# Item 9 SSD Report – Business Enterprises Program

**Business Enterprises Program Report**

**August 2022**

**Vision:** The California Business Enterprises Program (BEP) is the preferred food service of choice. This self-employment option expands the economic opportunities for the blind while providing an enjoyable experience for the customer. The program’s advances affirm that people with disabilities are integral to the social and economic success of our world.

Below are significant updates that have occurred since the last Blind Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting.

## Response to COVID 19

On November 2, 2021, the department received funds in the amount of $54,878.00 for insurance claims by 52 BEP vendors for expenses related to COVID. The California Vendors Policy Committee (CVPC) voted at the January 2022 meeting to disburse the funds equally among the 52 claimants. The funds have been distributed to 51 claimants. BEP is working with the last remaining vendor to receive the necessary completed form to distribute their insurance claim.

## BEP Staffing

The BEP Central Office Manager position interviews are completed, and reference checks have been completed and submitted to personnel for further processing. An offer is expected to be made soon.

The Training Officer position will be announced following the filling of the Central Office manager position to ensure proper training and supervision. The Training Officer Duty Statement has been slightly modified and includes providing continuing education for existing BEP vendors as the pandemic has altered the food service business.

The Southern Field Office currently has a vacant Business Enterprises Consultant for the San Diego Area resulting from Paul Darkwa separating from State Service. The job announcement was released on July 21, 2022. In addition, BEP continues to work with Personnel to fill the Office Technician position vacated by Juana Robinson in the Los Angeles Office.

The Northern Field Office is fully staffed. Mandip Dhami is the new Business Enterprises Consultant. He is getting off to a fast start as he becomes acquainted with his vendors and how best to serve them.

## Location Announcements, Awards, and Selections

April 22, 2022 – July 20, 2022

Note: Due to COVID 19, BEP is temporarily utilizing phone interviews and video calls for critical location selections.

## Location Announcements and Selections

There were no awards of locations during this time period.

**Pending Selections:**

Interim location 844, Long Beach Vending Route

Interim location 428, Metro State Hospital & Norwalk Superior Court.

Satellite location East County Regional Center Courthouse

## Procurement Section Overview

BEP Procurement April 22, 2022 – July 20, 2022

Total amount spent on vending machines: $0.00

Total amount spent on other pieces of equipment: $61,523.00

Total: $61,523.00 for this period.

\*The procurement of certain types of vending machines continues to be on hold pending compliance by vending machine manufacturers due to the new refrigerant regulations in California. Also, due to manufacturer supply chain issues resulting from labor shortages, BEP is challenged with getting timely delivery from vending machine distributers.

While BEP has seen some increase in equipment purchases over this reporting period, the growth has been slow as many locations continue to have reduced operating hours or remain closed as most state employees prefer to continue to telework.

## BEP Training

BEP training continues to be postponed until a trainer can be hired. It remains on hold as most BEP vendor locations used for pre-evaluation and On-the-Job-Training are closed; both are regulatory requirements. BEP has started the recruitment process for the BEP Training Officer, and it is anticipated that training will resume sometime in 2022 once the trainer and curriculum are onboard.

## Other Key Activities

## BEP Vendor Retirement Plan

Empower is making changes to the investment options available to BEP vendors along with a pricing reduction for their retirement funds. The anticipated effective date is October 1, 2022.