

**Virginia State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Vision Impaired  
Quarterly Meeting Agenda  
August 9, 2024, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm  
DBVI Main Conference Room**

Zoom Link:

<https://dsa-virginia.zoomgov.com/j/1607297948?pwd=UZ6M2XaLhmEBY5u4qkhXxiuJ7CEozA.1>

Meeting ID: 160 729 7948

Passcode: 237928

Or Telephone:

+16468287666 US

Meeting ID: 160 729 7948

Passcode: 237928

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9:30 am **Member Networking – OPTIONAL**

10:00 am **Welcome and Call to Order**

1. Adoption of Agenda – *Action Item*
2. Approval of February 9, 2024 Meeting Minutes – *Action Item*
3. Approval of May 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes – *Action Item*

10:10 a.m. **Public Comment**

10:20 a.m. **Commissioner Report – *Dr. Rick Mitchell***  
Updates to Agency Report

10:30 a.m. **Deputy Commissioner’s Report – *Kathy Malone***  
Update to Agency Report

10:40 a.m. **VR Program Update – *Megan Hall***  
Updates to Agency Report

10:50 a.m. **Old and New Business – *Milford Stern***

1. **Cara Kaufman** – Renewal of Hearing Officers – *Action Item*
2. **Megan Hall** – DBVI Programs Recap and Upcoming Programs
3. **Milford Stern** – Annual Report Volunteers
4. **Milford Stern** – SRC Members Term Expirations

12:00 p.m. **Break / Pick Up Lunch – Working Lunch**

## SRC Agenda – August 9, 2024

12:10 p.m. **SRC Member Updates**

1:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

Department for Blind and Vision Impaired  
State Rehabilitation Council  
Agency VR Report  
August 9, 2024

**Acting Deputy Commissioner’s Report – Kathy Malone**

**Regional Office Updates**

Bristol	Fully Staffed
Fairfax	Fully Staffed
Norfolk	Recruiting for 1 Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor,
Richmond	Fully Staffed
Roanoke	Fully Staffed
Staunton	Fully Staffed
Headquarters	Interviews for additional Pre-ETS specialist August 16, 2024
Business Relations	Fully Staffed
VRCBVI	Recruiting for Orientation & Mobility Specialist

**State Plan Goals**

DBVI, with assistance from the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), developed six goals and priorities for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) programs for this state plan cycle. The six goals are listed below and updates are included in this report.

1. Engage and collaborate with WIOA core partners to coordinate business service efforts to include the blind and visually impaired labor market.
2. Provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to students with disabilities, youth in transition, and adults resulting in the attainment of industry recognized credentials to obtain competitive integrated employment.
3. Conduct outreach efforts to Local Education Agencies and other Community Partners to assist in increasing the number of students with disabilities participating in and benefiting from DBVI offered Pre-Employment Transition programs.

4. Continue to expand the utilization of Supported Employment and Customized Employment services for adults and youth to increase competitive integrated employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities.
5. Achieving agency annual performance goals and establishing base lines for the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in section 116(b)(2)(A) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.
6. Increase collaboration with the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services to provide comprehensive wrap around services to address the needs of individuals who have dual diagnoses.

### **State Goal Updates:**

1. At the most recent Virginia Board for Workforce Development Access and Equity Committee meeting, DBVI's Director of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Services presented on disability and limited language access in relation to the Virginia Career Works Job Centers. This overview was intended to bring to the forefront some things for consideration in helping Committee members understand their role and function in relation to all types of accessibility in Virginia's workforce system. The information was well received and spurred a much needed discussion surrounding the impact that the Access and Equity Committee can have on proposed policy changes.
2. During this quarter, DBVI students have had a myriad of opportunities to receive career exploration and guidance regarding life post high school. Among those opportunities are the CyberSpace, JMU Launching point, and CyberWarriors. While these three programs do not lead to industry recognized credentials as a result of program completion, the programs help spur student's understanding of careers and career pathways that help them form their vocational plan based on known interests and aptitudes. As expected, DBVI has experienced an influx of measurable skills gains completions within the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the previous program year.
3. During the most recent quarter, the student team was able to stand up outreach operations throughout the Commonwealth with staff attending various in-person trainings/resource fairs. DBVI's student team is currently working with an Intern (DBVI participant) for assistance in researching school districts, primary point of contact for those districts, etc. As a result of the number of students with vision loss in various areas of the Commonwealth, DBVI is conducting interviews for a second outreach

specialist to join the team in serving the catchment of the Staunton, Roanoke and Bristol offices. DBVI anticipates having this position filled and on board by the middle of September 2024

4. During the third quarter of the program year, DBVI counselors and staff supported 30 individuals in pursuing careers of their choice by providing targeted supported employment services. Several individuals located work in competitive integrated environments and continue to receive follow along services to ensure continued employment success.

5. DBVI is awaiting the latest dashboard of information from the Rehabilitation Services Administration to provide a update on this state plan goal.

6. DBVI has been actively working with Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services to update policy and regulations in relation to serving individuals with dual enrollment. The Virginia DeafBlind Project, with members from both DBVI and DARS, meet on a quarterly basis to determine process improvements to streamline combined VR services.

### **Business Relations Unit Updates- Cindy Roberts and Team**

#### Program Update:

- During the past quarter, the Business Relations Unit presented “Level Your Career” for students and youth with disabilities. This event provided a detailed overview of services for career seekers, including work based learning, on the job training, mock interviewing, job shadowing, etc. All team members presented over the two-day mini career readiness class.
- The Business Relations Unit staff is busy getting ready for DBVI’s annual Ability in the Workplace event which recognizes individuals and employers for their exemplary efforts throughout their career journey into employment. This event also coincides with National Disability Awareness month. This years Keynote speaker is Ms. Erneisha Pinder, Vice President of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging with CVS Health.
- DBVI is in the final stages of securing grant funding to stand up a customer service call center training environment. In preparation for the stand up, DBVI is in the procurement

phase for work stations and chairs to allow for a typical call center environment to provide the most realistic call center setting as possible. We hope to have the training environment set up by October 2024 with the first cohort of trainees soon to follow.

- The Business Relations Unit Staff met with Marianne Haegli and Troy Collette of NSITE to learn about updates regarding their new year long intensive pilot program that would assist consumer's in learning and honing their power skills as well as be an active participant in their job search.

### **VRCBVI- Brooke Rogers**

#### **Programming Update:**

- The LIFE program (Learning Independence Feeling Empowered) was held from July 7<sup>th</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The primary Pre-ETS programming through VRCBVI had 19 students (18 after one removed themselves from the program) and teaches students self advocacy, skills of blindness, work experiences and more. Some of the fun learning activities included independently going to the movies, bowling, white water rafting, a DIY course, drivers education experience, ropes course, ceramics painting, and a partnership with workbench RVA (a public woodshop program in the Richmond area). The highlight of the program was the talent show!
- VRCBVI is excited to announce two sessions of the Senior retreat. This four day retreat focuses on helping individuals (and their family members) to understand how to live actively, live healthy and live modern in spite of a vision loss. The program not only features an independent living tract for Seniors, but also provides much needed education to family members to understand the Seniors capabilities.

The first session runs from August 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> with 26 Seniors and plus ones attending, and the second session runs from August 19<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> with 18 Seniors and their plus ones attending.

- **Adult Training Program:**

- VRCBVI will resume the adult skills of blindness training program on September 3, 2024.

### **August 2024 Vocational Rehabilitation Program, Common Performance Measures Report – Deborah Collard**

DBVI has transitioned to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Common Performance Measures (CPM). These measures replace the Standards and Indicators report that was previously shared with the SRC. The six core WIOA programs are all required to now report on the CPMs. The six core partners in WIOA include:

- Adult Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Youth Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Dislocated Worker Formula Program (WIOA title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIOA title II)
- Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service (WIOA title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation program (WIOA title IV)

#### **Common Performance Measures:**

Under section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, there are six primary indicators of performance:

A. Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit);

B. Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for title I Youth, the indicator is the percentage of participants in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit);

C. Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;

D. Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school

diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;

E. Measurable Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

- a) Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;
- b) Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- c) Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards<sup>2</sup>;
- d) Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; or
- e) Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

F. Effectiveness in Serving Employers: WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(i)(VI) requires the Departments (DOE and DOL) to establish a primary indicator of performance for effectiveness in serving employers. The Departments are piloting three approaches designed to gauge three critical workforce needs of the business community.

Approach 1 – Retention with the same employer – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide employers with skilled workers;

Approach 2 – Repeat Business Customers – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to employers and sectors and establish productive relationships with employers and sectors over extended periods of time; and

Approach 3 – Employer Penetration Rate – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

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<sup>2</sup> Within each State there is an administrative unit that provides authorization to postsecondary institutions within the State. States differ in the requirements to which they hold postsecondary institutions responsible for satisfactory progress. Progress for WIOA purposes must comply with any applicable State standards. Likewise, every State has a State educational agency that establishes education standards for secondary education within the State, which would apply for purposes of determining if a participant is meeting the State’s academic standards.

#### Virginia WIOA Employer Engagement Common Performance Measure (CPM)

DBVI reports with Virginia WIOA core partners on the joint CPM of Effectiveness in Serving Employers as described below:

1. Effectiveness in Serving Employers (States select two of three measures) – Virginia has selected employer retention and employer penetration as described below:
  - Retention with the same employer – addresses the programs’ efforts to provide employers with skilled workers; and
  - Employer Penetration Rate - addresses the programs' efforts to provide quality engagement and services to all employers and sectors within a State and local economy.

Since this indicator is a new approach for measuring performance under WIOA’s six core programs, DOE and RSA have implemented a pilot program during which States must select two of the three approaches. DOE and RSA will evaluate State experiences with

the various approaches and plan to identify a standardized indicator to be implemented in the future.

All state VR agencies nationwide continue working with RSA on reporting of WIOA Common Performance Measures (CPM) and utilizing RSA 911 data along with performance data dashboards developed by RSA to demonstrate VR program performance. Based on current information, DBVI is able to report on several measures as shown in the table below.

CPM	PY18	PY19	PY20	PY21	PY22	PY23Q3
Employment rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Q after exit	42.2% DBVI 51.5% VA*	37.6% DBVI 54.4% VA*	39.9% DBVI 51.6% VA*	39% DBVI	51.4% DBVI	34% DBVI
Employment rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Q after exit	N/A	27.7% DBVI 52.2% VA*	30.2% DBVI 47.5% VA*	33% DBVI	39.1% DBVI	47% DBVI
Median Earnings 2 <sup>nd</sup> Q after exit	\$4362 DBVI \$3011 VA*	\$4445 DBVI \$3127 VA*	\$5540 DBVI \$3238 VA*	\$4878 DBVI	\$7465 DBVI	TBD
Credential Attainment Rate	N/A	16.7% DBVI	61.8% DBVI 43.3% VA*	49% DBVI	49.3% DBVI	TBD
Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) Rate	53.0% DBVI 45.0% VA*	82.6% DBVI 85.65 VA*	85.5% DBVI 88.9% VA*	85% DBVI	93.3% DBVI	2% DBVI
Number of DBVI Participants Earning an MSG**	249	247	243	244	237	15
Effectiveness in Serving Employers						
Employer Retention Rate	N/A	62% VA*	70% DBVI	69%	34% DBVI	TBD

Employer Penetration - DBVI	256 services 129 businesses	266 services 132 businesses	190 services 84 businesses	190 services 117 businesses	227 services 118 businesses	150 services 79 businesses
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\*Reported for the state of Virginia, this includes Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) VR data combined with DBVI VR data.

\*\*Not a WIOA CPM but considered a primary indicator of performance by RSA.

As part of the implementation of the WIOA CPMs and to assist state VR agencies with determining how the RSA 911 data elements are used and how the CPMs are calculated, RSA has developed a set of dashboards or graphics that illustrate key data elements. One of the dashboards outlines Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) outcomes. In PY23 Q3 there were 31 CIE outcomes achieved. DBVI continues to have a wide variety of occupations and strong median wages represented in CIE outcomes. The top ten careers by Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) categories, median hourly wage, and median weekly hours are listed in the table below.

Standard Occupational Classification	Individuals	Median Hours	Median Wage
Stockers and Order Fillers	2	29	\$31.04
Community Health Workers	2	17	\$24.00
Customer Service Representatives	2	40	\$21.03
Retail Salespersons	2	30	\$13.79
Randolph-Sheppard vending facility operator	1	35	\$81.14
Chief Executives	1	40	\$56.37
Producers and Directors	1	40	\$37.74
Labor Relations Specialists	1	40	\$32.00
Teaching Assistants, All Others	1	40	\$28.00
Special Education Teachers, Elementary School	1	40	\$27.40

Another WIOA performance area where DBVI continues to be consistent and robust is in the provision of the required pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS). For PY2023 Q3, DBVI

reported 90 students receiving pre-ETS, including the following number of services provided: 45 job exploration counseling services (15%), 60 work based learning experiences (20%), 58 counseling and enrollment opportunities services (20%), 80 work readiness training experiences (27%), and 53 instructions in self-advocacy services (18%).

Additionally, through the national Rehab Data Workgroup, RSA has shared several “Other Measures that Matter” with the RSA quarterly Dashboards. These measures are provided to enhance the VR agencies’ understanding of the use of the new data elements collected and the implementation of WIOA. In FPY23 Q3, DBVI had 953 total VR participants of which 919 participants had a most significant disability representing 96.4% of participants receiving VR services.

### **VR Consumer Satisfaction Evaluation Program – August 2024 Deborah Collard**

The VR consumer satisfaction evaluation program for federal program year (FPY) 2023 continues with outreach to 225 eligible individuals with VR cases closed July 1, 2023 – June 2024. During the current cycle of the evaluation program several changes implemented in FPYs 2020 and 2021 in order to improve response rate and enhance the feedback received continue to be in place. In FPYs 2020 and 2021, DBVI partnered with the SRC to update and edit the survey platform and questions and add additional personnel resources to provide follow up. Also, adjustments to outreach of eligible individuals, including the re-introduction of providing the option to complete the survey by mail, and increased follow up activities with the addition of resources that were implemented in March 2021 remain in place. The current response rate is approximately 20%, down from 23% in FPY22. Additionally, the time to complete the evaluation is down approximately 20%.

Responses to the VR consumer satisfaction evaluation continue to be shared with the Director of VR and Workforce for consultation, training planning, resolution of potential issues, and continuous program improvement. Data review and analysis will continue to take place in order to provide quarterly updates to the SRC and as needed. Response summaries and graphics for FPY2023 can be viewed at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MwwOba1djYN8IUyABVQQ1A\\_3D\\_3D/](https://www.surveymonkey.com/stories/SM-MwwOba1djYN8IUyABVQQ1A_3D_3D/)

**VR Customer Satisfaction PRELIMINARY results to date; through June 2024.** The information in Tables 1 and 2 below, includes preliminary\* data from FPY2023 evaluation responses. The FPY2023 evaluation program is open through the third calendar quarter of 2024. Data included in this update are preliminary\* and are subject to change.

Table 1. Overall Satisfaction rating with the VR Program FFY2016 through current FFY2023, range = 20-100 points.

Year	Total	Rehabilitated	Not Rehabilitated
FFY2016	73.7	82.8	63.3
FFY2017	79.7	85.6	69.8
FFY2018	78.6	94.7	58.5
FFY2019/20	73.3	87.3	45.5
FPY2020	78.8	91.82	71.20
FPY2021	87.7	94.7	76.7
FPY2022	85.6	95.0	67.7
FPY2023*	87.2	TBD	TBD

Table 2. Satisfaction with VR Staff FFY2016 through FFY2023, range = 20 – 100 points.

How satisfied are you that your VR Counselor was:

Year	Respectful	Knowledgeable About your disability	Sensitive to your needs
FFY2016	83.7	78.6	78.0
FFY2017	86.6	86.0	83.9
FFY2018	92.9	81.4	85.7
FFY2019/20	84.4	83.8	85.7
FPY2020	85.8	87.2	84.3
FPY2021	90.9	88.7	90.9
FPY2022	88.6	90.5	88.3
FPY2023*	92.8	93.6	92.8