

# OREGON COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

*Expanding Opportunities  
for Oregonians with  
Vision Loss*

**Dacia Johnson: Interim Administrator**  
**Jodi Roth: Commission Chair**

# Mission Statement

***The mission of the Oregon Commission for the Blind is to assist eligible Oregonians who are blind in making informed choices to achieve full inclusion in society through employment, independent living, and social self-sufficiency.***

## **Key Service Objectives to Accomplish Mission**

- Coordinate specialized services for transition aged youth to ensure that students exit school with an individualized plan leading to employment
- Collaborate with other organizations to prevent delay or duplication of services for Oregonians who experience vision loss
- Provide vocational rehabilitation services to Oregonians who are legally blind and desire to return to work or maintain employment
- Provide training and skills related to blindness that enables people to remain independent in their homes and communities
- Provide business opportunities for Oregonians who are blind through public food service/vending locations throughout the state
- Prevent or delay institutionalization of elderly individuals who are blind
- Increase employment of legally blind Oregonians
- Increase income level of individuals who are blind

# Agency Programs Overview

## **Rehabilitation Services**

- Vocational Rehabilitation for Oregonians who are blind to develop skills of blindness and obtain or maintain employment
- Older Blind Independent Living, IL Part B- teaching skills of blindness for living independently and full participation and integration into the community

## **Orientation and Career Center**

- Residential and commuter based comprehensive training on skills related to blindness such as traveling with a white cane, braille, adaptive technology, food preparation, home management, etc.

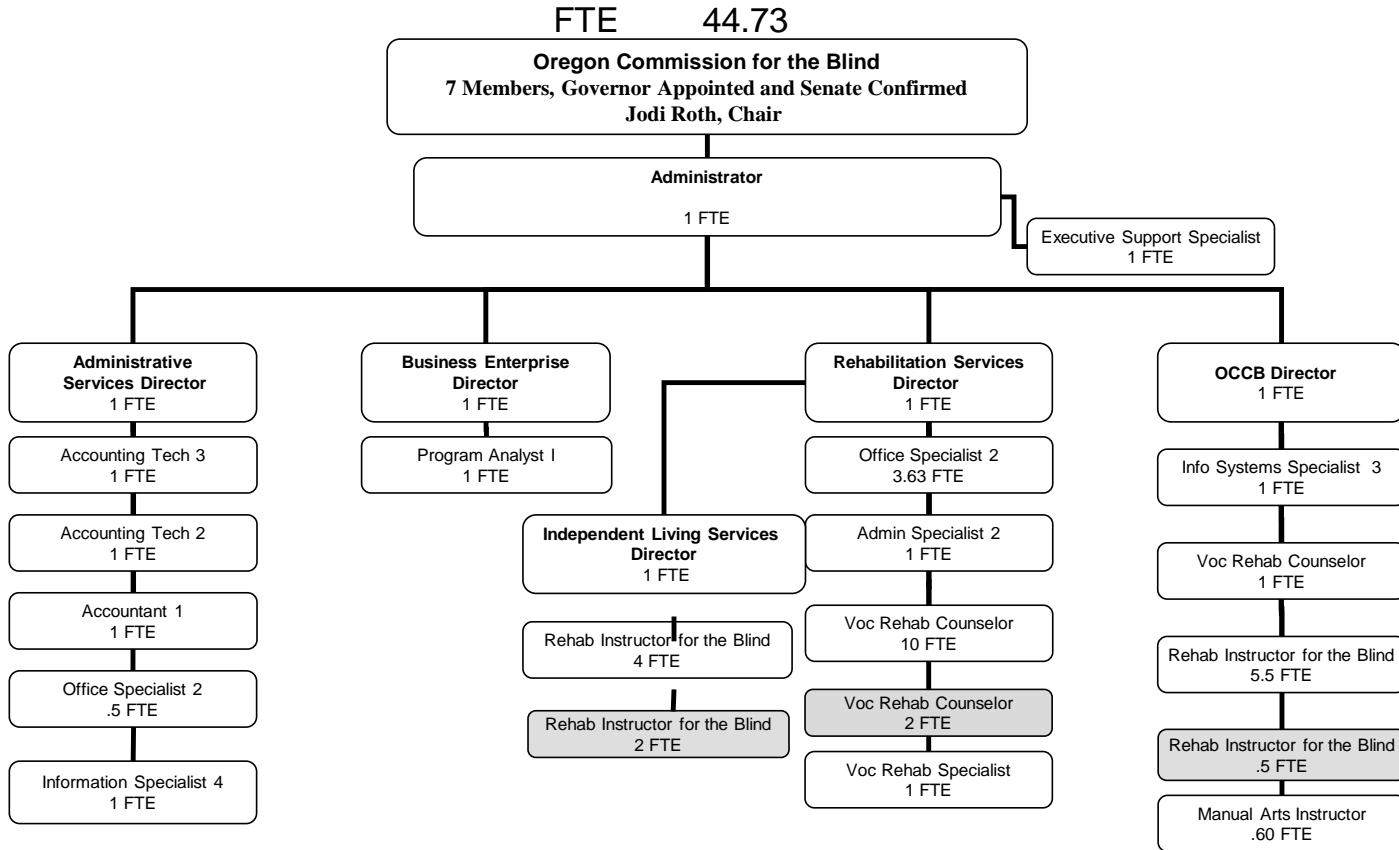
## **Business Enterprises Program**

- Training and licensing of business managers who are blind who are managing food service/vending businesses located in public buildings throughout the state

## **Oregon Industries for the Blind**

- Supported employment and work alternative program for individuals with intellectual disabilities in addition to blindness

## Commission for the Blind Organization Chart 2013 - 2015 Current Service Level



**Note: Shaded boxes represent positions eliminated in GBB.**

# Vocational Rehabilitation Services

## How services are delivered:

### **Purpose**

- Help individuals who are legally blind obtain and maintain employment
- Assist Oregon businesses retain or hire qualified employees who are blind

### **Target Group and Service Delivery System**

- Oregonians who are legally blind who have barriers related to employment and want to work, including transition aged youth exiting the school system
- Statewide services from seven locations

### **Individualized Employment Services**

- Professional counseling from specialized rehabilitation counselors
- Evaluation of strengths and challenges
- Service coordination with educational/medical providers
- Adaptive skills evaluation and training
- Adaptive technology for training and employment
- Job Training, job development and job retention
- Transition Services for Youth exiting school
- Summer Work Experience Program/early intervention for job readiness skills
- Consultation with businesses for job placement and retention

# Older Blind Independent Living Services

## How services are delivered:

### Purpose

- Help individuals with severe visual impairment to adjust, function and live as independently as possible in their community
- Keep older individuals in their homes, rather than moving into assisted living or care facilities

### Target Groups and Service Delivery System

- Serves Oregonians 55 and over who have significant vision loss
- Services provided in client's home by rehabilitation teachers

### Services

- Personal Management
- Traveling with a white cane
- Techniques of daily living
  - Cooking
  - Housekeeping
  - Shopping
- Alternative methods of written communication
  - Braille
  - Large Print
- Strategies for using remaining vision



# Orientation & Career Center: How services are delivered

## Purpose

- Provide skills of blindness training in a comprehensive, coordinated and efficient way
- Maintain specialized expertise in vision rehabilitation as the only training center for the blind in Oregon

## Target Group and Service Delivery System

- Individuals who have comprehensive training needs in the alternative skills to blindness required for full independence/employment
- Services available in residential and commuter modalities

## Services

- Adjustment to blindness
- Adaptive technology training
- Low vision assessments
- Traveling with a white cane
- Braille training
- Career exploration/evaluations
- Meal preparation/shopping
- Techniques of Daily Living
- Woodshop instruction
- Transition workshops/services
- Accessibility evaluations for business
- Job site modification, evaluations, and recommendations



# Business Enterprise Program-

## How services are delivered:

### Purpose

- Provides business management opportunities in food service and vending for Oregonians who are legally blind
- Provide customers with quality food service and vending programs. Administered under the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act

### Target Group and Service Delivery System

- Legally blind Oregonians who are trained and licensed by the agency
- Food service and vending facilities are located throughout Oregon in federal, state and other governmental buildings
- 640 Vending Locations
- 6 Snack Bars
- 6 Full-service Cafeterias
- 5 Coffee Carts and Office Coffee Services
- Serving more than 10,000 customers daily

### Services

- Training for new managers
- Licensing of qualified managers
- Continuing Education and Technical assistance to managers





# Oregon Industries for the Blind

## How services are delivered:

**100% Other Funds from Multnomah and Clackamas County's  
Developmental Disabilities Services**

### **Purpose**

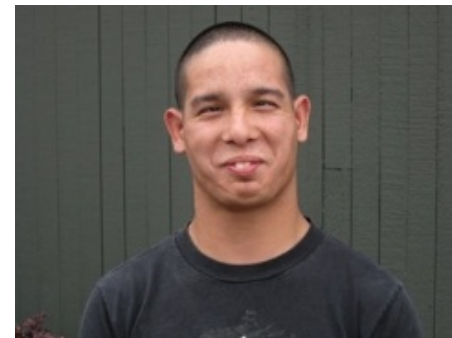
- ✓ Provide work and work activities to individuals with intellectual disabilities in addition to blindness
- ✓ Cooperative projects operated in conjunction with Multnomah County Mental Health under ORS 346.190

### **Target Group and Service Delivery System**

- ✓ Residents of Multnomah County with intellectual disabilities and blindness
- ✓ Services provided at a center in Portland and at supported employment sites in the community

### **Services**

- ✓ Job Coaching
- ✓ Placement in supported employment
- ✓ Sheltered employment
- ✓ Skill building activities
- ✓ Currently serves 44 individuals with 11 employees



# Overview of Performance and Outcome Measures

**KPM #1: EMPLOYMENT-** Percentage of individuals who enter into individualized plans for employment in the vocational rehabilitation program who are successful in reaching their outcome.

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: 45%

2009: 79%

2010: 70%

2011: 74%

2012: 78%

**Related Internal Management Measures- Total Number of VR Clients Served**

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: 896

2009: 743

2010: 684

2011: 690

2012: 714

**Related Internal Management Measures- Average Hourly Wage at Placement**

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: \$14.77

2009: \$13.20

2010: \$13.97

2011: \$16.95

2012: \$17.91

## **Overview of Performance & Outcome Measures Continued**

**KPM #2-INDEPENDENT LIVING-** Percentage of older individuals who complete independent living services who self assess as having an increase in confidence, skills, and abilities.

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: 87%

2009: 79%

2010: 85%

2011: 91%

2012: 90%

**Related Internal Management Measures- Total Clients Served**

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: 897

2009: 738

2010: 773

2011: 867

2012: 829

**Related Internal Management Measures- Percentage of total clients served who are age 65 or older**

Yearly Performance Data:

2008: 89.4%

2009: 89.5%

2010: 87.8%

2011: 91.3%

2012: 88.3%

## Environmental Factors

- Each year about 1,950 people become legally blind
- An estimated 19,500 Oregonians are blind
- Unemployment for individuals who are blind approaches 70%
- 35.3% of individuals over the age of 65 experience vision loss (\*National Center for Health Statistics)
- The Oregon Commission for the Blind is the only agency in Oregon to provide specialized rehabilitation services for Oregonians who experience blindness
- A Secretary of State Audit in 2009 and the follow up in 2011 indicated a strong need for greater attention to business practices and management oversight

## Secretary of State Audit Findings

A 2009 Audit found weak fiscal oversight and recommended tighter controls and greater attention to procurement and other state policies and procedures

A follow up review in 2011 found the agency to have made some improvements, but the efforts were considered incomplete or inadequate in many of the areas; processes or policies put in place were not consistently implemented or tracked.

The agency accepted the findings and recommendations and immediately began work on establishing effective business practices that can be sustained and verified through audit.

The agency reported its progress along with the Secretary of State Audits Division in September 2012 to the Legislative Audit, Information Management and Technology Committee and received a positive response

## Secretary of State Audit Response

Under the leadership of the Commission Board, agency management established a schedule of regular monitoring activities for each meeting to establish a transparent way of tracking high risk areas such as payments, contracts, computers, cell phones, SPOTS credit cards, agency sponsored events. This has been in place since February 2012. Each regular meeting of the commission includes a report on monitoring conducted by agency management that is reported in the public meeting and placed on the record.

The agency obtained input and feedback on the agency efforts to improve business practices from other state agency subject matter experts under the leadership of DAS/CFO. Gathered some ideas for efficiency measures, obtained reassurance that our efforts were on target.

The agency intends to move forward with contracting for auditing services that can independently verify the results of the monitoring and begin review of other unknown areas of risk.

The agency wants to present to stakeholders a transparent, evidence based process that provides real time data on our business practices that support the quality services provided to Oregonians who are blind.

## Budget Drivers and Environmental Factors

- High unemployment for all Oregonians, increased competition for jobs requiring competitive job skills
- Demand and projected need for services exceeds agency capacity in the areas of technology, orientation and mobility (cane travel) and independent living services in the home
- Increased demand for technology and training for working and living independently
- Increased demand for cane travel/mobility training among working age adults who want to go back to work
- Managing existing resources to stay out of an order of selection
- Age related vision loss has increased the demand for independent living services among our seniors in Oregon
- Increased emphasis on business functions, accountability and management oversight required for permanent sustainable changes
- Stakeholder engagement and new program leadership is expected to create opportunities to improve and strengthen the Business Enterprise Program
- Potential loss of federal funds due to decreased general funds
- Using donation funds to replace General Fund is not sustainable

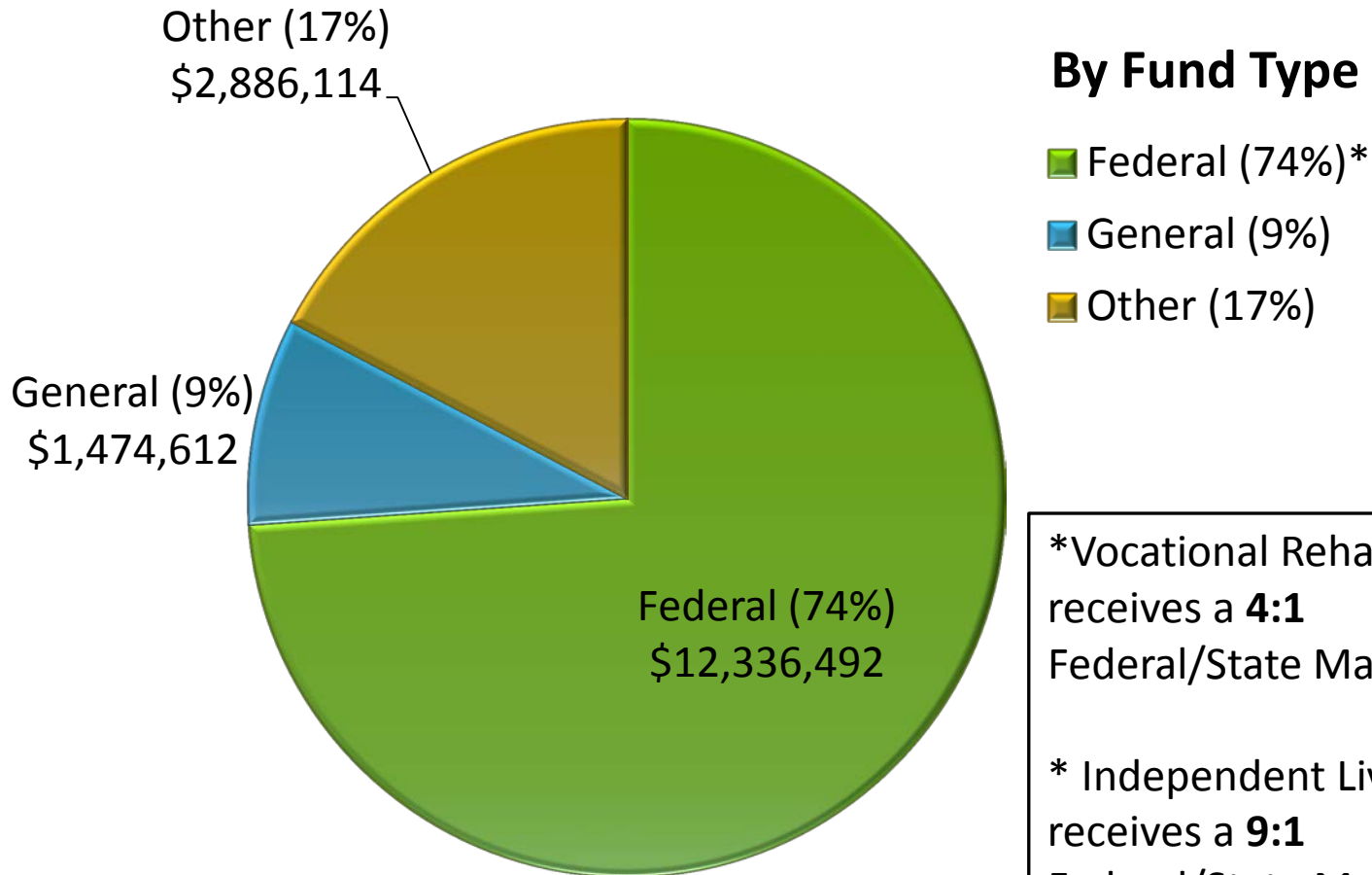
## Budget Detail



# BUDGET DETAIL- SOURCES

2013 – 2015 Current Service Level

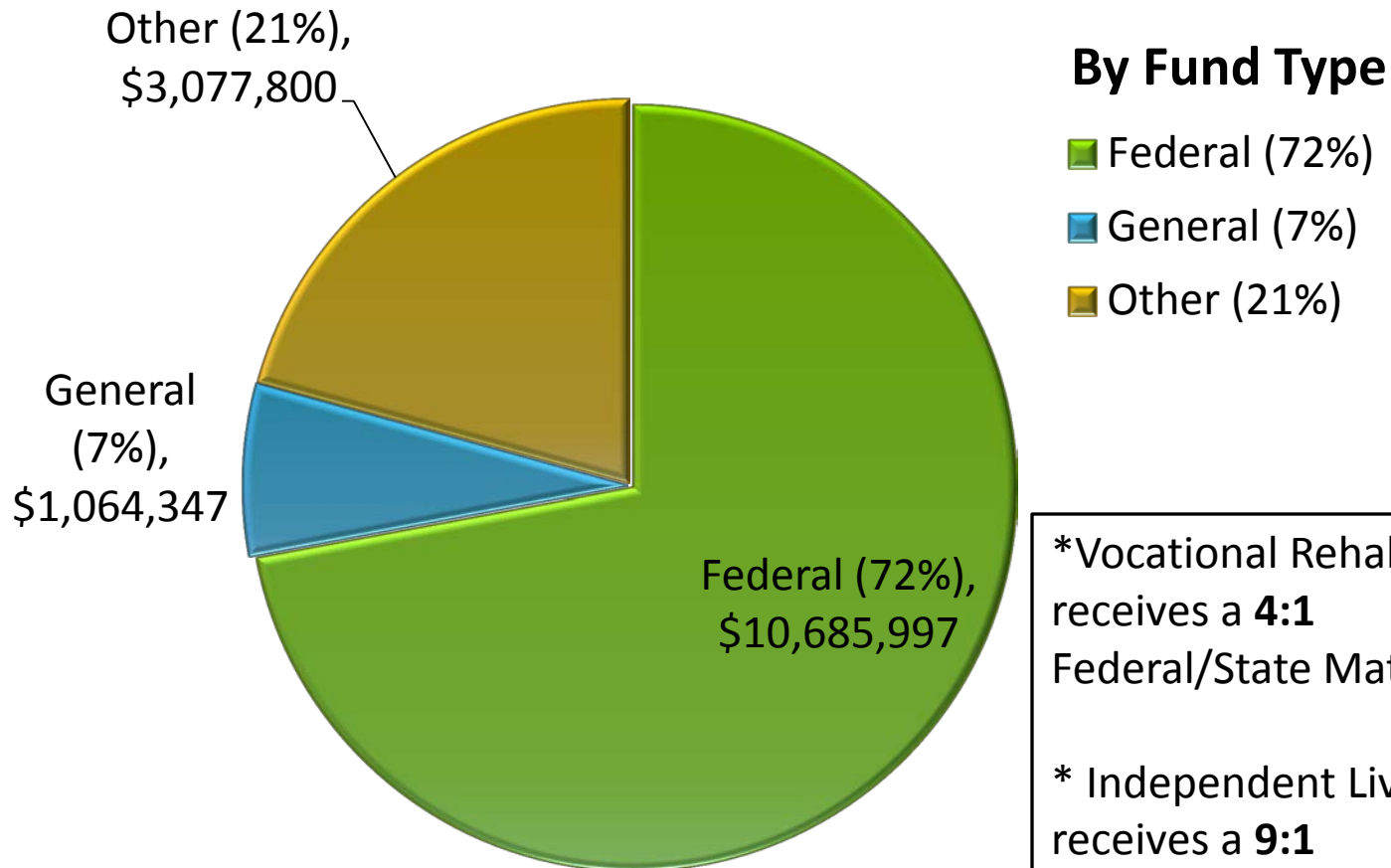
Total Funds: \$16,697,218



# BUDGET DETAIL- SOURCES

2013 - 2015 Governor's Balanced

Total Funds: \$14,828,144



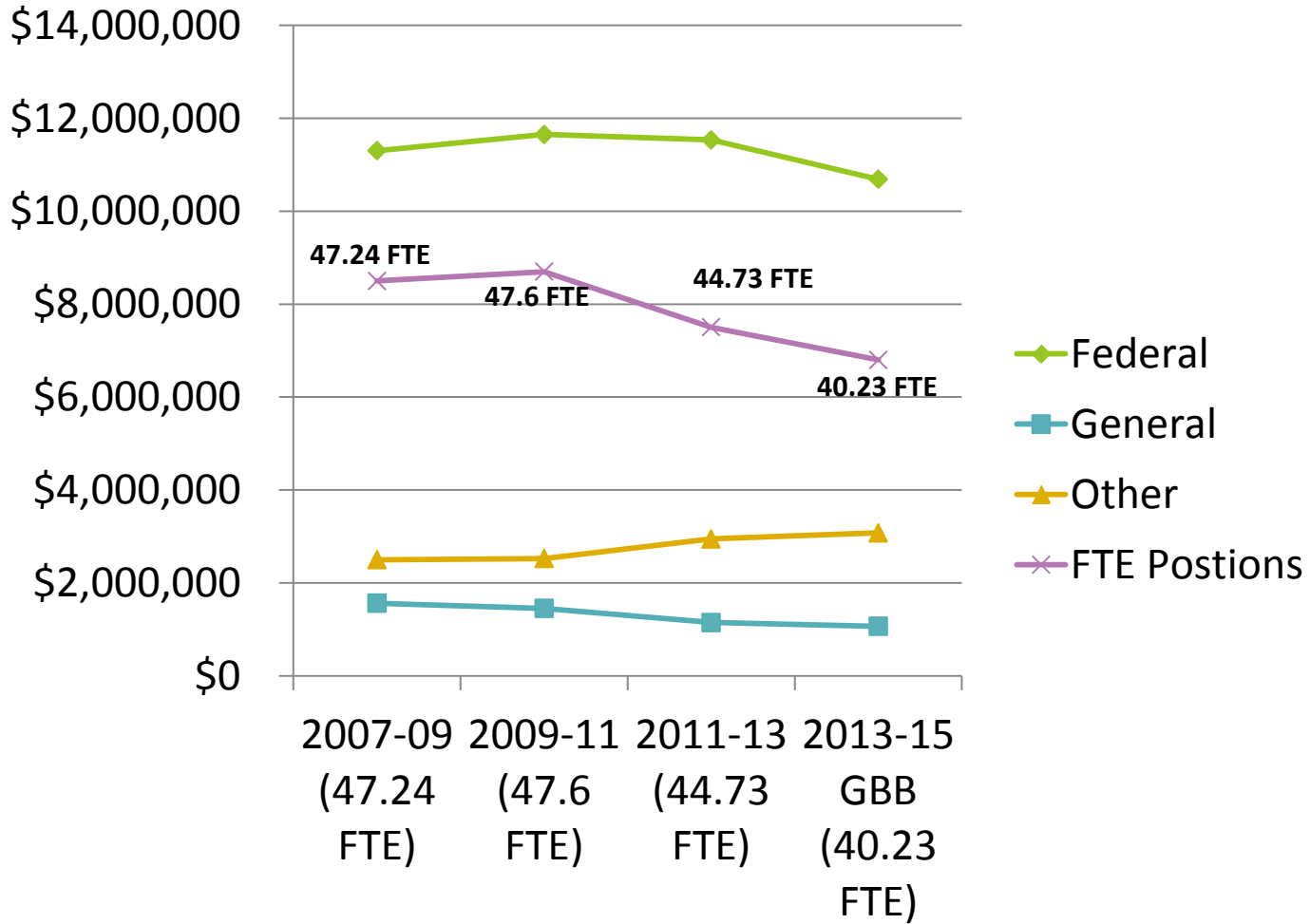
\*Vocational Rehabilitation receives a **4:1** Federal/State Match

\* Independent Living receives a **9:1** Federal/State Match

## 2013 – 2015 Governor’s Balanced Budget

- The Governor’s Budget funds the agency at \$1.9 million below the current service level and reduces the number of positions by 5 (4.50 FTE)
- Includes a reduction of \$410,000 General Fund and \$1.7 million in federal funds
- Utilizes \$392,060 in donation fund to match federal funds
- Federal fund availability would be reduced in the future by \$462,255 as a result of failing to meet maintenance of effort requirements

# HISTORICAL LEGISLATIVELY APPROVED BUDGET



# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES ARE A GOOD INVESTMENT

78.7% FEDERAL, 21.3% GENERAL/OTHER STATE FUNDS

## **Successfully Employed Clients Pay State and Federal Taxes Through Their Working Life**

### **On Average:**

- Oregon's contribution is paid back in State taxes in approximately 15 months
- The Federal contribution is paid back in Federal taxes in less than 29 months

### **Services Reduce Dependence on Public Assistance:**

- Successfully employed clients are less likely to be dependent on public assistance programs.
- **Average Savings** to SSI over a lifetime per individual recipient who goes off benefits is:
  - \$361,468 for females**
  - \$320,373 for males**
- **Average savings** to the Oregon Health Plan over a lifetime per individual who goes off benefits is:
  - \$211,358 for females**
  - \$187,329 for males**

# **OLDER BLIND SERVICES ARE A GOOD INVESTMENT**

**90% FEDERAL, 10% GENERAL/OTHER STATE FUNDS**

For every individual we help to live independently there is a significant cost savings:

**The State of Oregon saves a minimum of**

- **\$22,800 per individual each year receiving older blind services in lieu of moving into assisted living,**
- **\$23,700 per individual each year in lieu of foster home care,**
- **\$71,136 per individual per year entering intermediate nursing home care.**