**Business Enterprises Program Report**

**May 2023**

**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.

**BEP Staffing**

Like much of the public and private sector, BEP is not immune to high employee turn-over, staff shortages and a limited hiring pool. To meet these challenges the BEP team is working hard to support one another to provide quality and timely services to keep our equally hard-working vendors in business.

The BEP Central Office is currently fully staffed. The Training Officer position was filled by Marc Leyva effective February 21, 2023, the Location Development Officer position was filled by Matt Buller effective March 20, 2023, and the Office Technician position was filled by Daniela Isquierdo effective April 11, 2023.

The BEP Southern Region completed the selection process to fill the Business Enterprise Consultant vacancy. Cheryl Kidd was selected as the new BEC effective April 17, 2023.

The BEP Northern Region has a new Staff Services Manager I, Luis Rodriguez. Leaving a vacancy for the Central Valley Business Enterprises Consultant. Applications for this vacancy have been reviewed and Interviews are scheduled for April 26, 2023. Business Enterprises Consultant Larry Fowlks, transferred to another section of DOR. Applications for this vacancy have been reviewed and we are working with Personnel to confirm the eligibility of the applicants and then schedule interviews for this position. All staff are working with the vendors and stakeholders to keep the locations running smoothly while we work to fill these positions.

**Location Announcements, Awards, and Selections**

January 26, 2023 – April 25, 2023

**Awarded Locations:**

Primary location 815 Fresno Coalinga Vending Route was awarded to Nasir Aqbal.

Satellite location Alhambra Courthouse was awarded to Glenn Wyatt.

Satellite location 535 Gordon Schaber Courthouse and Sacramento Hall of Justice was awarded to Humberto Carbajal.

Satellite location 657 North County Regional Vista Courthouse was awarded to Andrew Gonzales.

Satellite location 866 California Medical Facility awarded to Ricardo Green.

Satellite location 1031 P Street Café and Vending awarded to Jesse Lopez.

Satellite location 1056 Larson Justice Center awarded to Gloria Blanco.

Satellite location 654 Southwest Justice Center and Riverside Hall of Justice awarded to Daniel Salinas.

**Pending Selections:**

Satellite location Caltrans LARTMC.

Primary location 793 Ironwood State Prison and Chuckwalla Valley State Prison.

Primary location 898 Mule Creek State Prison and Sierra Conservation Center.

Primary location 813 Westley and Enoch Christofferson Safety Roadside Rest Areas.

Satellite location Border Route in San Diego.

Satellite location 891 Environmental Protection Agency.

Satellite location Municipal Traffic Courts.

Satellite location Van Nuys Municipal Court, LA Superior Court, and Van Nuys State Office Building.

**Procurement Section Overview**

January 26, 2023 – April 25, 2023

There were two pieces of equipment purchased for a total of $56,294.49 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.

BEP has been able to provide vendors with equipment from closed and downsized locations over this reporting period which have kept the equipment purchases low. Another key factor that has kept purchases low is the determination by the Rehabilitation Services Administration that any purchase under $1,000 is considered a supply and therefore set-aside funds cannot be used for these items. Still another consideration is growth has been slow as many locations continue to have reduced operating hours or remain closed as most state employees continue to telework.

**BEP Training**

The new BEP training program is currently being developed and will be offered in both a virtual and in person format. It is slated to resume on January 1, 2024. Training Officer Marc Leyva is scheduled to attend Orientation Center for the Blind the first two weeks of May to gain perspective on daily living activities for those who are blind and visually impaired.

**Other Key Activities**

Payments totaling $206,919 were deposited into individual BEP vendor retirement accounts from the vending machine commissions received in 2022.