

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

The Commission for the Blind’s mission is to assist blind Oregonians in making informed choices and decisions to achieve full inclusion and integration in society through employment, independent living, and social self-sufficiency. The agency’s programs are focused on two main objectives: employment and independence.

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND	2009-11 Actuals	2011-13 Leg. Approved	2013-15 Current Service Level	2013-15 Governor's Budget	2013-15 Co-Chairs' Budget (1.0)	% Change 2011-13 LAB to 2013-15 CSL
General Fund	1,339,094	1,148,037	1,474,612	1,064,347	0	28.4%
Other Funds	2,672,035	2,946,859	2,886,114	3,077,800	0	-2.1%
Federal Funds	10,708,500	11,532,986	12,336,492	10,685,997	0	7.0%
TOTAL FUNDS	\$14,719,629	\$15,627,882	\$16,697,218	\$14,828,144	\$0	6.8%
Positions	51	48	48	43	0	0.0%
FTE	47.73	44.60	44.73	40.23	0.00	0.3%

Major Revenues	Budget Environment	Comparison by Fund Type																								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The largest source of federal funding is vocational rehabilitation support funds from the U.S. Department of Education, which have a match rate of \$3.70 federal funds for every \$1 of state funds. This funding is shared with the Department of Human Services. General Fund and certain Other Funds are used to meet the maintenance-of-effort (MOE) requirement as well as federal matching requirements. Almost half of Other Funds revenue supports the Industries for the Blind, predominately from Multnomah County to support services to developmentally disabled persons. Other sources include cooperative agreements with school districts and other providers, business enterprise vendor assessments, and donations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission estimates that approximately 20,000 Oregonians are blind. This number is increasing about 10% per year. Most causes of blindness are age-related. The vocational rehabilitation caseload for 2011 was 690, similar to the last two years. An additional 922 clients were served in the Older Blind program focused on independence rather than employment. In 2011, 74% of the individuals in the vocational rehabilitation program who entered into a plan for employment were successful in reaching their goals. The average cost per case was \$2,632. One of the largest expenses in the program is associated with technology and adaptive equipment. With advances in technology, many more jobs become possible to perform without vision. 	<p style="text-align: center;">COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Revenue Breakdown (Millions of Dollars)</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>General Fund/Lottery</th> <th>Other Funds</th> <th>Federal Funds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2009-11</td> <td>\$1.3</td> <td>\$2.7</td> <td>\$10.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011-13</td> <td>\$1.1</td> <td>\$2.9</td> <td>\$11.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-15 CSL</td> <td>\$1.5</td> <td>\$2.9</td> <td>\$12.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-15 GB</td> <td>\$1.1</td> <td>\$3.1</td> <td>\$10.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-15</td> <td>\$0.0</td> <td>\$0.0</td> <td>\$0.0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	General Fund/Lottery	Other Funds	Federal Funds	2009-11	\$1.3	\$2.7	\$10.7	2011-13	\$1.1	\$2.9	\$11.5	2013-15 CSL	\$1.5	\$2.9	\$12.3	2013-15 GB	\$1.1	\$3.1	\$10.7	2013-15	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
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MAJOR CHALLENGES AND DECISION POINTS

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The agency must meet matching requirements in order to utilize the federal revenue available to it. The vocational rehabilitation support must be matched with 21.3% state matching funds (or about \$1 state funds for every \$3.70 federal funds). For the Older Blind program the state must provide 10% state match. In the 2011-13 biennium, the agency had adequate funding to utilize the \$11.5 million Federal Funds available. General Fund and certain Other Funds (including donation funds) are used for match. 2. There is also a maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement associated with the federal funding, based on the prior two years of funding. If state funding is reduced below the MOE requirement, an equivalent amount of federal funding is lost. That reduced level of federal resources available will continue into the future. The MOE requirement is for the state as a whole, and is shared with the Department of Human Services. Historically, the agency has been adequately funded to meet the MOE requirement, although in recent years that has been accomplished partially by using donation funds. 3. The agency maintains a Blind Bequest and Donation Fund. Each of the last two biennia the Fund received about \$200,000 in donations. Years ago, the Commission used only the interest earnings to fund programs and projects above the standard program. However, beginning in 2003-05 and increasing through the current biennia, the agency has needed to use donations in order to match federal funding and continue basic programs. In 2011-13, the agency's budget includes over \$490,000 of expenditures funded with donations. Over the last three biennia, the General Fund budget has declined from \$1.5 million in 2007-09 to \$1.1 million in 2011-13. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Order of Selection is a federally required wait list system that mandates vocational rehabilitation agencies to prioritize individuals with the most significant disabilities and rehabilitation needs. An agency is required to enter into an order of selection when they determine to have either inadequate staffing levels or case service funds to serve all eligible clients in the vocational rehabilitation program. The Commission has been in Order of Selection during two periods in the recent past, from August 2000 to September 2005 and from January 2009 to December 2010. 5. The Governor's budget (GB) is \$14.8 million total funds, which is 11% below the current service level and results in the reduction of five positions (4.50 FTE). This includes two rehabilitation counselors, two rehabilitation instructors, and one instructor in the Orientation Center. The reduction also includes special payments to provide education, training, and supportive services to clients preparing for employment, as well as professional services. 6. In addition, the Commission's budget request included five new staff to increase program support to the Blind Enterprises program and to provide instructors to meet increased demand for technology and mobility training. The GB did not fund this enhancement. 7. The GB funding level results in the agency being about \$463,000 short of meeting its MOE requirement. It also means the agency will "send back" \$2 million of federal funds that they will be unable to match. The agency anticipates that this budget would require them to enter into an Order of Selection. The budget includes \$392,060 of donation funds. |
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