

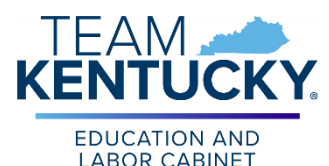
2024

ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024

Developed by and for the Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation in conjunction with the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

STRATEGIZING FOR OUR FUTURE



Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet • Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
Mayo Underwood Building, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Kentucky Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires that each state establishes a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) that partners and collaborates with the state's vocational rehabilitation agency regarding the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities. In Kentucky, the Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR) serves as the state's SRC. The SCVR reviews agency data, surveys and reports, provides input and makes recommendations to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to ensure the employment needs of persons with disabilities in the state are met.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 361.17(h)(5), SCVR has prepared this annual report for the Governor and the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

Mission

The mission of the Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation for the state of Kentucky is to analyze policies, programs, and services, make recommendations, and advise/partner with the agency and its stakeholders.

Vision

The vision of this endeavor is to ensure the services, policies, and programs are consumer-oriented and consumer-driven resulting in meaningful employment, self-sufficiency, and independence.

Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

OVR provides the support needed to assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment. Their beliefs are embedded in the OVR vision, mission and core value statements outlined below.

Vision

All Kentuckians with disabilities have an opportunity to be an essential part of Kentucky's workforce and their communities.

Mission

To empower Kentuckians with disabilities to maximize independence and economic security through competitive, integrated employment.

Core Values

OVR recognizes and respects the talents and contributions of all individuals as a vital part of a productive society. Therefore, OVR values:

- The rights, merit, and dignity of all persons with disabilities;
- Independence for Kentuckians with disabilities;
- Diversity, inclusion, and belonging;
- Competitive, integrated employment;
- Career advancement and economic security; and
- Collaborative efforts and partnerships.

The Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation

Strategizing for Our Future

The Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR) chose the theme “Strategizing for Our Future” because it accurately describes the activities that occurred during federal fiscal year 2024 (FFY 2024).

The SCVR made a recommendation to the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to hold a retreat for members to connect with one another and implement a plan to better carry out the functions of the council in FFY 2023. The recommendation was accepted by OVR, and a plan was made to fulfill the recommendation.

During FFY 2024, the SCVR, along with OVR, planned and executed its first two-phased strategic planning retreat. OVR provided resources to secure a facilitator, interpreters and accommodations needed for the councilmembers to participate in the strategic planning activities.

On June 10, the SCVR held the first phase of the strategic planning conference at Marriott East Louisville. The facilitator led discussions on various topics and introduced interactive activities that allowed members to work together and learn more about one another. A vision for the council was discussed, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis was performed, and important themes to consider were brought to the forefront, such as commitment, advocacy and training. At the end of the session, members produced a new vision and mission statement, and several goals were drafted.

On June 20, the second phase of the strategic planning conference was held virtually. The executive committee attended this half-day event to summarize and finalize the drafted goals, objectives and strategies with measures for the first year of the three-year strategic plan.

The following are the priority goals in the SCVR Strategic Plan 2024-2027.



Identify and address areas of need by analyzing additional information in order to better support OVR.



Proactively communicate policy changes and other factors that may impact consumers to improve knowledge of and access to available services.



Encourage interest in council service and member engagement to ensure diverse perspectives and consumer voices.

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Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR)

Letter from the SCVR Chairperson

On behalf of the Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation, I am pleased to present *Strategizing for Our Future*, our annual report for FFY 2024. Our past year was very productive and engaging. We heard from a variety of speakers on topics ranging from benefits counseling, rehabilitation, and assistive technology to voting and Medicaid waivers, to name a few.

The Council worked on a strategic plan for the first time since I have been a councilmember. We hope this will give the Council guidance and insight into how best to assist OVR central office, counselors in the field offices and most importantly, the consumers of services.

We want to improve the dialogue among all parties and increase opportunities for all consumers. Our hope is that every consumer truly benefits from the amazing services OVR offers and experiences the dedication of professionals who work hard every day to help Kentuckians with disabilities achieve gainful and competitive employment.

David Allgood,
Outgoing Chairperson
Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation



Pictured: David Allgood, SCVR Chairperson, and Katrina Read with Tropical Smoothie of Owensboro

Employer Recognition Award

During the April SCVR quarterly meeting, Tropical Smoothie of Owensboro was presented the Employer Recognition Award with Katrina Read accepting a certificate on behalf of the employer.

With the hiring of three employees with disabilities through the Supported Employment program, Tropical Smoothie has demonstrated a commitment to hiring individuals with disabilities and implementing strategies for success. Tropical Smoothie employment specialists create unique individualized approaches to assist employees in reaching their job goals. This is achieved utilizing the employee's natural skills set, visuals with words and pictures for employees to associate and complete tasks, and alphabetizing supplies to make it easier to complete orders. In addition, Tropical Smoothie offers an inclusive environment that allows each employee to work at their own pace and style.

Congratulations, Tropical Smoothie of Owensboro, for hiring individuals with disabilities, identifying their natural skills, and setting them up to succeed in the workforce!

SCVR Member Statements on the Strategic Planning Conference

Todd Stephens

"The strategic planning activities on June 10th and 20th provided the forum needed to appreciate one another's strengths as we participated collectively in formulating a plan. It is vital to know our purpose as well as having clearly defined and measurable goals and objectives. This plan is the start of ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of our Council."

Todd is a Member-At-Large, and serves on both Blind Services, and Nominating and Bylaws committees.

Joe Cowan

"During the strategic planning sessions on June 10th and 20th, I noticed how well we worked together as a team, sharing our ideas and thoughts. I believe these efforts will serve as a motivational factor in the future, and it will give the councilmembers specific guidelines to follow."

Joe is the SCVR Vice-Chairperson, and serves on both Blind Services, and Nominating and Bylaws committees.

Necholyia (Nicky) Wright

"The transparency among the group and the individuals available to address the questions in real-time was most beneficial from the strategic planning activities on June 10th. Members were able to identify what changes needed to be made to better assist OVR and ultimately the recipients of services through the work of SCVR. The strategic plan will keep the Council on task, staying true to the mission and vision established by the Council."

Necholyia serves as the Chairperson of the Policy and Planning Committee.

Kelly Bass

"It was great to come together, face-to-face, and put names with faces to discuss actual planning concepts and a path for moving the Council forward. The activities promoted more communication, more engagement and overall motivation for members. The outcome was the SCVR strategic plan which will give us a road map towards our goals and what we hope to achieve for the Council."

Kelly serves on both the Blind Services, and Public Awareness and Legislative committees.

Kellie Smith

"I loved the facilitation as well as the opportunity to come together, sit together, talk and get to know one another. I believe there is a clearer understanding of the Council's role and the expectations of its members due to this process. As a result, we will be able to have a written plan. I am sincerely looking forward to the upcoming year with a newly defined focus."

Kellie serves as Chairperson of the Public Awareness and Legislative Committee.

Mary Teresa (Terrie) Terlau

"The most beneficial part of the strategic planning activities on June 10th was learning the variety of thoughts and opinions expressed about how SCVR can provide input to OVR. The Council will have a better sense of what we need to do to focus on VR consumer needs and bring these to OVR. In the future SCVR will be able to evaluate its own performance against goals that are set in the strategic plan."

Terrie serves on both the Blind Services, and Consumer Services and Program Evaluation committees.

Briana Sweatt

"I found the conversation surrounding the different committees and their duties to be the most interesting and helpful. I think breaking down the responsibilities of the committees is key to running a successful council. The benefit of the strategic plan is having goals and a clearer picture on what we are here to do. Ultimately, it will make the Council more productive and cohesive."

Briana serves on both Consumer Services and Program Evaluation, and Blind Services committees.

Christopher White

"The facilitator did a great job helping the Council narrow down key areas of importance. Everyone involved truly made an effort to communicate their ideas. The discussions were well thought out and brought a better sense of working as a team to support OVR's work. Building better communication between the Council and staff will help to identify and address areas of need and develop clearer goals. The strategic plan built a framework of purpose for the Council, and it will help build an even better partnership with OVR."

Chris serves as Chairperson of the Nominating and Bylaws Committee, and as a member of the Public Awareness and Legislative Committee.

Allison Johnson

"The June 10th strategic planning session really helped me better understand all the different components and subcommittees of the SCVR as a new member. The activities furthered my understanding of all the many moving parts that build the whole. The strategic plan will enable the council to act with deliberation and forethought to efficiently and effectively advise OVR leadership. By setting goals and developing a plan, the SCVR will be better equipped to assist in OVR's continuous improvement cycle, providing ever-improving, high-quality services to the people of Kentucky."

Allison serves on the Policy and Planning Committee.

Danielle Burton

"The strategic planning sessions were helpful to identify where our strengths and weaknesses exist as a council. I believe it will help guide the council in taking the necessary steps to ensure they work together and with OVR to ensure consumers receive high-quality services. The benefit of having a strategic plan will help determine whether the council is meeting its goals and where it may fall short in the future."

Danielle serves as Chairperson of the Blind Services Committee.

Executive Director's Office

Letter from the Executive Director



The future is complex and there are many unknowns. This past year, the council looked to the future and how to best assist the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

The council envisioned what the next few decades might look like, and asked the question, "how should OVR respond with new services or different ways of working to meet the demands of an ever-changing workforce?".

Through the strategic planning process, the council took the time to listen carefully to ideas with an open mind. They did a good job of obtaining the information needed to make good, solid decisions.

I want to thank the council for their hard work and support this past year. The council has been instrumental in carrying out its responsibilities to review, evaluate and advise OVR to improve vocational rehabilitation services.

In addition to the strategic planning process, the council worked with the agency on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), the state plan, policy development, and rate increases for service fee memorandums. As we begin another year, I think there is much to achieve, and together, we can make a significant impact in the lives of individuals with disabilities in Kentucky.

Cora McNabb
Executive Director

Employment First Council

"The Employment First Council serves to promote competitive integrated employment as the first and primary option for persons with disabilities to help meet the talent demands of Kentucky's workforce."

During FFY 2024, the Kentucky Employment First Council has made significant strides in developing new partnerships to address and eliminate barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities across the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Some of these accomplishments include partnering with other agencies, stakeholders and advocates, and receiving technical assistance from nationally renowned subject-matter experts through Project NEON.

In 2024, OVR was awarded 300 hours of technical assistance through Project NEON to bolster the Employment First Council and its leadership in their ongoing mission while also assisting the OVR to build provider capacity.

Some notable initiatives include:

- An ongoing collaboration with the Retaining Employment and Talent After injury/illness Network Kentucky program (Kentucky RETAIN) offering a monthly Employer Seminar Series.
- A three-part webinar series titled "Enhancing Employer Engagement" to equip community rehabilitation providers with effective strategies for employer outreach.
- Ongoing resource collection from the Advocacy and Education Committee, creating a knowledge base for advocates, providers, employers, parents and educators.
- Continuous review of policies to identify and eliminate employment barriers. This included providing input on funding and rate structures for supported employment to the main funders of the service, 1915c Medicaid waiver programs and OVR. In addition, it has pointed to opportunities for education around existing policy, and the expansion of resources for OVR, community rehabilitation providers and Kentuckians with disabilities who desire to be employed.
- Presentations on Employment First were shared across the commonwealth to providers, OVR staff, workforce organizations, employers, education associations, people with disabilities and families.

As the Employment First Council continues its work, it remains committed to its mission to ensure all Kentuckians, regardless of disability, can contribute to Kentucky's workforce. In FFY 2024, the council is moving forward to implement solid strategies to address and eliminate barriers to employment.

OVR Agency Updates

RETAIN KY

The Kentucky OVR is the lead agency for Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network Kentucky program (RETAIN Kentucky). RETAIN Kentucky enrolls people whose injuries or illnesses were not work-related and provides return-to-work (RTW) coordination services to all treatment enrollees.

The RETAIN Kentucky program uses a vocational rehabilitation model, in contrast to other RETAIN states, which use an occupational medicine model. Whereas the occupational medicine model helps people get as healthy as possible to return to work, the vocational rehabilitation model considers employment as a contributing factor to a person's recovery process and health outcomes. This places employment as an important component to a person's overall well-being as well as economic future.

During FFY 2024, RETAIN Kentucky focused on continuing to build partnerships and provide learning opportunities intended to sustain systems changes to support early stay-at-work (SAW)/RTW strategies well beyond the grant period. RETAIN Kentucky also continued to promote multisystem improvement, innovation and change.

RETAIN Kentucky continued to promote recruitment and enrollment among organizations that serve historically underserved communities. These organizations included Family Resource Centers located in public schools and the Kentucky Rural Health Association, which focuses on equitable access to healthcare for people living in rural underserved areas. In addition, program staff worked with other entities—including the University of Kentucky extension offices, libraries and police departments—to disseminate RETAIN Kentucky materials.

RETAIN Kentucky's enrollment started slowly but increased sharply to 34% midway through the enrollment period after adding an online clinical research recruitment platform as a referral source, improving referral processes, offering potential enrollees an incentive to join and streamlining OVR referrals. Additionally, one of the lead healthcare partners had existing initiatives in place to reach and serve communities that historically have been underserved. At the end of the recruitment period in May 2024, RETAIN Kentucky had enrolled 3,167 and was just 43 short of meeting the goal of 3,200.

Program Policy and Quality Assurance

Strategically Moving the Agency Forward Though Policy and Procedure

The Program Policy and Quality Assurance Branch oversees agency policy and procedure development and coordinates with agency leadership for approvals leading to implementation.

During the past year, the branch has focused on reviewing and proposing updates for written policy and procedures for staff concerning services for consumers. Proposed revisions provide guidance and clarity on expectations to meet federal and state requirements while still allowing counselors to work with autonomy and attention to serving consumers' individual strengths, capabilities, interests and informed consent. While the team has made significant progress over the past year, there is still work needed to complete the project.

In addition to the focus on consumer service policies and procedures, an expanded push was made to address internal controls for financial requirements and administrative functions. For example, the branch worked closely with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Quality Management (VRTAC-QM) to update the internal case quality assurance to a more robust process for increased compliance with federal requirements. The revisions address quality assurance throughout the span of the case. As a component of this process, a team was established to provide additional support, training and policy recommendations for counselors.

Overall, having uniform guidance for the agency and clear policy and procedure expectations for staff will ensure the OVR is firmly positioned on the path of success for their consumers.

Training and Development

The OVR has made significant strides during the FFY24 in utilizing training opportunities to enhance staff capabilities and, ultimately, improve the services offered to consumers. Planning and implementing strategic training opportunities enables OVR to connect employees and consumers with resources that will extend OVR's mission and maximize its impact across the commonwealth.

In May 2024, a statewide training conference was held for all members of OVR staff to lay the groundwork for consistent, high-quality service delivery that reinforces the agency's mission to empower Kentuckians with disabilities. After positive feedback from staff, OVR is planning another statewide conference in 2025. Additionally, the ongoing Skills Enhancement Training (SET) ensures that both new and seasoned staff, especially those in field services, remain proficient in their roles and maintain the level of service that OVR consumers deserve. In August 2024, OVR also held a Supported Employment Training for staff members and community rehabilitation providers (CRPs). This opportunity fostered collaborative efforts that will support competitive, integrated employment opportunities.

The upcoming Pre-Employment Transition Services (pre-ETS) conference will provide both school districts and OVR with a collaborative platform meant to enhance postsecondary readiness measures and advance the success of Kentuckians with disabilities. The training development team is also in the beginning stages of planning regional staff training on a new case management system to elevate consumer services. All these continuous efforts strategically position the agency to advance its vision of creating opportunities for Kentuckians with disabilities to be active, essential contributors to the workforce and their communities.

OVR Outreach

The OVR has reorganized its outreach program to establish a more uniform and streamlined process for the agency. With consumer growth and strategic partnerships, the agency is focused on ensuring the foundational outreach messages and materials are standardized across the state.

As part of the OVR Strategic Plan, a statewide outreach needs assessment was performed in 2023 to determine the resources needed by staff to adequately represent the agency at public events. The agency coordinated with the Education and Labor Cabinet's Office of Communication to develop and design public awareness resources and a process for securing materials. In addition, staff across the agency were surveyed for input regarding the materials and items needed to support field offices.

As a result of the assessment, survey and strategic planning, the OVR wrote Preliminary Guidance for Outreach with updated standards and distributed it to all staff. The guidance details processes ranging from the materials used for various types of events to vetting documents to utilize. In addition, OVR selected an outreach coordinator in the central office to be the point of contact for information and to coordinate resources for all events to help the agency accurately record and centralize activities statewide.

During the federal fiscal year, the agency has participated in more than 30 days of outreach, including county community resource fairs, high school career and transition fairs, Kentucky State Fair, Southern Kentucky Economic Development, Kentucky Refugee and Immigrant Inclusion Summit, Sanctuary Outreach, and Special Needs Expo.

While OVR has always performed outreach, the new streamlined process and standardized materials will set the agency up for success as it grows. By identifying a centralized coordinator to track and record all outreach efforts, the agency can utilize that information to make strategic decisions and better equip Kentuckians with disabilities in learning about resources in the state that will help them achieve their vocational goals.



Jason Herron, left, VR counselor certified, and Chad Hunt, OVR administrator for Division of Blind Services, provided information at the Hispanic Fair on April 18, 2024.



Dorothy Jenkins, Pre-ETS administrator, discusses OVR with a member of the public at the Kentucky Refugee

2024 State Plan

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), requires each state submit a unified or combined state plan to obtain federal funding. The 2024 Kentucky WIOA state plan details the current integrated workforce system and a comprehensive strategy for its development to meet the needs and demands of the state for the next four years.

Along with other core programs within Kentucky's workforce development system, OVR prepared and submitted its portion of the plan. The OVR described how the agency would provide services through established programs and utilize resources to be effective and accountable.

In partnership with the SCVR, OVR planned and held five forums to gain public input and feedback. The SCVR participated in the planning of state plan forums and provided input during discussions. The last forum was held on Oct. 24, 2023.

With information from the public forums and the 2023 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), the agency revised its strategic plan goals and strategies to focus on areas of improvement to meet the needs of Kentuckians with disabilities. The OVR strategic plan was presented to and approved by the SCVR, and is available for public viewing on the [Vocational Rehabilitation website](#).

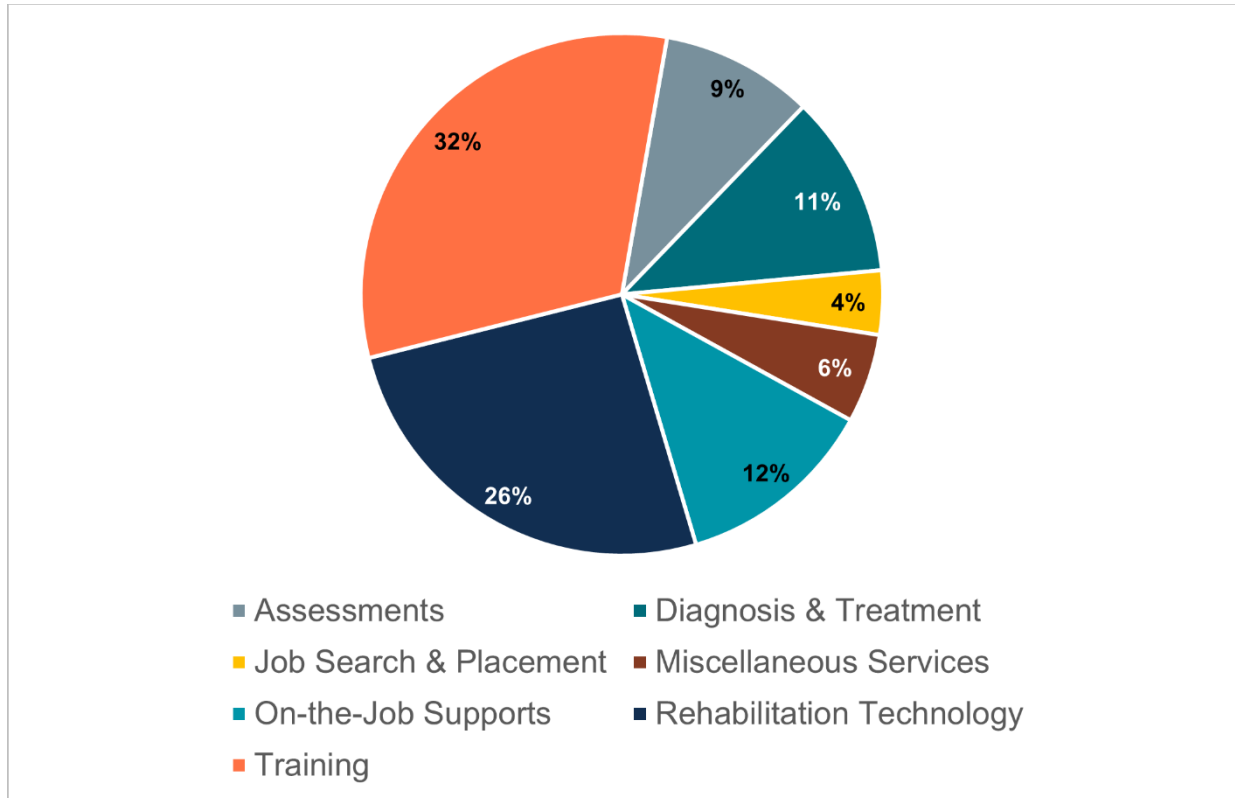
The OVR continues to utilize the state plan as an effective and strategic guide to providing services for all Kentuckians with disabilities, especially individuals with the most significant disabilities, across the state.

Agency Statistics

OVR Data At-A-Glance

Expenditures

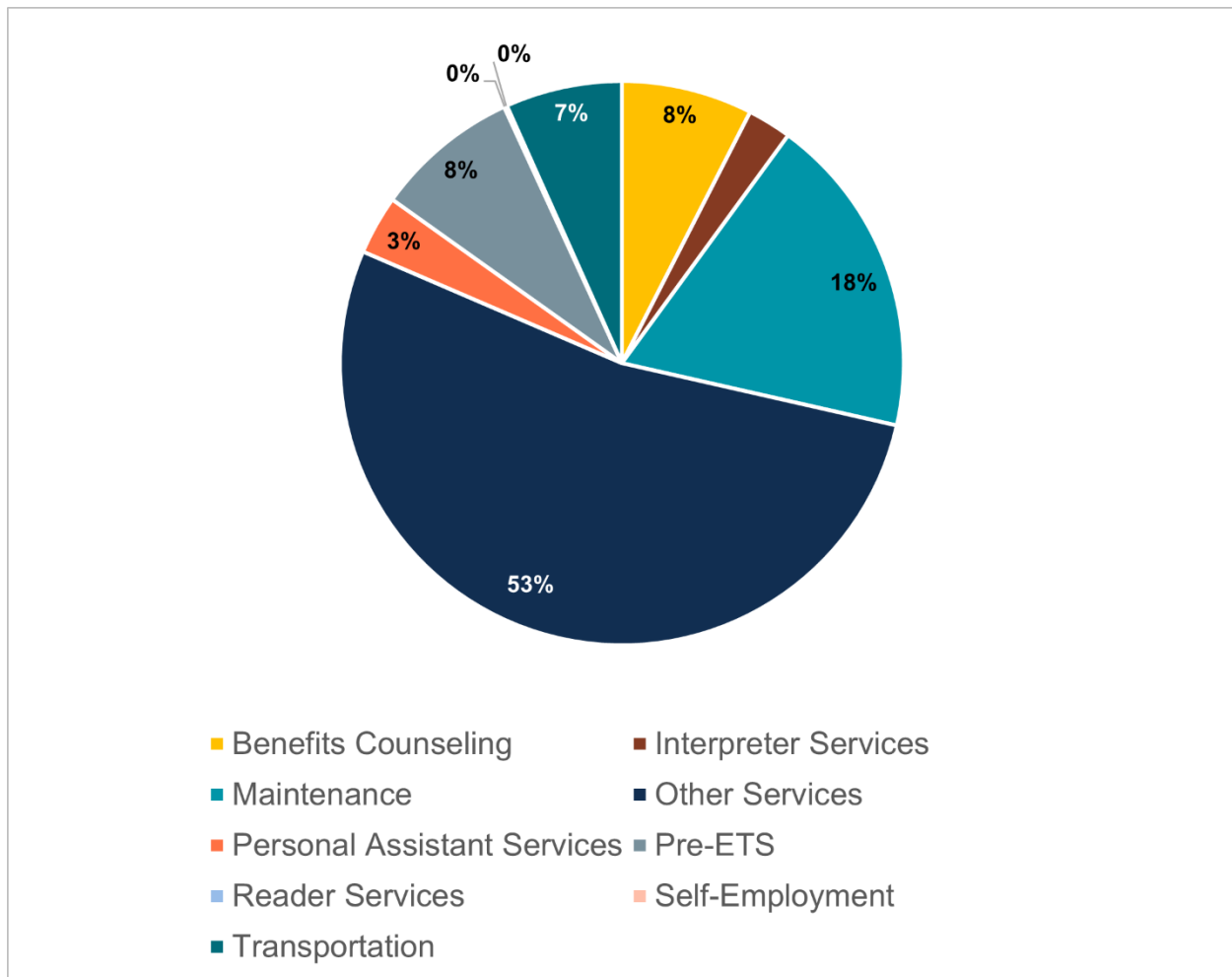
Total Expenditures



Type of Service	Amount Expended
Assessment	\$3,809,119.22
Diagnosis & Treatment	\$4,547,469.28
Job Search & Placement	\$1,600,310.00
Miscellaneous Services	\$2,220,860.41
On-the-Job Supports	\$4,996,659.85
Rehabilitation Technology	\$10,342,568.02
Training	\$12,769,865.99

Total Expenditures: \$40,286,852.77

Miscellaneous Services

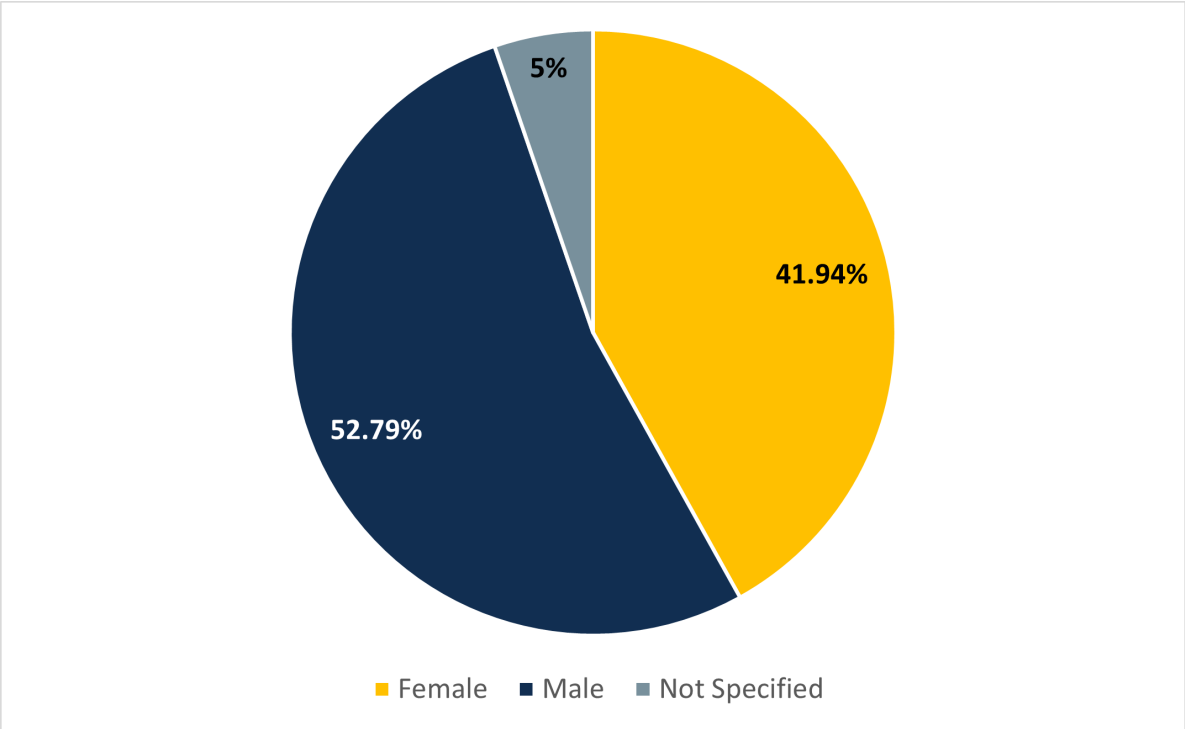


Type of Service	Amount Expended
Benefits Counseling	\$167,074.99
Interpreter Services	\$55,967.50
Maintenance	\$410,933.90
Other Services	\$1,175,340.90
Personal Assistant Services	\$75,077.21
Pre-ETS	\$184,004.71
Reader Services	\$1,615.40
Self-Employment	\$2,264.00
Transportation	\$148,581.80

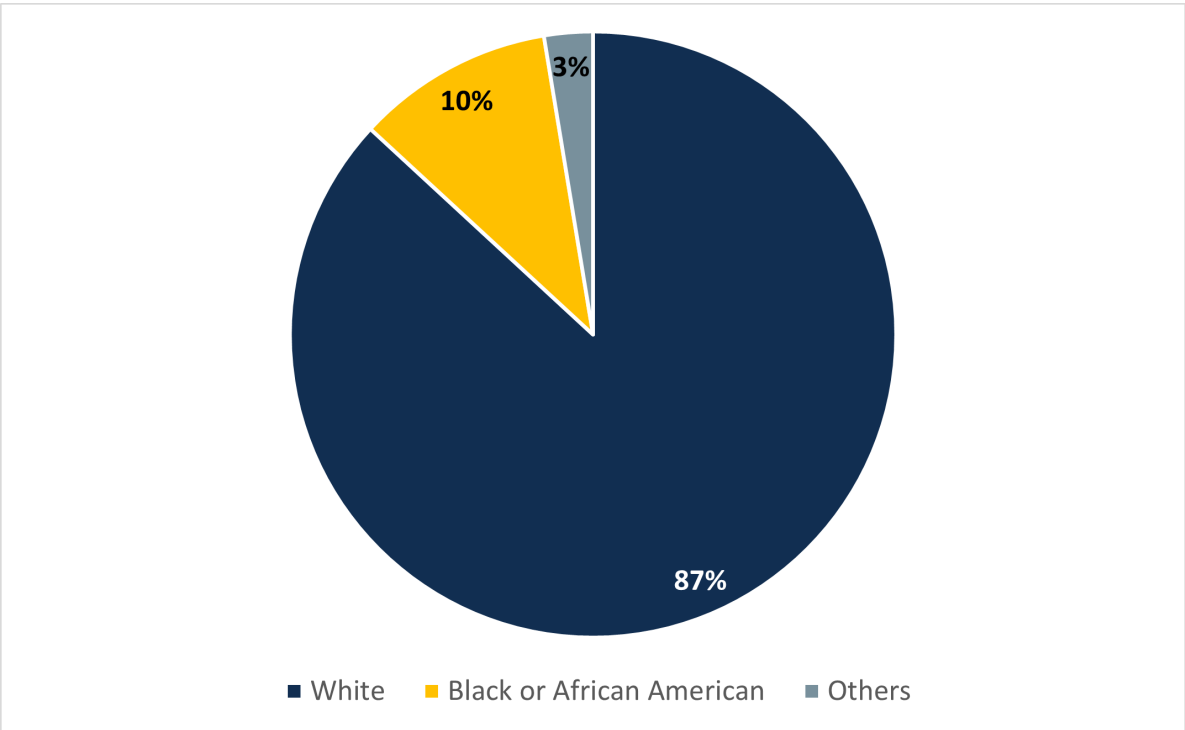
*An additional \$7,551,976.04 of contracted pre-ETS services were expended.

Consumer Demographics

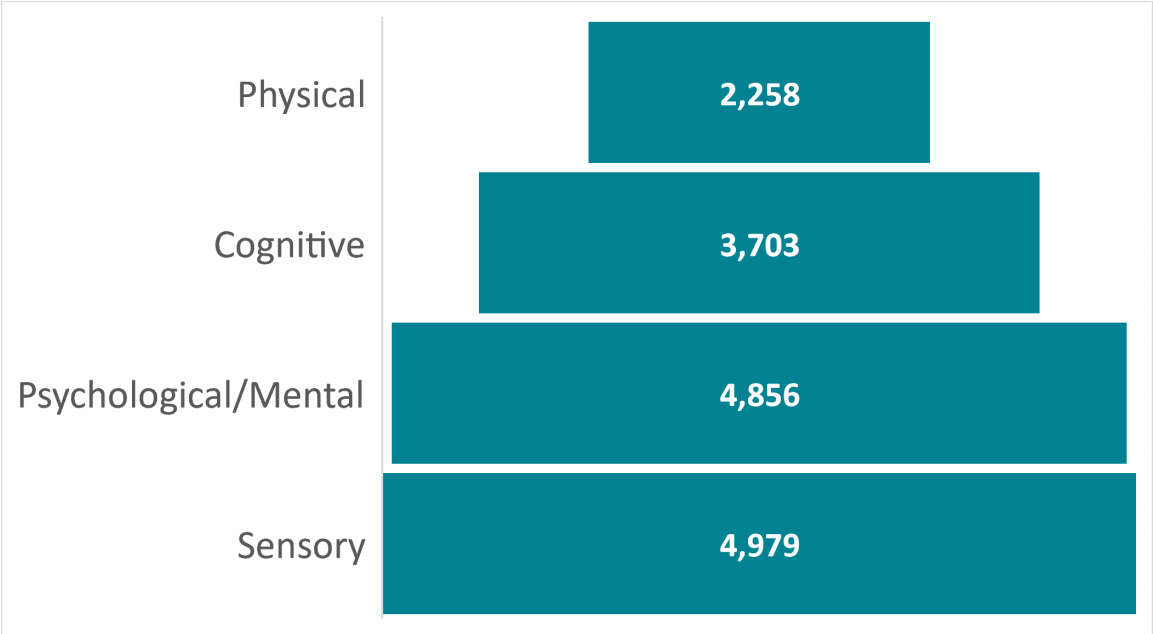
Consumer Identified Gender



Consumer Identified Race

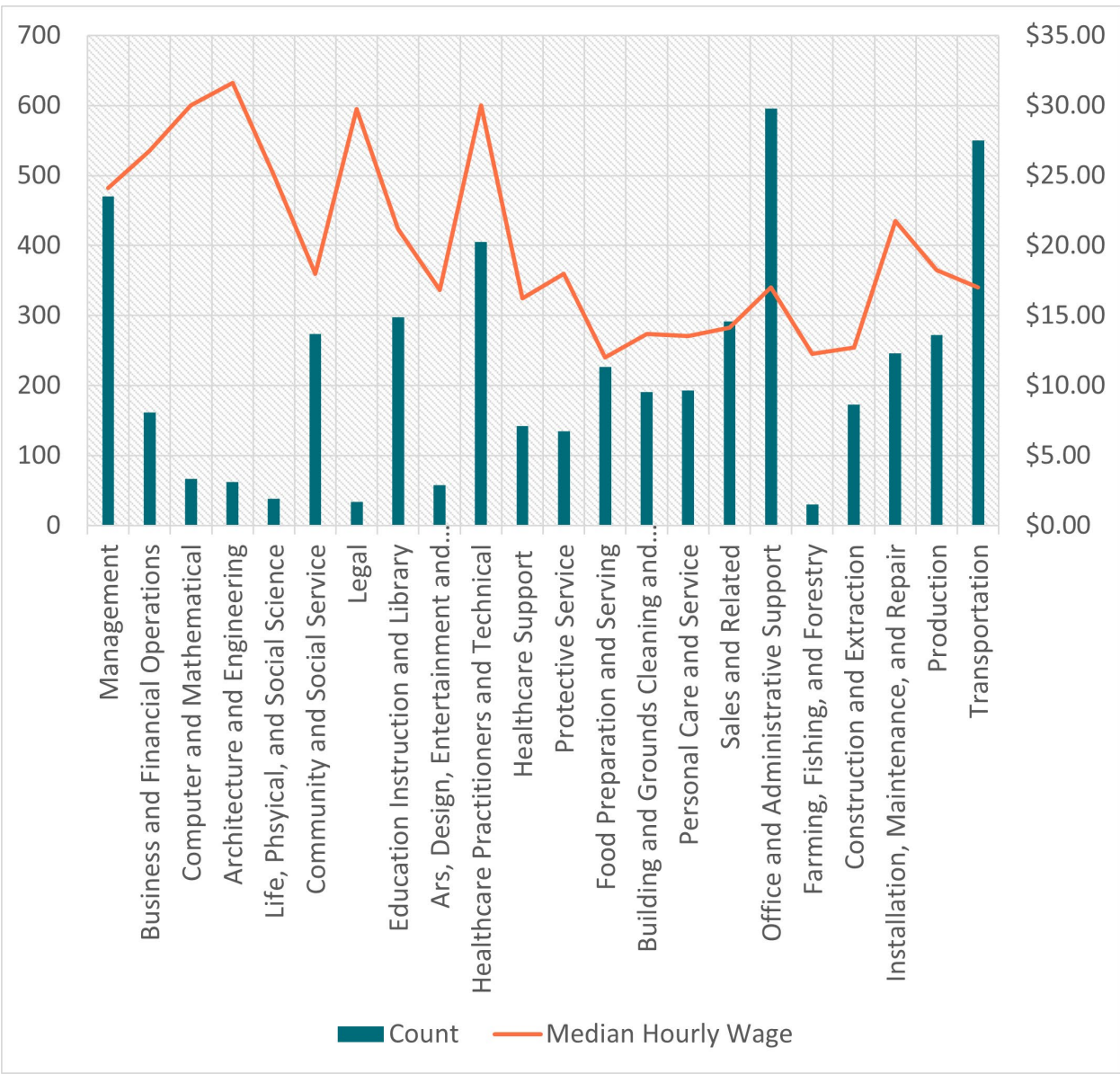


Disability (Primary Impairment)

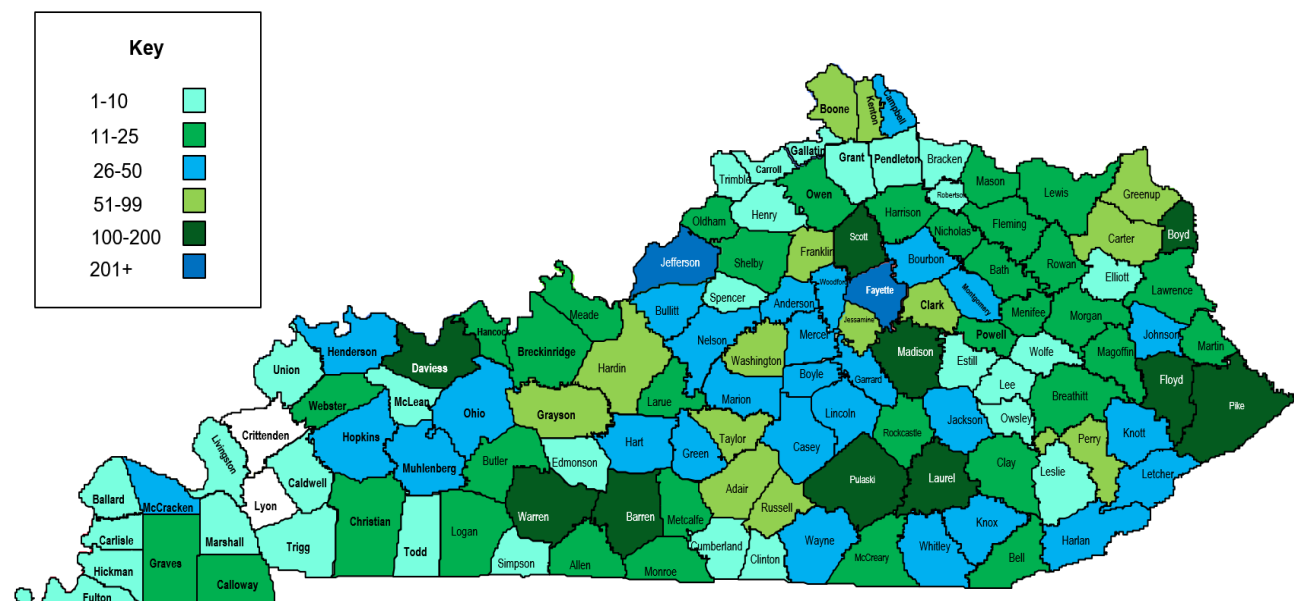


Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes (CIEO)

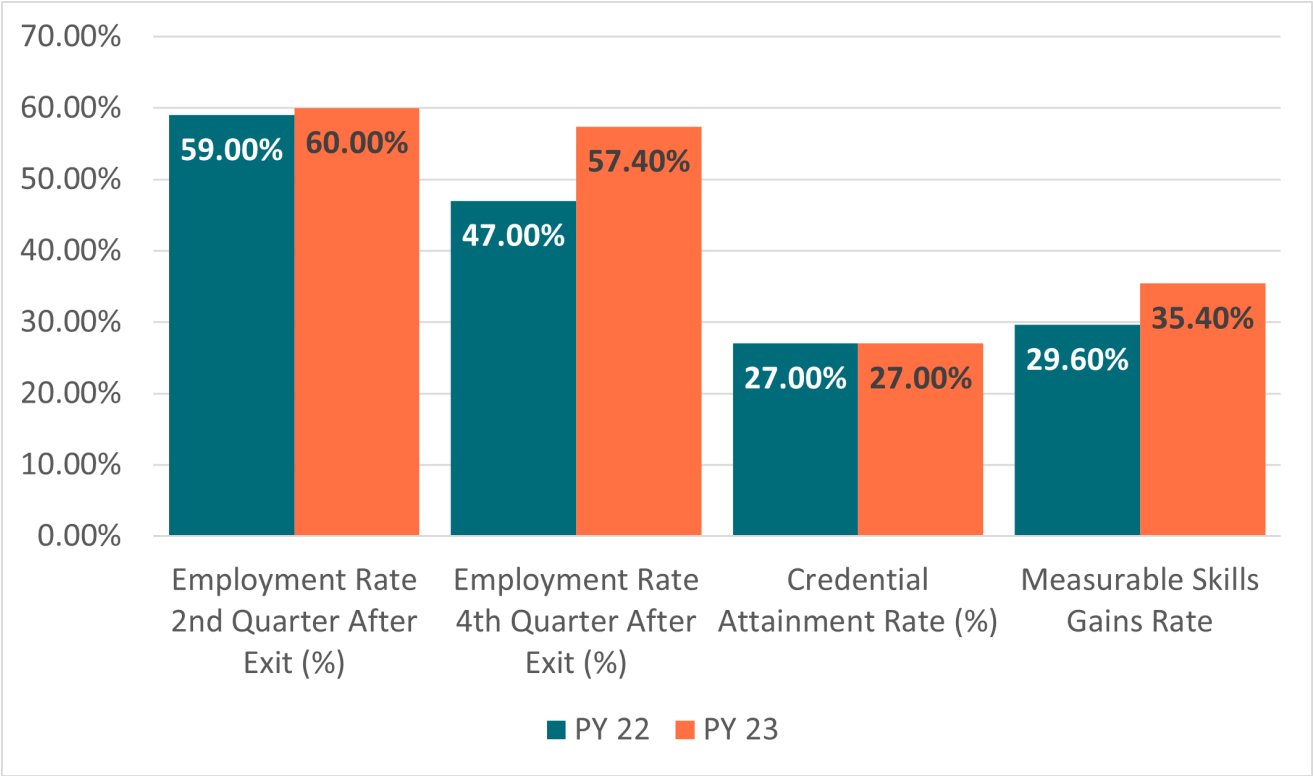
CIEO by Standard Occupational Classification



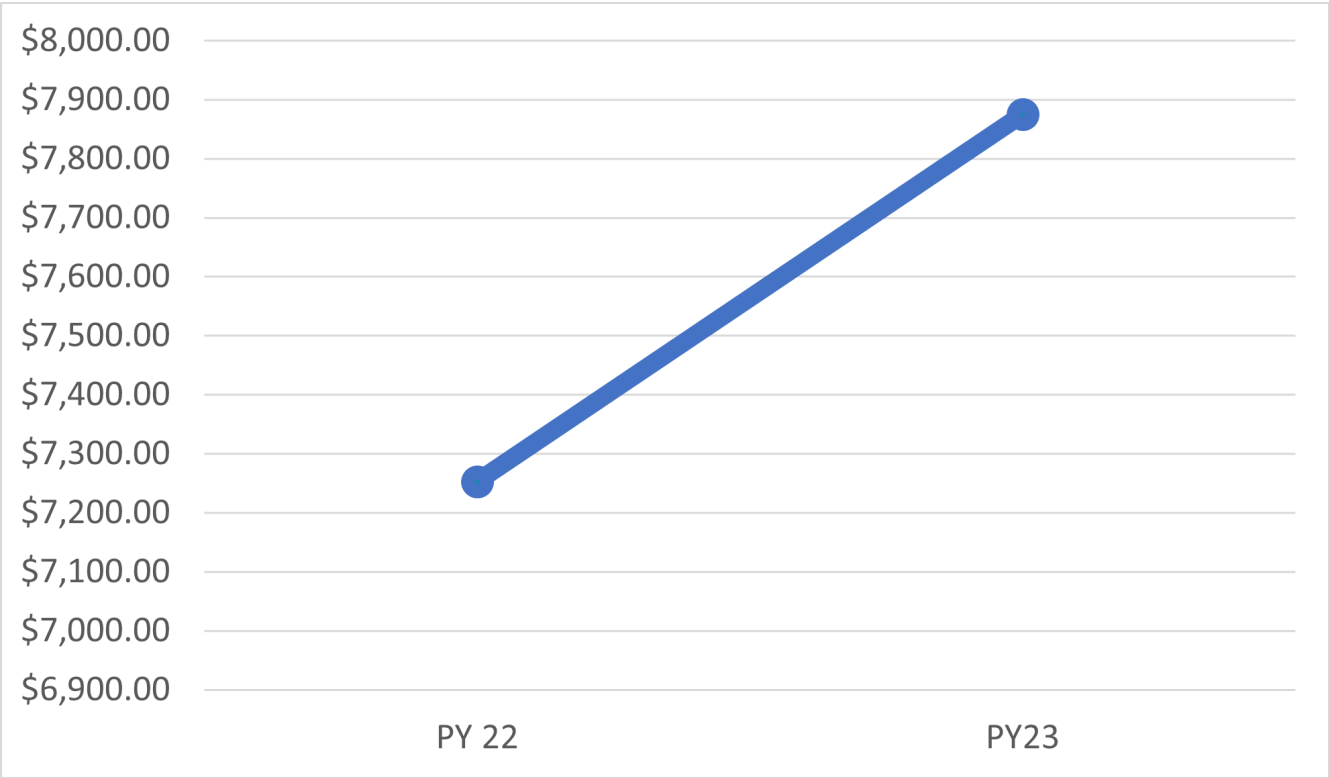
Kentucky Impact Map | Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes (CIEO) by County



WIOA Performance Measures



Median Wages/Earnings, 2nd Quarter after Exit



Social Security Disability Insurance Update

For federal fiscal year 2024, 500 Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) recipients obtained employment after receiving services from OVR. Social Security reimbursed OVR for 243 claims totaling \$3,052,642.45, providing additional funds for direct services for consumers.

OVR supports consumers receiving SSDI benefits by helping them understand the impact of work on their benefits and providing information on additional supports available to them. In 2024, OVR contracted Cornell University's Work Incentive Support Center to provide a two-day virtual training on SSDI and work incentives. Thirty-five staff participated, including each district's SSDI specialist. This training will help counselors answer consumers' initial questions about work and benefits while encouraging them to seek work.

OVR also sponsors [Kentucky Disability Benefits 101](#), a website with benefits information specific to Kentucky residents and estimators that illustrate the benefits of working. This tool is available to OVR staff, partners and consumers, as well as any SSDI recipient in the state who may be contemplating employment.

Currently, OVR has two in-house benefits counseling staff who provide in-person counseling to consumers. A third position planned to expand these services and allow for greater outreach to SSDI beneficiaries. Also of note, OVR continues to promote the ongoing supports available through Social Security's Ticket to Work program. The Social Security Specialist team participates in quarterly Partnership Plus calls with local Employment Networks to encourage collaboration.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey

The most recent Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) was completed and submitted to SCVR on April 2, 2024. The sample of people randomly selected to participate was stratified to reflect the population of all consumers with cases closed in fiscal year 2023. Overall, 88.7% of survey participants indicated that services were good or very good.

As in prior surveys, those consumers who had cases closed Successful in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) were most satisfied (mean = 3.78). Those closed Successful in CIE were more satisfied and experienced better outcomes in virtually all areas, which continues the trend reflected in prior surveys.

Consumers whose cases were closed Successful in CIE were slightly more satisfied with their jobs and pay received. Regardless of case closure status, 93.5% of people indicated that they would return to the OVR if they needed to in the future. This is also considered a measure of satisfaction.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

To comply with the assessment requirements set forth in 34 CFR 361.17(h)(3) and (4), a CSNA is conducted every three years to analyze the vocational rehabilitation needs of Kentuckians with disabilities throughout the state. A report of the findings is produced and published. The SCVR oversees the assessment and report along with the OVR. SCVR and OVR offered input into the methodology and data analysis of the assessment, assuring the research would adequately reach the target population, return valid and reliable data, and produce recommendations to guide the strategic planning and budget development process.

The completed report with recommendations was presented and provided to the SCVR and OVR by the contractor who completed the assessment, the University of Kentucky Human Development Institute (UK HDI) staff. A copy of the full report is available at [Vocational Rehabilitation - Kentucky Career Center](#).

Highlights from the 2023 CSNA include:



Consumer Engagement and Feedback

89.9% of general consumers and 83.6% of transition-age consumers were highly satisfied with the opportunities that OVR provides for consumers to give feedback and for OVR to listen to their concerns.

86.9% of general consumers were satisfied that OVR emphasizes consumer involvement in creating individualized plans of employment, ensuring services are tailored to meet specific needs.



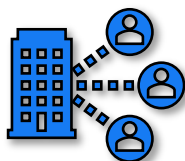
Professionalism and Support

89.7% of general consumers and 81.8% of transition-age consumers were highly satisfied with OVR counselors' dedication to providing quality services, and consider them as professional and helpful.



Accessibility and Availability of Services

88.3% of general consumers and 81.4% of consumer rehabilitation providers (CRPs) were highly satisfied that OVR services are accessible and available to consumers, including those with the most significant disabilities, with high satisfaction ratings of 88.3% among general consumers and 81.4% among Consumer Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs).



Collaboration with CRPs

87.8% of CRPs said that the OVR values and emphasizes partnership with CRPs, and fosters a collaborative environment to provide necessary services.

80.8% of CRPs were satisfied with the clear and open communication between OVR staff and CRP staff and agreed it is a notable strength.

Division of Field Services

Strategizing for Growth

The Division of Field Services provides the direct services needed for individuals to reach their vocational goals. The division offers services for transition, employment, rehabilitation technology, the deaf and hard of hearing, supported employment, and employers as well as other services and programs available throughout the commonwealth.

In FFY 2024, the agency experienced a substantial increase in the number of consumer referrals. To meet those needs, the division has focused on ways to manage the increase of referrals and minimize the wait time for new referrals to meet with a counselor. For example, it has hired additional counselors and assistants, explored pilot programs for taking applications and utilized counselor volunteers to take applications for consumers interested in virtual services. The division is adding five section supervisor positions in assistive technology and employer services.

The Supported Employment program recently completed new and revised fee schedules and structures with assistance from stakeholders through a survey and agency-wide input. The division is also nearing implementation of changes to the Supported Employment fee schedules and structures and evaluating Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) delivery plans.

In addition, the agency continues to focus on the development of the new case management system which is a vital part of field services and the entire agency's operations. The director of Field Services is heavily involved with the design of the new case management system.

While the agency and consumer referrals are rapidly growing, the division is working to align resources to accommodate this growth. This year was pivotal for the division and required it to be resourceful, respondent to leadership needs and innovative in its approaches to growth.

OVR Puts PEOPLE to Work

Agency Helps People with Disabilities Gain Employment

Jae Haymond of Beaver Dam loves his job at Walmart.

By John Lynch

Reprinted with permission of the Commonwealth Commission on Developmental Disabilities

On the brink of leaving the workforce and going back on SSI, Jae Haymond of Beaver Dam revived his employment career with the help of a state agency that specializes in such efforts – the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

Haymond, who has autism, is now ready to celebrate his one-year anniversary at Walmart in Ohio County.

"They were perfect and awesome to work with," Haymond said about his OVR counselors. "They helped me find a job. It was a wonderful



experience. Having a job makes me feel good and makes me feel proud.”

That’s the kind of testimonial that gratifies everyone at OVR.

“Listening to success stories is the highlight of our experience,” said Cora McNabb, OVR’s executive director.

“People with disabilities deserve the same rights as everyone else when it comes to employment so they can achieve their goals.

“The work our staff does impacts the lives of so many people.”

How many? In 2022-23, OVR served 42,256 clients, with 3,809 landing jobs that average 34 hours a week and pay an average of \$21.34 per hour.

“When I started in the field nearly 30 years ago,” McNabb said, “supported employment was cutting edge. Getting jobs was not a routine practice.

“That has changed so much and we have accomplished a lot since then.”

But more needs to be done, said McNabb, who has worked at OVR for 19 years, the past five as executive director.

The latest Kentucky numbers show that more than three of every four people with disabilities are unemployed.

OVR’s staff of nearly 500 located in 45 offices throughout the state is dedicated to improving those numbers, McNabb said.

“Every day we focus on how to deliver the best services that we can,” she said.

Services include job training at the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center in Thelma in Eastern Kentucky.

Currently, 140 students are enrolled, getting trained in such fields as cosmetology and food service, and landscaping and fork-lift operation.

Services for the blind are offered at the Charles McDowell Center in Louisville.

Thanks to those services, Kentuckians with vision issues work side by side in cafeteria jobs at both Fort Campbell and Fort Knox, and at highway rest stop areas.

OVR works to keep pace with technological changes in the workforce, and has formed collaborative partnerships with employers, schools and other state agencies.

But the heartbeat of OVR are the counselors and staff at the 45 field offices.

“These are the boots on the ground,” McNabb said.

This is how Haymond connected with OVR. After leaving Ohio County High, where he served as the football team's manager, Haymond landed a job with Tamarlane Industries, where he worked for eight years.

When he was laid off, he connected with Lisa Nicodemus, an OVR counselor, and Stacia Cole, a job placement specialist.

The pair gave Haymond employment testing, which showed he was a fit for Walmart.

After they helped Haymond with his resume and interviewing skills, he landed a job at Walmart, which pays nearly three times as much as his previous job.

"I'm a maintenance worker," Haymond said. "I clean windows and bathrooms, and take out the trash. I love it."

And Nicodemus loved working with Haymond, who is a lay deacon at Barnes Chapel United Methodist Church and well known in Beaver Dam.

"Everybody knows Jae because he lights up everyone's heart," Nicodemus said. "He is liquid sunshine. The community is good to Jae, but Jae is even better for the community."

With Assistance From OVR, Looney Learned to Drive With Hand Controls

By John Lynch

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Katie Looney celebrates her new safer, more convenient vehicle

The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation not only trains people for work, the agency can help people get to the job on time.

Consider the case of Katie Looney of Russell. Looney, 27, was born with spina bifida, and often uses a walker and a wheelchair.

When it came time for driver education in high school, Looney was a special case. She needed to learn to drive using only her hands.

Her family reached out to OVR, which arranged for driving instructor Michele Coffey to travel from UK in Lexington to Russell to teach Looney to drive.

Although Looney paid for her vehicle, Voc Rehab covered the cost to modify it for Looney.

She has owned three different vehicles, including a Mazda 5 that she drove for 10 years. It had a remote-controlled grab bar that pulled Looney's wheelchair in and out of the car.

This year, for safety and efficiency reasons, she purchased a white Chrysler Pacifica. The Pacifica comes with a lowered floor, automatic doors, a ramp, automatic hatch, a locking mechanism for her

wheelchair to stay in place, and a remote control for the driver's seat that allows for easier access in and out.

Last school year, Looney, who has a degree in special education from Morehead State, was a reading interventionist at an elementary school in Ashland, a 20-minute drive from her home.

Looney is proud that she worked hard to pay for her vehicles and that she has the autonomy to drive by herself.

For that, she's also grateful to OVR.

"Because I can't drive normally, it was very important to learn how to use hand controls," Looney said. "The instruction I received through OVR was helpful and I'm very thankful for that help."

OVR helped Rickie Stinson of Scottsville add a useful robotic arm to his wheelchair.

By John Lynch

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When Rickie Stinson, 49, of Scottsville was born with cerebral palsy, doctors told his parents that he wouldn't live past 12 years old, and that he would never lead a productive life.

"They told us to put him in a home and that he would never get married or have children," said Ricky Stinson, his father. "But he proved everybody wrong."

After high school, Rickie lived at OVR's Carl D. Perkins center for four years, learning computer science.



At the same time, he earned an associate's degree from the community college in nearby Paintsville.

After he returned home, Rickie landed a computer job in Bowling Green, got married and became a father.

His daughter, Leeanna, 20, made Rickie a grandfather two years ago with the birth of James.

When Rickie's marriage ended, he returned to Scottsville and considered his employment future.

Worried that no one would hire him, he decided to start his own business.

Again, OVR offered its assistance. Counselors helped him plan for his computer business and apply for a grant. Before long, Rickie's Computers was in business.

With 3-D printing and a laser machine, Rickie makes cupholders for wheelchairs, and can create custom designs for clients.

"He wouldn't have anything that he's got now, if it wasn't for Voc Rehab," Rickie's father said. "They got him everything he needed to help himself."

Most recently that included a robotic arm that attaches to his wheelchair.

"He can eat with it, use a screwdriver in the arm, and if he drops anything he can pick it up with the arm," Ricky said.

"We're told that he is the first person in Kentucky to have a robotic arm.

"Rickie is very intelligent. Everything I know about computers, he taught me. I've always told him that you can do anything if you set your mind to it. Don't let your disability get in your way."

And, with a little help from OVR, that's exactly what he has done.

Transition Services Branch

The OVR Transition Services Branch (TSB) administers transition services, including Pre-ETS, for students with disabilities in the state. The goal of transition services is to assist students with disabilities to transition successfully from secondary education settings to employment or postsecondary training programs that lead to employment.

Pre-ETS represent the first stage in the continuum of OVR services and are exploratory in nature. These services are intended to get high school students to begin to consider what kinds of jobs they are interested in and what steps they need to navigate to achieve a job goal. In Kentucky, these services are available to any student with a disability that is between the ages of 14-21.

This year, TSB has been focused on developing strategies to engage more students who might need services. After reviewing transition services data, TSB found that since the introduction of Pre-ETS into the VR process, significantly fewer students have been applying for OVR services. Additionally, the data suggests that students who receive only Pre-ETS, without receiving transition services, do not achieve improved postsecondary outcomes. Therefore, OVR has been working to increase the number of students who move beyond Pre-ETS to receive additional transition services.

OVR has been collaborating with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and other stakeholders through intensive technical assistance from the National Technical Assistance Center for Transition – the Collaborative (NTACT-C). In the fall of 2023 and spring of 2024, focus groups were conducted in seven Kentucky school districts, as well as with OVR staff who serve students with disabilities. Information gathered from the focus groups indicated a greater need for collaboration at the local level between OVR and the school districts. As a result, OVR and KDE leadership have been creating local collaboration guidance for school districts and OVR staff. This document will outline clear steps and timelines for the provision of Pre-ETS and transition services for students with disabilities and offer guidance for establishing and maintaining strong partnerships between school districts and local OVR staff.

In addition to working with KDE, TSB has been increasing Pre-ETS to students with disabilities by recruiting new providers and establishing partnerships with existing entities that serve Kentucky students. For example, Everybody Counts is a Team Kentucky initiative that provides a clear

pathway to employment, post-secondary education or both for students graduating from five school districts in central Kentucky. Through a partnership with OVR, Everybody Counts was able to hire staff to specifically serve students with disabilities in those districts. The Everybody Counts program plans to expand into additional school districts in the coming years.

TSB staff have been collaborating with several entities throughout the state and nationally to ensure stakeholders are aware of how students can access services and stay up to date on current trends in transition. Staff are represented and serve on the Kentucky Interagency Transition Council and the State Interagency Council for youth with mental health and/or substance use disorders. Over the past year, staff have met with representatives from the Department of Juvenile Justice and parent advocacy groups to ensure those programs have a good understanding of the services OVR provides for students.

These collaborations and partnerships lay a solid foundation for the TSB to continually improve services to Kentucky students with disabilities and help them achieve their employment goals. OVR believes that employment is a critical first step for young people to become independent, productive members of their communities.

Division of Kentucky Business Enterprise

Kentucky Business Enterprise (KBE), established pursuant to the federal Randolph Sheppard Act, is one of the nation's vending and foodservice programs operated by individuals who are visually impaired or blind. The program trains and places individuals as self-employed operators of snack bars, dining facilities and automated vending facilities in public and private buildings across the state.

KBE renewed its ongoing relationship with the United States Army at Ft. Knox in FFY 2024. The five-year contract has two parts, one year-around feeding soldiers stationed at Ft. Knox and one feeding participants in the Cadet Summer Training (CST).

During CST from May to August, the Army brings in 12,000 of its brightest cadets from around the world to Ft. Knox for intensive training in leadership and skill development. This special mission makes the foodservice operation at Ft. Knox the most challenging food operation within the Army.

The blind vendors who manage the contracts partner with Southern Foodservice Management (Southern) of Birmingham, Alabama. Southern brings a rich history of successful Department of Defense food service contracts to help KBE complete this difficult mission. As the teaming partner onsite, Southern provides the day-to-day leadership and support, while educating the blind managers on all the aspects of the business operation. Southern also provides technical assistance and supports for other KBE projects at Ft. Campbell and Wendell H. Ford National Guard Training Center in Greenville.



A group picture of four contract co-manager awardees in the Blind Vendor Program at KBE. From left to right: Chris Miller, Lynn Florence, Clyde "Buster" Mayne and Angela Stevens.

In 2024, KBE awarded this location to four co-managers due to its size and scope. Lynn Florence (Louisville), Angela Stevens (Lexington), Chris Miller (Louisville) and Clyde “Buster” Mayne (Frankfort) were selected. They have a proven track record of delivering exceptional service and their expertise will greatly benefit the troops and contribute to a positive and enjoyable dining experience. There is no doubt that they will represent the program with integrity and support the mission of the U. S. Army.

Each vendor will operate in a distinctive area of focus, working on a one-year rotation, including human resources, operations, accounting and logistics. They will work with Southern and OVR to gain the knowledge, experience and expertise to meet the high standards and needs of the military.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center

Strategizing For Our Future



2024 Graduates of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center

For more than 50 years, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (Perkins Center) has been assisting Kentuckians with disabilities achieve independence and employment. Following the center’s celebration of 50 years in 2023, the staff focused on ensuring that consumers at the center get the training and skills needed to obtain competitive integrated employment not only for today, but into the future. Currently, the center is upgrading and renovating the facility, offering new programs, and helping consumers achieve both on-campus and follow-up trainings at the center.

The Assisted Living Unit at the Perkins Center is updating doors, showers, toilets, sinks and various fixtures to make the area more accessible. Renovations also will involve new heating/cooling units for each room, ensuring consumers are comfortable, and making the center more efficient with up-to-date units.

In addition, a new community area was designed near the dormitory lobby. Modular seating with electrical outlets was installed recently that gives consumers a place to charge devices and stay connected while socializing with friends.



Consumers who have earned Honors Status while participating at the Perkins Center are excited about the work being done to create an Honors Room. Currently, approximately 25 consumers have exhibited their ability to master the 15-target work-readiness factors, socialize effectively, and live within the guidelines of the center's Behavior Interventions Supports & Techniques (BeST) system to become Honors Students. Along with the other rewards and recognitions that come with being an Honors Student (i.e., participation in numerous activities or events intended for Honors Students only), the Honors Room will be an area set aside exclusively for these consumers to socialize with their cohorts.

The industrial truck/forklift training program is expanding and adding a building for training activities. The popular center program has averaged about 30 completions over the past couple of years and continues to yield excellent results from graduates. Demand for jobs in this field continue to grow in all areas of the state.

In September 2024, the Perkins Center changed the name of the materials management program to logistics and added three certifications: certified logistics technician, certified logistics associate and certified production technician. As the field of logistics continues to grow, the center is striving to give its consumers a pipeline to jobs that will be available and ready in their home areas.

In April 2024, the center held the opening of Carl's Cup, an onsite coffee shop. Carl's Cup also serves as the onsite hands-on training experience for consumers entering the center's new barista track in the food service training program. The training is designed to prepare students to gain and successfully integrate into entry-level work as baristas.

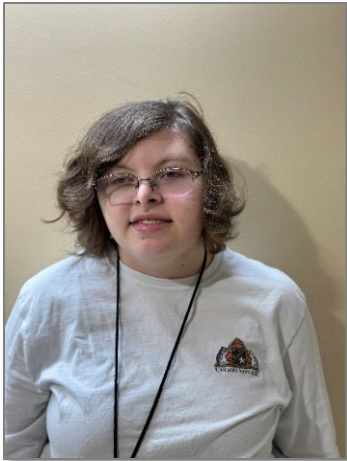
The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) surveyors were onsite April 11-12, 2024, for the center's accreditation survey for both the vocational evaluation and training programs. The center received a three-year accreditation, which is the highest review granted for the survey.

Staff and students continue to give back to the community by participating in regular blood drives. Since October 2023, the center has hosted six Kentucky Blood Center drives on campus in the center's gymnasium. From these events, 112 units of blood were collected from an average of 27 donors per event to save more than 330 Kentucky patients' lives. In addition to training and independence, consumers are learning about community service while participating in events at the Perkins Center.

On June 21, 2024, the Perkins Center's Student Government Association hosted a golf scramble at the 18-hole Paintsville Golf Course. There was a great turnout with 11 teams comprised of 44 participants for the event. With more than 70 donors contributing to the scramble through sponsorships, food donations or door prizes, it was a successful day. After all expenses were paid, the Student Government Association received more than \$6,800 to use for future off-campus activities and outings.

The Perkins Center is committed to making the facility, programs and services the best place for Kentuckians with disabilities to get what they need to achieve independence and employment. The center's vision is to be "the preferred choice for transforming lives through individualized comprehensive services." It fulfills this vision through its mission "that through comprehensive services, persons served will achieve employment and maximize independence and self-respect."

Kaylyn's Plans for the Future



Kaylyn was referred to the Perkins Center in August 2021. Her vocational evaluation in October 2021 recommended that she participate in the Job Readiness Training Program (JRT).

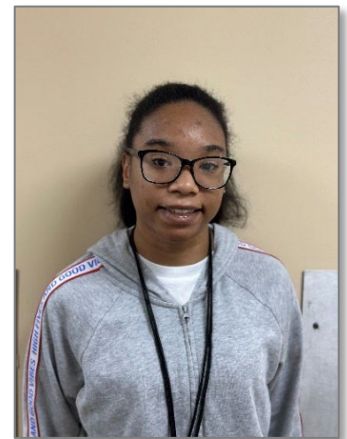
Kaylyn enrolled in JRT on Jan. 17, 2023, and completed the program one month later. She entered the CVS training program on Feb. 27, 2023, and successfully completed both the retail and pharmacy tech sections of the program on Feb. 26, 2024. During her training, she completed an externship which offers actual work experience at a CVS pharmacy. In addition, Kaylyn earned the National Retail Federation Customer Service and Sales Certified Specialist Certification.

D'asia's Plans for the Future

D'asia was referred to the center in March 2023. After participating in a vocational evaluation in July 2023, she entered the JRT. D'asia completed the JRT program and entered the childcare training program on Sept. 1, 2023.

After successfully completing the childcare training program on March 18, 2024, she obtained certifications in first aid and CPR, and earned the Commonwealth Child Care Credential.

By utilizing the skills, she learned in the childcare training program at the center, D'asia is now employed at a child care center in Louisville.



Division of Blind Services

As the Charles W. McDowell Center for the Blind celebrated 30 years of service in 2024 to Kentuckians with vision loss, it looked forward with renovations, a growing staff and greater access to services.

The McDowell Center was a state-of-the-art training center when it was built in 1994, and it still does the job of providing spacious training rooms, comfortable dormitories, a cafeteria, recreational spaces, and offices. However, quite a few things have changed. The blind skills instructional staff as well as residential and specialized services staff are growing. Today, the McDowell Center also houses additional OVR staff representing several different agency programs and branches.

The McDowell Center continues to offer hope, possibility and support to Kentuckians with vision loss. In the last fiscal year, July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the McDowell Center served 127 consumers. The average age of McDowell consumers was 48 years old, and they came from 31 different counties. Of these 127 individuals, 18 were referred from the Independent Living, Older Blind Program. McDowell “students” graduate and go on to greater independence with plans to start college, resume their careers or start new jobs.

A large building renovation project will begin soon and will last through 2025. The renovations will be broken into four phases and encompass mechanical updates, dormitory bathroom updates, construction of additional home management training kitchens, updated flooring and lighting throughout the first and second floors, and additional office and breakroom spaces. These changes will ensure the facility will remain capable of carrying out OVR’s mission to provide vision rehabilitation for Kentuckians for the next 50 years and beyond.

Through collaborative efforts, 2025 will also see the opening of a Low Vision Clinic which will operate out of the McDowell Center. Over the past 18 months, the Kentucky Lion’s Eye Foundation has led a planning committee of stakeholders including representatives of OVR’s Blind Services Division, the Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation, and the Louisville Lion’s Club. There is a long-standing need in Kentucky for greater access to low-vision exams, particularly as Kentucky’s population ages. This specialized exam, provided by an optometrist with additional training and certification, is important for individuals experiencing eye conditions that result in low vision, and need a different approach to the exam and follow-up. The McDowell Low Vision Clinic will operate four days a month during the first year, and will serve 30 or more individuals a month.

The McDowell Center’s purpose is to prepare individuals to enter or return to the workforce. To accomplish that goal, the center cultivates relationships with local businesses in Louisville to ensure consumers have the chance to take their new skills out of the classroom and into the workplace. There is no better way to practice white cane skills, assistive technology/computer skills, and all the other professional workplace skills than by using them in a job setting. The American Printing House for the Blind, the American Red Cross, and Up: For Women and Children have provided work experiences in the past year. Other employers have offered site visits, informational interviews and mock interviews with McDowell students, including Humana, Metro Louisville Parks & Recreation, GE Appliances, Goodwill Industries, SOS Medical Supply, Walgreens, Visually Impaired Preschool (VIPS), Baptist Hospital East Gift Shop, Eurest (Compass Group), Pathful Explore Accessibility, Premier Visual Voice, Louisville Metro Waste and Recycling, LGE, Home Depot, and Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation.

James’ Success Story

A retired police officer, husband and father to a 4-year-old daughter, James felt very alone in his vision loss. He didn’t know anyone who was blind in his community and didn’t feel anyone could possibly understand what he was going through.

James and his wife were invited to tour the McDowell Center by his OVR Independent Living/Older Blind counselor, Meagan Alvey, to decide if he wanted to attend. He feared that having a prosthetic leg in addition to his vision loss would prevent him from participating in training and was extremely relieved to hear the staff person giving the tour state, "It's no problem; we'll figure it out when you get here." The couple felt immense relief and hope, because lately he'd heard a lot of, "I don't know if you can participate... we'll have to get back to you."

James completed a month of training at the McDowell Center late this summer. This was the first blind-skills training he'd participated in since he lost his vision two years ago. He concentrated on learning orientation and mobility skills, which include using a white cane, Braille, and smartphone technology.



James explained that when he lost his vision, he grieved and became depressed. It impacted his closest relationships, and he didn't understand what was happening or how he was feeling. One of the other students James met on the first day told him, "When I came here, the anger lifted off me like a balloon." James suddenly realized he had been going through those emotions, too, but he did not realize it. He said the biggest realization was that he wasn't alone, and that the more he opened up to other people, the more he started to learn about himself and how to deal with his situation.

"Everyone there is going through their own thing; I'm not the only one who's ever dealt with this," James said.

His wife told him that she noticed after a few days of attending McDowell that he was happier than she had ever seen him.

James said that being at the McDowell Center made him realize that his life held more than sitting home in front of the television, and "...resorting to doing nothing." Now, James has plans. He is going to open an application with an OVR vocational counselor to, "repurpose my life," he said.

He plans to return to McDowell for accessibility software training so he can complete an associate degree and then his bachelor's degree. He is also interested in studying economics.

James said, "I have nothing but the highest praise to say about the McDowell Center. I know I don't have to sit out of the way, I can still be viable."

Steve's Success Story

Steve Henson set a goal and achieved it—he earned his bioptic driver's license in September 2024. Steve explains that it was life changing when the examiner told him he passed the road test. He said the reassuring words of Brenda Eadens, his OVR driving instructor, came back to him at that moment, "You are not going to fail, you've got this, you can do this."

Steve said he needed to hear that throughout training because, "People have always told me, my whole life, that I'm going to fail. That I can't do things, that I can't see."

As a child, Steve traveled to the Shriner's Hospital for treatment of a muscular condition affecting his lower body and requiring leg braces and physical therapy to learn to walk. His vision condition required 16 surgeries to treat, and he was given eyeglasses to wear. He felt very different in school and with his peers. He was made fun of and treated differently, so he quit wearing his glasses. As a young adult, he ceased getting regular eye exams.

Throughout his early years, Steve experimented with trying to drive. He never dreamed he could be eligible to hold a driver's license. Then two years ago, he was pulled over by the police, issued a ticket for driving without a license or insurance, and referred to the Department of Motor Vehicles in Manchester. It was here that he was told about the possibility of being eligible for a bioptic driver's license and referred to the OVR. Steve said that ticket was the best thing that could have happened to him.

Steve worked with Vocational Rehabilitation counselor Twyla Hammons to get updated eye exams, an updated eyeglasses prescription, and an evaluation for the Bioptic Driving Program. His biggest regret is not knowing about the possibility sooner, and not having the right prescription lenses that could correct his vision so substantially. He understands now that his self-confidence was so impacted by years of negativity and judgement that he really felt he couldn't see, and he gave up on trying to correct his vision.



Steve says his wife couldn't be happier for him, and she's adjusting to the small modifications to their family car such as additional side mirrors and a digital speedometer. Steve has always assisted his wife with their food delivery service, but he's excited now that he will be able to provide pick-up and delivery independently.

Wearing the bioptic lens in his eyeglasses draws questions and sometimes judgement. "I wish people would be more understanding. Regular people without a disability. My bioptic puts me in this category, and I love that I fall in that category . . . I want people to know that there is help out there. They deserve to know . . . I'm so grateful to be in a position now where I can tell people about Bioptic Driving. I want the opportunity to change someone else's life."

The Kentucky Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCVR)

The council is comprised of 19-23 members with both voting and non-voting (ex-officio) status. The majority of SCVR members must self-identify as having a disability or represent someone with a disability who meets the requirements of 34 CFR 361.5(c)(28). Members of the council are appointed by the governor.

In accordance with KRS 151B.245, the membership must include representatives from the following:

Statewide Independent Living Council	State Workforce Innovation Board
Parent Training and Information Center	Kentucky Council for the Blind
Client Assistance Program	National Federation for the Blind
Community Rehabilitation Service Provider	Bluegrass Council of the Blind
Business, Industry and Labor – Four Representatives	Representative of a disability group, including individuals who have difficulty representing themselves
Representatives of a disability group	State Committee of Blind Vendors
Current or former applicant or recipient of vocational rehabilitation services	Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
State Educational Agency	Executive Director of OVR

The SCVR meetings are held four times per year on a quarterly basis. The council encompasses six standing committees, which are Executive, Blind Services, Policy and Planning, Consumer Services and Program Evaluation, Public Awareness and Legislative, and Nominating and Bylaws. The committees meet once between each full council quarterly meeting and may require additional time spent on the specific function of a committee.

It is suggested that potential candidates for appointment attend at least one full council meeting to understand more about OVR and the SCVR before applying for a position.

Anyone interested in learning more about the council or joining the SCVR guest listserv, please visit the [Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation webpage](#) for more information. If you would like to apply for membership with the SCVR, you may apply directly at the [Kentucky Boards and Commissions website](#).