Maryland	6	60.75	95.32	100.00	0.400	61.02	5	2
Massachusetts	135	54.90	99.92	99.34	0.415	62.08	4	2
Michigan	168	59.62	97.70	81.81	0.553	70.81	6	3
Minnesota	11	59.95	98.30	100.00	0.467	62.08	5	2
Mississippi	-395	65.22	98.29	78.33	0.685	53.74	5	3
Missouri	107	60.12	95.03	96.85	0.481	65.66	5	2

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for general and combined agencies, by indicator and state: FY 2016, *continued*

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

Must Pass at Least Four of Six 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Montana	-107	38.92	93.41	83.65	0.634	53.01	4	3
Nebraska	-142	68.12	99.80	77.40	0.563	59.55	5	3
Nevada	11	49.83	95.09	94.61	0.537	69.28	5	3
New Hampshire	2	58.85	96.26	93.13	0.497	39.30	4	2
New Jersey	-15	61.23	97.58	100.00	0.411	73.43	4	2
New Mexico	62	37.65	98.93	91.70	0.578	52.35	4	3
New York	-12	57.53	94.27	98.96	0.368	57.87	4	2
North Carolina	-190	53.99	100.00	83.66	0.420	62.84	3	2
North Dakota	6	69.56	99.81	86.19	0.574	55.60	6	3
Northern Mariana Islands	26	63.16	60.42	89.66	N/A	6.90	4	2
Ohio	1,081	50.15	91.22	92.52	0.486	57.36	4	2
Oklahoma	-174	53.84	97.22	91.82	0.547	79.86	4	3
Oregon	252	64.91	95.50	100.00	0.531	48.86	5	3
Pennsylvania	-341	56.13	98.93	100.00	0.495	51.53	3	2
Puerto Rico	172	62.19	99.45	86.64	0.704	94.80	6	3
Rhode Island	4	61.54	99.54	100.00	0.495	61.86	5	2
South Carolina	100	59.75	99.84	96.03	0.555	65.89	6	3
South Dakota	7	59.46	99.87	98.58	0.531	55.23	6	3
Tennessee	-228	58.39	94.69	98.71	0.450	56.22	4	2
Texas	894	63.90	99.73	86.59	0.505	52.86	4	2

Table A-2. Evaluation Standard 1: Employment outcomes reported by state vocational rehabilitation agencies for general and combined agencies, by indicator and state: FY 2016, *continued*

Must Meet 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 met	Number of primary indicators (1.3 to 1.5) in Standard 1 that were met
Performance-level criteria are shown in parentheses for each indicator.								
Utah	-1,534	49.37	99.03	94.82	0.535	65.62	4	3
Vermont	-348	54.46	96.57	99.80	0.578	44.47	3	3
Virginia	-10	52.05	89.47	100.00	0.612	55.88	4	3
Virgin Islands	28	56.02	96.72	100.00	0.392	55.72	5	2
Washington	-142	64.28	90.16	98.22	0.458	53.04	4	2
West Virginia	-287	54.42	99.83	83.33	0.656	56.06	4	3
Wisconsin	-260	55.11	100.00	99.85	0.529	65.24	4	3
Wyoming	-50	56.88	99.35	90.30	0.552	54.28	5	3

Table A-3. 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: FY 2016

State agency[a]	Indicator 2.1: Service rate ratio for individuals from a minority background (≥ .80)[b]	Individuals from a minority background exiting the vocational rehabilitation program[c] *Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.
Arkansas	0.957	222
Connecticut	0.899	78*
Delaware	0.800	30*
Florida	0.988	990
Idaho	1.080	15*
Iowa	0.667	34*
Kentucky	1.040	69*
Maine	0.766	13*
Massachusetts	1.003	107
Michigan	0.866	193
Minnesota	0.835	71*
Missouri	0.901	113
Nebraska	1.008	45*
New Jersey	0.901	273
New Mexico	0.946	44*
New York	1.010	447
North Carolina	0.864	320
Oregon	0.853	48*
South Carolina	0.951	268
South Dakota	0.732	41*
Texas	0.949	1950
Vermont	1.052	5*
Virginia	1.014	270
Washington	0.907	116

[a] Separate agencies in 24 states providing specialized services to inviduals 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 2015–16.

Table A-4. 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: FY 2016

State agency—general and combined	Indicator 2.1: Service rate ratio for individuals from a minority background (≥ .80)	Individuals from a minority background exiting the vocational rehabilitation program *Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.
Alabama	0.973	4,393
Alaska	0.866	757
American Samoa	N/A	71*
Arizona	0.920	3,480
Arkansas	0.915	2,274
California	1.009	20,986
Colorado	1.026	2,170
Connecticut	0.863	1,448
Delaware	0.925	1,430
District of Columbia	1.184	2,612
Florida	0.961	12,700
Georgia	0.853	6,242
Guam	1.250	60*
Hawaii	0.981	1,156
Idaho	0.893	1,027
Illinois	0.958	6,490
Indiana	0.917	2,405
Iowa	0.909	909
Kansas	0.866	1,435
Kentucky	0.872	2,609
Louisiana	1.001	4,361
Maine	0.831	378
Maryland	0.935	4,233
Massachusetts	0.934	3,063
Michigan	0.841	6,595
Minnesota	0.869	1,884
Mississippi	0.860	3,980
Missouri	0.937	3,899
Montana	0.909	573
Nebraska	0.929	1,163
Nevada	0.955	1,182
New Hampshire	0.874	168
New Jersey	0.849	6,214
New Mexico	0.958	2,555

Table A-4. 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: FY 2016, *continued*

State agency—general and combined	Indicator 2.1: Service rate ratio for individuals from a minority background (≥ .80)	Individuals from a minority background exiting the vocational rehabilitation program **Indicates fewer than 100 individuals from minority backgrounds exiting program.*
New York	0.795	17,852
North Carolina	0.994	11,706
North Dakota	0.768	325
Northern Mariana Islands	0.804	138
Ohio	0.863	6,804
Oklahoma	0.912	2,902
Oregon	0.967	1,607
Pennsylvania	0.876	5,781
Puerto Rico	1.208	8,290
Rhode Island	0.855	852
South Carolina	1.008	8,506
South Dakota	0.790	589
Tennessee	0.881	2,529
Texas	0.927	21,070
Utah	0.851	1,597
Vermont	1.018	209
Virginia	0.595	121
Virgin Islands	0.958	4,866
Washington	0.928	3,074
West Virginia	0.893	510
Wisconsin	0.773	4,631
Wyoming	0.898	286

Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Case Service Report (RSA-911), FYs 2015–16.

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: FYs 2015 and 2016

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	2016	3,117,808,380	186,714	175,677	94.09
U.S. Total	2015	3,052,453,598	186,234	176,251	94.64
U.S. Total		2.14	0.26	-0.33	
Total—General and Combined Agencies[d]	2016	2,876,728,396	180,720	169,788	93.95
Total—General and Combined Agencies	2015	2,817,173,739	179,792	169,959	94.53
Total—General and Combined Agencies		2.11	0.52	-0.10	
Total—Agencies for the Blind[e]	2016	241,079,984	5,994	5,889	98.25
Total—Agencies for the Blind	2015	235,279,859	6,442	6,292	97.67
Total—Agencies for the Blind		2.47	-6.95	-6.40	
General/Combined Agencies					
Alabama	2016	62,174,068	4,607	4,213	91.45
Alabama	2015	59,918,424	4,602	4,048	87.96
Alabama		3.76	0.11	4.08	
Alaska	2016	10,393,765	554	529	95.49
Alaska	2015	10,174,845	576	537	93.23
Alaska		2.15	-3.82	-1.49	
American Samoa	2016	932,881	43	37	86.05
American Samoa	2015	921,580	25	17	68.00
American Samoa		1.23	72.00	117.65	
Arizona	2016	68,748,348	1,476	1,467	99.39
Arizona	2015	65,074,283	1,339	1,335	99.70
Arizona		5.65	10.23	9.89	

[a] Total number of individuals with disabilities exiting the vocational rehabilitation program securing employment during the 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 vocational 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 blindess 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 2015–2016; Federal Financial Report (SF-425), FYs 2015–2016.

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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]
Arkansas	2016	33,092,480	2,412	2,340	97.01
Arkansas	2015	32,548,852	3,077	3,013	97.92
Arkansas		1.67	-21.61	-22.34	
California	2016	302,747,126	13,521	13,491	99.78
California	2015	301,569,474	13,416	13,375	99.69
California		0.39	0.78	0.87	
Colorado	2016	42,317,015	2,545	2,382	93.60
Colorado	2015	41,576,303	1,686	1,661	98.52
Colorado		1.78	50.95	43.41	
Connecticut	2016	17,990,946	1,583	1,511	95.45
Connecticut	2015	17,758,059	1,460	1,411	96.64
Connecticut		1.31	8.42	7.09	
Delaware	2016	8,938,638	1,204	1,174	97.51
Delaware	2015	8,750,367	1,138	1,074	94.38
Delaware		2.15	5.80	9.31	
District of Columbia	2016	14,116,707	623	605	97.11
District of Columbia	2015	13,788,513	670	625	93.28
District of Columbia		2.38	-7.01	-3.20	
Florida	2016	151,955,969	5,447	5,418	99.47
Florida	2015	144,117,852	5,034	4,990	99.13
Florida		5.44	8.20	8.58	
Georgia	2016	109,381,181	4,056	3,715	91.59
Georgia	2015	104,461,323	2,926	2,579	88.14
Georgia		4.71	38.62	44.05	
Guam	2016	2,885,287	15	15	100.00
Guam	2015	2,836,152	29	27	93.10
Guam		1.73	-48.28	-44.44	
Hawaii	2016	12,284,163	441	434	98.41
Hawaii	2015	11,555,208	265	264	99.62
Hawaii		6.31	66.42	64.39	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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	2016	16,194,059	2,253	1,737	77.10
Idaho	2015	15,747,967	2,186	1,963	89.80
Idaho		2.83	3.06	-11.51	
Illinois	2016	112,743,914	5,697	5,696	99.98
Illinois	2015	109,582,291	5,923	5,923	100.00
Illinois		2.89	-3.82	-3.83	
Indiana	2016	75,985,951	3,754	2,867	76.37
Indiana	2015	74,769,663	4,103	3,528	85.99
Indiana		1.63	-8.51	-18.74	
Iowa	2016	25,489,251	2,224	2,200	98.92
Iowa	2015	25,533,106	2,321	2,290	98.66
Iowa		-0.17	-4.18	-3.93	
Kansas	2016	28,747,534	1,134	1,093	96.38
Kansas	2015	27,907,803	1,343	1,304	97.10
Kansas		3.01	-15.56	-16.18	
Kentucky	2016	48,550,504	5,150	5,150	100.00
Kentucky	2015	47,391,184	4,498	4,498	100.00
Kentucky		2.45	14.50	14.50	
Louisiana	2016	55,250,730	2,282	2,273	99.61
Louisiana	2015	53,471,877	2,347	2342.00	
Louisiana		3.33	-2.77	-2.95	
Maine	2016	12,912,268	1,166	945	81.05
Maine	2015	12,414,046	1,132	900	79.51
Maine		4.01	3.00	5.00	
Maryland	2016	41,899,699	2,565	2,565	100.00
Maryland	2015	39,892,974	2,559	2,559	100.00
Maryland		5.03	0.23	0.23	
Massachusetts	2016	40,682,328	3,924	3,898	99.34
Massachusetts	2015	39,670,885	3,789	3,760	99.23
Massachusetts		2.55	3.56	3.67	
Michigan	2016	93,655,863	6,821	5,598	82.07
Michigan	2015	93,426,963	6,653	5,611	84.34
Michigan		0.25	2.53	-0.23	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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	2016	39,447,260	3,115	3,115	100.00
Minnesota	2015	38,695,418	3,104	3,104	100.00
Minnesota		1.94	0.35	0.35	
Mississippi	2016	42,989,605	4,212	3,304	78.44
Mississippi	2015	41,636,766	4,607	3,788	82.22
Mississippi		3.25	-8.57	-12.78	
Missouri	2016	58,770,387	5,170	5,013	96.96
Missouri	2015	56,827,495	5,063	4,910	96.98
Missouri		3.42	2.11	2.10	
Montana	2016	11,511,355	622	524	84.24
Montana	2015	11,405,873	729	638	87.52
Montana		0.92	-14.68	-17.87	
Nebraska	2016	14,918,182	2,026	1,569	77.44
Nebraska	2015	15,148,030	2,168	1,550	71.49
Nebraska		-1.52	-6.55	1.23	
Nevada	2016	25,605,404	897	851	94.87
Nevada	2015	24,188,896	886	816	92.10
Nevada		5.86	1.24	4.29	
New Hampshire	2016	10,829,085	1,044	972	93.10
New Hampshire	2015	11,099,461	1,042	1,005	96.45
New Hampshire		-2.44	0.19	-3.28	
New Jersey	2016	47,941,770	3,803	3,803	100.00
New Jersey	2015	46,066,991	3,818	3,818	100.00
New Jersey		4.07	-0.39	-0.39	
New Mexico	2016	20,373,730	840	771	91.79
New Mexico	2015	19,597,006	778	720	92.54
New Mexico		3.96	7.97	7.08	
New York	2016	122,950,430	11,272	11,136	98.79
New York	2015	118,851,132	11,284	11,146	98.78
New York		3.45	-0.11	-0.09	
North Carolina	2016	94,538,646	6,127	5,126	83.66
North Carolina	2015	91,459,551	6,317	5,305	83.98
North Carolina		3.37	-3.01	-3.37	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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	2016	10,393,765	537	463	86.22
North Dakota	2015	10,174,845	531	483	90.96
North Dakota		2.15	1.13	-4.14	
Northern Marianas	2016	817,456	48	45	93.75
Northern Marianas	2015	800,202	22	15	68.18
Northern Marianas		2.16	118.18	200.00	
Ohio	2016	129,344,935	6,643	6,186	93.12
Ohio	2015	128,337,515	5,562	5,440	97.81
Ohio		0.78	19.44	13.71	
Oklahoma	2016	41,677,157	2,125	1,956	92.05
Oklahoma	2015	42,579,635	2,299	2,115	92.00
Oklahoma		-2.12	-7.57	-7.52	
Oregon	2016	36,061,861	2,975	2,975	100.00
Oregon	2015	34,435,454	2,723	2,715	99.71
Oregon		4.72	9.25	9.58	
Pennsylvania	2016	125,507,083	8,438	8,438	100.00
Pennsylvania	2015	126,288,054	8,779	8,778	99.99
Pennsylvania		-0.62	-3.88	-3.87	
Puerto Rico	2016	69,213,071	3,115	2,698	86.61
Puerto Rico	2015	69,178,100	2,943	2,558	86.92
Puerto Rico		0.05	5.84	5.47	
Rhode Island	2016	10,393,765	648	648	100.00
Rhode Island	2015	10,174,845	644	644	100.00
Rhode Island		2.15	0.62	0.62	
South Carolina	2016	51,194,069	6,806	6,536	96.03
South Carolina	2015	49,644,374	6,706	6,368	94.96
South Carolina		3.12	1.49	2.64	
South Dakota	2016	8,315,012	776	765	98.58
South Dakota	2015	8,139,876	769	764	99.35
South Dakota		2.15	0.91	0.13	
Tennessee	2016	73,971,149	2,130	2,104	98.78
Tennessee	2015	72,800,670	2,358	2,296	97.37
Tennessee		1.61	-9.67	-8.36	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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	2016	194,511,702	14,135	12,241	86.60
Texas	2015	193,482,551	13,241	11,659	88.05
Texas		0.53	6.75	4.99	
Utah	2016	32,465,380	1,968	1,867	94.87
Utah	2015	31,690,616	3,502	3,306	94.40
Utah		2.44	-43.80	-43.53	
Vermont	2016	9,146,513	1,574	1,571	99.81
Vermont	2015	8,953,864	1,922	1,916	99.69
Vermont		2.15	-18.11	-18.01	
Virgin Islands	2016	2,004,545	38	38	100.00
Virgin Islands	2015	1,985,438	48	48	100.00
Virgin Islands		0.96	-20.83	-20.83	
Virginia	2016	58,115,675	4,060	4,060	100.00
Virginia	2015	57,165,260	4,032	4,032	100.00
Virginia		1.66	0.69	0.69	
Washington	2016	47,593,772	3,049	2,997	98.29
Washington	2015	46,529,202	3,191	3,127	97.99
Washington		2.29	-4.45	-4.16	
West Virginia	2016	25,790,582	1,803	1,502	83.31
West Virginia	2015	25,432,131	2,090	1,812	86.70
West Virginia		1.41	-13.73	-17.11	
Wisconsin	2016	59,870,610	4,615	4,608	99.85
Wisconsin	2015	59,369,649	4,875	4,869	99.88
Wisconsin		0.84	-5.33	-5.36	
Wyoming	2016	10,393,765	612	553	90.36
Wyoming	2015	10,174,845	662	580	87.61
Wyoming		2.15	-7.55	-4.66	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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]
Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired					
Arkansas	2016	4,512,611	304	304	100.00
Arkansas	2015	4,438,480	366	366	100.00
Arkansas		1.67	-16.94	-16.94	
Connecticut	2016	3,174,873	105	105	100.00
Connecticut	2015	3,133,775	115	115	100.00
Connecticut		1.31	-8.70	-8.70	
Delaware	2016	1,455,127	30	29	96.67
Delaware	2015	1,424,478	29	29	100.00
Delaware		2.15	3.45	0.00	
Florida	2016	31,123,512	813	813	100.00
Florida	2015	29,518,114	771	771	100.00
Florida		5.44	5.45	5.45	
Idaho	2016	2,527,397	84	82	97.62
Idaho	2015	2,457,775	85	85	100.00
Idaho		2.83	-1.18	-3.53	
Iowa	2016	5,978,960	68	68	100.00
Iowa	2015	5,989,247	101	101	100.00
Iowa		-0.17	-32.67	-32.67	
Kentucky	2016	7,903,571	249	249	100.00
Kentucky	2015	7,714,844	282	282	100.00
Kentucky		2.45	-11.70	-11.70	
Maine	2016	2,931,006	112	112	100.00
Maine	2015	2,817,912	89	89	100.00
Maine		4.01	25.84	25.84	
Massachusetts	2016	7,179,234	266	266	100.00
Massachusetts	2015	7,000,745	265	265	100.00
Massachusetts		2.55	0.38	0.38	
Michigan	2016	16,527,505	138	138	100.00
Michigan	2015	16,487,111	182	180	98.90
Michigan		0.25	-24.18	-23.33	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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	2016	8,659,155	140	140	100.00
Minnesota	2015	8,494,116	143	143	100.00
Minnesota		1.94	-2.10	-2.10	
Missouri	2016	8,781,782	273	272	99.63
Missouri	2015	8,491,465	272	266	97.79
Missouri		3.42	0.37	2.26	
Nebraska	2016	2,736,471	67	67	100.00
Nebraska	2015	2,778,633	50	50	100.00
Nebraska		-1.52	34.00	34.00	
New Jersey	2016	11,985,443	211	159	75.36
New Jersey	2015	11,516,748	296	273	92.23
New Jersey		4.07	-28.72	-41.76	
New Mexico	2016	4,624,712	22	22	100.00
New Mexico	2015	4,448,400	20	20	100.00
New Mexico		3.96	10.00	10.00	
New York	2016	23,419,129	563	558	99.11
New York	2015	22,638,311	542	540	99.63
New York		3.45	3.87	3.33	
North Carolina	2016	15,390,012	370	334	90.27
North Carolina	2015	14,888,764	497	428	86.12
North Carolina		3.37	-25.55	-21.96	
Oregon	2016	5,151,694	60	60	100.00
Oregon	2015	4,919,351	129	129	100.00
Oregon		4.72	-53.49	-53.49	
South Carolina	2016	7,649,689	105	105	100.00
South Carolina	2015	7,418,125	137	137	100.00
South Carolina		3.12	-23.36	-23.36	
South Dakota	2016	2,078,753	115	114	99.13
South Dakota	2015	2,034,969	123	113	91.87
South Dakota		2.15	-6.50	0.88	
Texas	2016	48,627,926	1,456	1,453	99.79
Texas	2015	48,370,638	1,486	1,449	97.51
Texas		0.53	-2.02	0.28	

Table B. Grant awards to state vocational rehabilitation agencies and number and percentage of individuals with disabilities employed, by type of disability and jurisdiction: FYs 2015 and 2016 *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]
Vermont	2016	1,247,252	81	81	100.00
Vermont	2015	1,220,981	90	89	98.89
Vermont		2.15	-10.00	-8.99	
Virginia	2016	8,683,952	197	196	99.49
Virginia	2015	1,220,981	90	89	98.89
Virginia		611.23	118.89	120.22	
Washington	2016	8,730,218	165	162	98.18
Washington	2015	8,534,942	172	172	100.00
Washington		2.29	-4.07	-5.81	

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