# Item 5 Detail Sheet: Running List of Policy Questions

Background: The SRC’s policy recommendations reflect the Council’s efforts to review, analyze and advise DOR on the performance and effectiveness of California’s VR program, a function of the SRC required by federal regulations. The SRC’s current list of policy questions under consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

## DOR Student Services

* Background: There are 150,000 students in California eligible for an Individualized Education Program (IEP). DOR is currently serving ~30,000 students. As reported during the August 31, 2022 SRC meeting, DOR’s goal is to increase the number of students served to 60,000.
* Policy Questions: What strategies could help DOR achieve this increase? How is DOR going to ensure that youth with disabilities leave high school with either 1) a family sustaining wage, or 2) enrolled in VR services?

## Benefit Planning and Employment

* Background: An existing barrier that needs to be addressed is regarding the true cost of living with a disability. Concerns regarding losing benefits might deter individuals from pursuing VR services. Individuals with disabilities need more education on benefits. The current design of the benefit system is that it’s built on the concept of “fail to benefit.”
* Policy Question: How can DOR increase awareness for consumers about available benefits?

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

* Background: The California Health and Human Services Agency is leading many initiatives to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and as a result, DOR will likely be asked to develop an equity action plan.
* Policy Questions: In support of a DOR equity action plan, the SRC is asked to provide considerations on the following questions: 1) how can inequities in DOR’s programs and services be identified, and what methodologies can be used to address these equity gaps, 2) what communities are unserved and underserved, and how can DOR effectively reach them, and 3) what methods and models should DOR look to and consider to address these inequities?

## Gun Violence

* Background: The California Health and Human Services Agency is calling upon Departments, including DOR, to recognize gun violence as a public health and public safety crisis, and for Departments to do more to act on this issue.
* Policy Considerations: The SRC has been asked to provide suggestions and recommendations on the strategies and actions that DOR can take to help address and respond to the gun violence crisis.

## Intersection of Retention Plans and Order of Selection

* Background: Per federal regulations, State VR agencies may elect to serve individuals at risk of losing employment outside the order of selection and provide VR services needed for the individual to maintain employment.
* Policy Question: If DOR implements an Order of Selection with closed categories, would DOR support the provision of VR services to individuals who reapply and require services to maintain/retain employment even though the individual would otherwise be assigned to a waiting list?

## Independent Living and Traumatic Brain Injury Programs

* Background: DOR’s Independent Living and Community Access Division has a standing item on the SRC quarterly meeting agenda for program overviews, updates, and opportunities for collaboration. This aligns with the SRC’s requirement to coordinate efforts with the State Independent Living Council (SILC).
* Policy Questions: 1) How can DOR provide coordinated “no wrong door” services to address the whole person whether they enter the systems through the VR or independent living programs? 2) How can DOR improve employment services and outcomes for individuals with traumatic brain injuries? 3) There is a need to include vocational rehabilitation and the benefits of employment when community supports are being discussed. Where and when does employment fit into the conversation?

## SRC Recommendation Review

Which SRC recommendations from the past five years should the SRC revisit and request updates on?

## Budget Change Proposals

Policy Question: If DOR was going to make a budget ask, what should that ask be, and why? Notes:

* Recommendations for Budget Change Proposals (BCPs) need to be submitted to DOR between January – March 2023 for consideration for the next budget cycle.
* BCP recommendations need to be new initiatives – cannot be a request to do more of the same.
* Reference new Executive Order N-16-22 which requires an analysis related to DEI for any new budget requests.

## Legislative Policy Change

If DOR had an opportunity to propose a legislative policy change, what would that change be and why?

## Data Analysis

What can the data and trends from the Consumer Satisfaction Survey, fair hearing decisions, and the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment tell us about the impact of DOR’s programs? Where are there opportunities to improve service delivery?

## Program Development

* Before developing a new initiative or program what are the core, guiding principles that need to be identified and established?
* What are some of the core principles that should guide efforts to integrate health and human services programs?
* What systems and policies are outdated and need to be modernized? Or instead, do we need to let go of them?