**Business Enterprises Program Report**

**November 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**

The BEP Central Office is in the process of selecting a new Office Technician as the previous occupant, Daniela Isquierdo, received a promotional position in the Northern Field Office. Daniela did an exceptional job in her role and the promotion was well deserved. The Central Office will also be advertising the Budgets and Reporting Analyst position in the coming weeks as the current team member, Frances Volk, will be retiring mid-November after 35 years of State service and 14 of those years being in BEP. We are extremely grateful to Frances for her hard work and commitment to the program.

The BEP Southern Region has completed the selection process to fill two positions for Business Enterprises Consultants (BEC). The selected candidates,

Art Aghakhani and Raghbir Tung will be joining the BEP-Southern Region on November 1, 2023. The BEP-Southern Region is understaffed and currently has vacant positions for one Staff Service Analyst (SSA) and one Office Technician (OT); the SSA vacancy resulted from Jeremy Santos separating from State Service on October 20, 2023, and the OT vacancy resulted from RyAnn Bustillos separating from State Service on August 30, 2023. We are in the process of schedule interviews to select an OT and an SSA in the next couple of weeks.

The BEP Northern Region office staff are assisting the BEP Southern Region with critical daily functions to avoid interruption of services to our BEP vendors.

The Southern Field Office handled one request for public records this quarter.

The BEP Northern Region has completed the selection process to fill one position for the Business Enterprises Consultant (BEC). BEP welcomed Ryne Meyers to the team on October 10, 2023.

The Northern Field Office handled three requests for public records this quarter.

**Location Announcements, Awards, and Selections**

July 25, 2023 – October 20, 2023

**Awarded Locations:**

Satellite location, United States Coast Guard Alameda, was awarded to Ivor Horsfall.

Primary location, United States Coast Guard San Diego, was awarded to Daniel Salinas.

Primary location 793, Ironwood and Chuckawalla Valley State Prisons, was awarded to Reynold Chen.

Satellite location 337, Federal Building, was circulated and went through an interview process but the selected vendor withdrew. Location 337 was circulated a second time and had no applicants.

Satellite location, Navy GAF, was awarded to Michael Headley.

Satellite location, Allenby Building, was awarded to Ruben Huq.

**Pending Selections:**

Satellite location 891, EPA Building

Interim location 813, Westley and Turlock Safety Roadside Rest Areas

Interim location 1025, Valley Wells Safety Roadside Rest Area

**Procurement Section Overview**

July 25, 2023 – October 20, 2023

There were two pieces of equipment purchased for a total of $8,306.17.

\*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 Training**

The new BEP Training Program is ready to roll out starting the first of the year. The BEP Training Officer presented all training program pre-requisites at the Blind Field Services quarterly meeting in October.

**Other Key Activities**

BEP will be hosting a Statewide Vendor Training Conference in Sacramento November 3-5, 2023, for current vendors. This is the first training conference the program has held since 2019. Twenty-nine vendors are scheduled to attend. The conference will kick off with The California Restaurant Association providing an overview of the SERV safe exam and proctor the exam for fifteen vendors. We will have a packed agenda of guests from across the food service industry presenting on various topics. The National Association of Blind Merchants will provide a presentation on national issues of interest that affect the future of the BEP program. We look forward to a conference that offers something for everyone.