**Blind Field Services Program Report**

**Third Quarter 2022-23**

Pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 105, Chapter 1102, Statutes of 2002, the California Department of Rehabilitation’s (DOR's) Specialized Services Division (SSD) and Blind Field Services (BFS) were established in July 2003 to provide improved specialized, and comprehensive services to people with vision loss. It is the vision of BFS to increase the number of successful employment outcomes for consumers seeking competitive employment and ensure that every blind and visually impaired Californian who wants to work, obtains employment; and every blind and visually impaired Californian who may not believe they can work, is provided the necessary counseling and guidance to overcome their individual barriers to employment.

**Unless otherwise stated, all data is through 3/31/2023**

**Total Applications**

Applications as of March 2023: 917

Applications as of March 2022; 1,047

Applications as of March 2021; 737

Applications as of March 2020; 853

Applications as of March 2019; 1,062

**Applications for Students with a Disability ages 16-21**

SWD applications as of March 2023; 111 -12% of the total

SWD applications as of March 2022; 67 - 6% of total

SWD applications as of March 2021; 67 - 9% of total

SWD applications as of March 2020; 103 - 12 % of total

SWD applications as of March 2019; 106 - 10% of total

**Total Number of Open Cases**

BFS currently has 4,067 open cases. Of this number 604 or 14.8% are Students with Disabilities.

**Successful Closures**

Successful closures as of March 2023; 220

Successful closures as of March 2022; 373

Successful closures as of March 2021; 254

Successful closures as of March 2020; 340

Successful closures as of March 2019; 333

**Hourly and Median Wage Information as of 2/28/2023**

Successful Closures for BFS 191

Avg. Hourly Wage at Employment - BFS has the highest average at $27.88 per hour. The statewide average is $20.73 per hour.

Median Hourly Wage at Employment $22.00

Avg. Hours Worked Per Week at Employment 32

Avg. Weekly Wage at Employment - not listed on the report

**Highest Employment Earnings per Hour at Closure**

Marriage and Family Therapists $150.00

Data Scientists $96.15

All Other Managers And Administrators $81.73

Massage Therapists $74.00

Agricultural Engineers $59.84

Art, Drama, and Music Teachers, Postsecondary $58.86

Nuclear Engineers $53.37

Teachers, Elementary School $48.08

All Other Managers And Administrators $45.67

Registered Nurses $43.60

Dietitians And Nutritionists $42.00

Human Resources, Training, and Labor Relations Specialists, All Other $40.50

Tax Examiners, Collectors, And Revenue Agents $36.06

Dietitians And Nutritionists $36.03

All Other Inspectors, Testers, And Related Workers $36.00

Lawyers $35.10

Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education $34.62

All Other Engineering And Related Technicians And Technologists $33.29

Special Education Teachers, All Other $32.69

Computer Support Specialists $32.50

Paralegals and Legal Assistants $32.21

Medical and Public Health Social Workers $32.00

Budget Analysts $31.00

Computer Support Specialists $30.29

Surveyors And Mapping Scientists $29.33

Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes $29.12

Paralegals and Legal Assistants $29.05

Industrial Engineering Technicians And Technologists $29.00

Marriage and Family Therapists $27.00

Customer Service Representatives $25.62

**BFS Contract Participation**

Students in Transition Partnership Programs (TPP) except California School for the Blind (SCB);

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 25

22/23 Third Quarter - 20

Students in TPP at CSB;

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 13

22/23 Third Quarter - 13

Students in other student services contracts including the Foundation of California Community Colleges (FCCC), the American Job Centers of California (AJCC), Student Transition Experience Program (STEP) and other private vendors; 25

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 25

22/23 Third Quarter - 27

Students in We Can Work (WCW);

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 7

22/23 Third Quarter - 7

Students in College to Career (C2C);

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 1

22/23 Third Quarter - 1

Individuals in Workability III;

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 24

22/23 Third Quarter - 24

Individuals in Workability IV;

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 12

22/23 Third Quarter - 12

Individuals in Mental Health Contracts;

22/23 First Quarter – not documented

22/23 Second Quarter - 2

22/23 Third Quarter - 2

**BFS Outreach**

Eleven BFS staff, and two Community Resource Development staff attended the California Transcribers and Educators for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI) 2023 conference in San Francisco on April 20-23, 2023. Peter Dawson, Laura Rasmussen, Joe Stansil and Melissa Harris lead two of the conference workshops. The first was a general session on DOR services. The second was session on DOR student services.

The mission of CTEBVI is “Ensuring ongoing high-quality professional development, enriching the community, and meeting the evolving education needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired.” Many connections were made with teachers and others in the school programs. DOR plans to be further involved with this conference in the coming years.

**SB 105 Mandated Training**

BFS has finished the scope of work for vision training. It has been sent to the vendor we expect work to start in July. This training will provide an opportunity to learn about various medical aspects of blindness and low vision. Staff will be able to apply this learning to improvement of the vocational rehabilitation process for consumers with visual impairments. There will be 15 lectures released over the next two years. The training will be available to all DOR staff as well as community partners.

BFS continues to plan for the in-person SB 105 training on Wednesday July 12 through Friday July 14, 2023, at the Orientation Center for the Blind (OCB). Friday July 14 will be an open house at OCB with tables having information related to BFS services, tours of OCB, Assistive Technology vendors who want to present and other items to be determined.

**BFS Staffing**

1 - Staff Services Manager III - Regional Director (Filled)

1 - Staff Services Manager II - District Administrator (Filled)

9 - Staff Services Manager I - Team Managers (Filled)

1 - Staff Services Manager I - BFS Operations Manager (Filled)

45 - Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors – Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals (SVRC-QRP) (42 filled, 1 vacant and 2 temporarily redirected to VRED due to need)

17 – Staff Services Analyst - Service Coordinators (SSA-SC) (17 filled)

4 - Staff Services Analyst – Business Specialists (SSA-BS) (4 filled)

1 - Associate Governmental Program Analyst (AGPA) - Regional Business Specialist (RBS) (Filled)

1 – AGPA - District Contract Administrator (VRCA) (Filled)

1 – AGPA or SSA – Lead Operations Analyst (DOS Unit) (Vacant – In process of being refilled with Limited Term Analyst position)

2 - Office Technicians – Typing (OT-T) (Filled)

18 - Office Technicians - General (OT-G) (18 filled)

4 - Staff Services Analysts (SSA) – Procurement Analyst (SSA-PA) (4 Filled)

2- Accountant I – Specialists (AIS) (2 Filled)

Total Allocated: 107 – (2 SVRC-QRP positions redirected to VRED)

Total filled: 103

**BFS Limited Term positions (up to 2 years)**

3 – Graduate Student Assistant (GSA) – 3 filled

2 – Student Assistant (SA) – 1 filled, 1 vacant

**Procurement Update**

Christine Templeman has been hired as the Chief of the Contracts & Procurement Section Christine is assumed her new role on April 24, 2023.

We have been allotted overtime for the procurement staff to work on purchasing.

Invoices processed and processing time from receipt of invoice to issuance of warrant to vendor.

* Prompt Payment Act Policy (Invoices Processed and Released by DOR to SCO):      30 Days or Less
* Prompt Payment Act Policy Total Days (Invoices Processed and Issued to Vendor by SCO):  45 Days

January – total of 1,428 transactions (invoices) and processing time was 35.5 days, state average for the month was 34.5 days, below the statewide average

February – total of 1,128 transactions and processing time was 29.3 days, state average for the month was 28.1 days, below the statewide average

March – total of 1,423 transactions and processing time was 28.2 days, state average for the month was 31.3, higher than the statewide average

BFS is averaging about 1,200 transactions per month and average of 30 days processing time from receipt to warrant and within the Prompt Payment Act.  BFS is processing an average of about 30 percent more of the next highest districts who process and average of 800 to 900 transactions and a processing time ranging from 27 days to 45 days from receipt to warrant.

**VR Connections Portal Update - New features**

**Student Services Request** - Students with disabilities (SWD) between the ages of 16 to 21 can now request DOR Student Services through an online enrollment process. If they are a minor or under a conservatorship, approval is required from their parent, guardian, or conservator before services can be provided.

**Consumer Document(s) Request Form** - Allows staff to request specific education related documents from a consumer using a checklist. The Portal will send the consumer an email identifying the requested document(s), and an upload link for them to use. Once the consumer uploads the document(s), the Portal will attach them in Aware as a case note attachment. The Counselor and Service Coordinator will receive an email notifying them that the requested document(s) have been received and are attached in Aware.

**DR 260 Consent to Release and Obtain Information Form** - can now be emailed by the Portal to consumers with a valid email address in Aware. Sending the DR 260 form through the Portal will allow consumers to approve/sign and date the form quickly and expedite service delivery.

**Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) Amendments -** The Portal will process Plan Amendments that have been created and email the document to the consumer for review and approval.

**Plan Development Extension** - Once a counselor completes a Plan Development Extension in Aware (and a Team Manager completes a second extension, if needed), the Portal will send the document to the consumer via email for their approval.

**CalDOR Payment Card (CPC) Enrollment Agreement -**  can now be emailed by the Portal to consumers with a valid email address in Aware.

**Verification for Goods and Services (VGS) Activity Due -** When a vendor submits an invoice electronically, the Portal checks to see if the goods and/or services have been verified in Aware, and the invoice is able to be paid. If marked as PARTIAL or NONE, the Portal will now send an Activity Due (AD) to the authorization's issuer, to complete the VGS.

**National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) Form Update -** The Portal includes an electronic version of the Voter Preference Form to comply with the standards of the NVRA.