**Blind Field Services Program Report**

**Fourth 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 7/1/2022 through 6/30/2023. Data was gathered from Aware and the DOR Dashboard.**

**Highlights of 2022/2023**

* Highest number of applications for any year (not including home makers)
* Highest number of Students with Disabilities (SWD) applications
* Highest number of open cases for any year (not including home makers)
* BFS had 352 closures this year. This is the third highest number of closures in the past twenty years. Our twenty-year average is 315 The last five years we have averaged 356.

**Total Applications – includes SWD**

Applications as of June 2023: 1,267

Applications as of June 2022: 1,074

Applications as of June 2021: 758

Applications as of June 2020: 921

**Students With Disabilities Applications**

SWD is defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as “…in general, an individual with a disability in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education program who is not younger than the earliest age for the provision of transition services…and is not older than 21 years of age…”

Applications as of June 2023: 168

Applications as of June 2022: 81

Applications as of June 2021: 85

Applications as of June 2020: 123

Applications as of June 2019: 122

**Total Number of Open Cases**

Open cases in June 2023: 5,247

Open cases in June 2022: 4,067

Open cases in June 2021: 3922

Open cases in June 2020: 3899

**BFS has been steadily increasing the number of SWD being served. The numbers below are part of the total number of individuals served**

SWD Open cases in June 2023: 664

SWD Open cases in June 2022: 604

SWD Open cases in June 2021: 501

SWD Open cases in June 2020: 589

**Successful Closures**

Successful closures as of June 2023: 352

Successful closures as of June 2022: 373

Successful closures as of June 2021: 254

Successful closures as of June 2020: 340

Successful closures as of June 2019: 333

**Hourly and Median Wage Information as of 5/31/2023**

* Of the 14 districts at DOR, BFS has the highest average hourly wage at employment at $29.90 per hour.
* BFS has the highest median hourly wage at employment at $22.00 per hour.
* BFS average hours worked per week at employment is 32 hours per week. This is the same as the statewide average hours per week.
* BFS median hours worked per week at employment is 40 hours. The median statewide is 37 hours per week.
* Weekly income is no longer provided.

**Highest Employment Earnings per Hour at Closure**

Clinical and Counseling Psychologists $175.00

Marriage and Family Therapists $150.00

Project Management Specialists $144.23

All Other Financial Specialists $130.00

Sales Agents, Selected Business Services $120.00

All Other Health Professionals, Paraprofessionals

and Technicians $110.00

Marriage and Family Therapists $100.00

Software Developers $96.15

Data Scientists $96.15

General Managers and Top Executives $86.54

General and Operations Managers $86.54

All Other Managers and Administrators $81.73

All Other Managers and Administrators $81.25

All Other Teachers and Instructors $80.00

Software Developers $79.81

Pharmacists $79.00

Marketing Managers $76.92

Massage Therapists $74.00

Social Workers, Except Medical and Psychiatric $70.00

Mechanical Engineers $68.27

Mathematical Science Teachers, Postsecondary $60.00

Court Reporters $60.00

Agricultural Engineers $59.84

Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers $57.69

All Other Teachers and Instructors $57.69

Technical Writers $56.25

Adjudicators, Hearings Officers, And Judicial Reviewers $54.12

All Other Engineering and Related Technicians

and Technologists $53.85

Nuclear Engineers $53.37

All Other Engineers $52.88

Occupational Therapists $52.00

All Other Teachers and Instructors $50.77

Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers $50.48

Human Services Workers $50.48

Architects, Except Landscape and Marine $50.00

English Language and

Literature Teachers, Postsecondary $50.00

Computer Programmers $50.00

Computer and Information Systems Managers $50.00

**BFS Contract Participation**

Students in Transition Partnership Programs (TPP) except California School for the Blind (CSB):

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 25

22/23 Third Quarter: 20

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 28

Students in TPP at CSB:

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 13

22/23 Third Quarter: 13

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 14

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

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 24

Students in We Can Work (WCW):

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 7

22/23 Third Quarter: 7

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 8

Students in College to Career (C2C):

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 1

22/23 Third Quarter: 1

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 2

Individuals in Workability III:

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 24

22/23 Third Quarter: 24

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 24

Individuals in Workability IV:

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 12

22/23 Third Quarter: 12

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 14

Individuals in Mental Health Contracts:

22/23 First Quarter: Not documented.

22/23 Second Quarter: 2

22/23 Third Quarter: 2

22/23 Fourth Quarter: 2

**Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs)**

The BFS Regional director, District administrator, and BFS CRD specialist completed meeting with CRPs throughout the state. Each of the meetings are at the CRP site and include staff from the CRP as well as the local DOR teams.

The purpose of the meetings was threefold. First, to encourage the CRPs to provide student services including work experience sites. Second, to build strong relationships between the consumer, the CRPs and DOR. And finally, to work on any issues around service delivery in that area. These meetings have been very well received by staff of both DOR and the community partners.

**SB 105 Mandated Training**

BFS completed three days of training on July 12 - 14. The first day of training was leadership training for BFS managers. The training was coordinated by the Regional Director and District Administrator. It included various leadership development activities. The main focus was on knowledge-based leadership.

The second day of training was held at OCB. Due to the location size, we limited the audience to BFS counselors and team managers. The training included:

1. History of Specialized Services and Blind Field Services.
2. Specialized Services Division updates
3. Employment Readiness
4. Human Guide Training
5. What you need to know about the visually impaired student high school experience
6. Best practices for working with your Blind and Visually Impaired Students.

The final day featured speakers from DOR, NFB and CCB. There was an open house with tours of OCB. Many assistive technology vendors and community resource providers were present to share their products and services.

While the final evaluation is not yet completed, the event was very well received. Our next SB 105 training is scheduled for the fall of 2024. We expect to be back to our regular format. This includes inviting service providers to most of the training.

**BFS Staffing**

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

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

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

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

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

1 – AGPA or SSA – Lead Operations Analyst (DOS Unit) (1 filled with Limited Term Analyst position)

2 - Office Technicians – Typing (OT-T) (1 filled, 1 vacant)

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

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

2- Accountant I – Specialists (AIS) (1 filled, 1 vacant)

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)

**District Operations Unit Reporting**

DOR completed 301,151 authorizations for the 2022/2023 FY. Of that number BFS completed 14,512 authorizations. As far as the volume of authorizations, BFS is 11th out of 14 districts. However, this number does not reflect the complexity of the authorizations. A breakdown of the more complex authorizations is listed below. A routine authorization would be for things such as school, books, transportation, clothing, and similar services. Complex authorizations involve bidding and other time intensive actions.

Assistive Technology Assessments/Evaluations

Total DOR authorizations 1214

BFS Authorizations 702

Next highest district 119 then 86

Assistive Technology Devices

Total authorization by DOR 3260

BFS Authorizations 2630

Next highest district 147 then 59

Assistive Technology Training

Total DOR authorizations 2066

BFS Authorizations 1717

Next highest district 76

Independent Development Services

Total DOR authorizations 992

BFS Authorizations 687

Next highest district 59

Orientation and Mobility Services

Total DOR authorizations 958

BFS Authorizations 930

Next highest district 14

Personal Computers - General/Hardware/Software

Total DOR authorizations 9615

BFS Authorizations 1631

Next highest district 1228

Rehabilitation Technology Services

Total DOR authorizations 339

BFS Authorizations 255

Next highest district 68

Vision

Total DOR authorizations 2326

BFS Authorizations 1458

Next highest district 261