**Individuals who are Blind Program Report**

**November 2024**

Title VII Chapter 2 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, authorizes and funds independent living services to individuals age 55 or older whose visual impairment makes competitive employment difficult to attain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. The Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB) program aims to assist Californians, 55 and older, who are blind or severely visually impaired, live in their community of choice, function at maximum capacity, and feel valued in society.

AB2480 established the DOR’s ability to provide OIB equivalent services to the 18 and older population who are not interested in seeking employment. This program is established through the OIB service provider network as the legislation allows for a non-competitive distribution of the funds allocated for this purpose. This program serves people 18-54 who are not seeking employment. The goal of the program is consistent with that of the OIB program as the program intent is to increase independence for people who are not seeking employment.

Below are updates since the last meeting of the Blind Advisory Committee (BAC) in August 2024.

Program Reviews and Site Visits

Grant staff have resumed a full review schedule. Past grant year visits were conducted with four programs and 2 additional reviews were reviewed/scheduled for October and November 2024. Reports were issued for the first four program reviews.

OIB Services

The new grant cycle began October 1, 2023. DOR made 3-year awards with an option to extend for two additional one-year periods in order to facilitate funding stability for the grantees. Significantly, all counties in California have both OIB and AB2480 services available to eligible residents. This required three RFAs, but resulted in the availability of grant services no matter where an individual resides in California. Grant staff completed all grant amendment packages to ensure continued consumer services. An additional $4,000,000 in Social Security Administration reimbursement dollars has been incorporated into the grants to provide enhanced funding for OIB programs and to extend OIB services to the 18-54 population. This brings the total of California DOR blind service grant awards to $8 million for the 2024-25 grant year.

It is also noted that The Earle Baum Center has become part of LightHouse for the Blind. LightHouse for the Blind has taken on serving Sonoma County along with their other counties for both OIB and the AB2480 programs.

OIB Match

For the 2024-25 federal fiscal year the OIB program is negotiating match pledges from potential match partners.

Staffing

OIB has completed the process of recruiting/hiring an Associate Governmental Program Analyst (AGPA) that will continue to be shared with the Division. The Division hired Laurie Russi to assist with Division priorities. Laurie will help support the work of OIB invoice processing, reviewing reports, and doing on-site reviews as well as assisting the Division with key operational tasks.

Data

At the time this report was developed, more than $6.46 million in invoices have been received to date. Programs have invoiced for $3.67 million of the SSR funding. It is anticipated that the majority of the money allocated to programs will be invoiced for as staff complete processing the September 2024 claims.

The number of OIB consumers served, through the 3rd quarter, is just over 3,100 and over 400 AB2480 consumers have been served. Final numbers will be included in the next BAC report once the final quarterly reports have been compiled.

List of 2024/26 Provider Agencies and their Counties of Service

(Through September 30, 2026)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Agency Name** | **Counties Served** | **Contact Information** |
| Access to Independence | Imperial | Website: [https://accesstoindependence.org](https://accesstoindependence.org/)Phone: 619-293-3500Email:accessmedia@accesstoindependence.org |
| Blindness Support Services | Riverside, San Bernardino, part of Los Angeles | Website: <http://www.blindnesssupport.com/>Phone: 951- 341-9244Email: info@blindnesssupport.com |
| Blind and Visually Impaired Center of Monterey | Monterey | Website: <https://blindandlowvision.org/>Phone: 831-649-3505Email: steven@blindandlowvision.org |
| Community Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired | San Joaquin | Website: <https://www.communitycenterfortheblind.org/>Phone: 209-466-3836Email: info@CommunityCenterForTheBlind.org |
| Dayle McIntosh Center | Orange | Website: <https://daylemc.org/>Phone: 714-621-3300 |
| Independent Living Resource Center Inc. | San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura | Website: <https://ilrc-trico.org/>Phone: 805-963-0595Email: info@ilrc-trico.org |
| Lions Center for the Visually Impaired | Alameda | Website: <https://lcvi.org/>Phone: 800-750-3937Email: info@LCVI.org |
| LightHouse for the Blind | Alameda, Alpine, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Plumas, San Francisco, Shasta, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tehama, Trinity | Website: <https://lighthouse-sf.org/>Phone: 415-431-1481Email: infor@lighthouse-df.org |
| San Diego Center for the Blind | San Diego | Website: <https://www.sdcb.org/>Phone: 619-583-1542Email: info@SDCB.org |
| Society for the Blind | Amador, Butte, Calaveras, El Dorado, Glenn, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, Solano, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba | Website: <https://societyfortheblind.org/>Phone: 916-452-8271Email: info@societyfortheblind.org |
| Valley Center for the Blind | Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Tulare | Website: <https://myvcb.org/>Phone Fresno Office: 559-222-4447Phone Bakersfield Office: 661-865-5115Email: info@valleycenterfortheblind.org |
| VISTA Center | San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz | Website: <https://vistacenter.org/>Phone: 650-858-0202Email: info@vistacenter.org |
| Visually Impaired Persons Support (VIPS) | Stanislaus, Tuolumne | Website: <https://www.vipsmodesto.org/>Phone: 209-846-9027Email: tim@vipsmodesto.org |
| Wayfinder  | Los Angeles  | Website: <https://www.wayfinderfamily.org/>Phone: 323-295-4555 Ext 451Email: rdeerr@wayfinderfamily.org |