

OREGON COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

AGENCY OVERVIEW



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Oregon Commission for the Blind is to Empower Oregonians who are Blind to Fully Engage in Life

Key Service Objectives

Provide vocational rehabilitation services to Oregonians who are legally blind needing to return to work or maintain employment

Provide training and skills related to blindness that enables seniors to remain independent in their homes and communities

Coordinate specialized pre-employment transition services for in-school youth to ensure that students exit school with an individualized plan leading to employment

Provide business opportunities for Oregonians who are blind through public food service/vending locations throughout the state

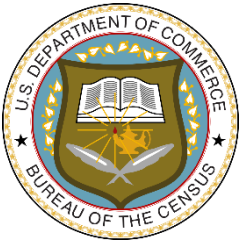
Work with businesses to attract and retain qualified workers who are blind

Provide public education, information and referrals on vision loss

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN OREGON OVERVIEW

The Oregon Commission for the Blind is the only agency in Oregon to provide specialized rehabilitation services for Oregonians who experience blindness. As Oregon's population increases, the need for these services to support Oregonians returning to work and living independently will expand.

US Census 2015 American
Community Survey
for Oregon



**100,070 OREGONIANS
EXPERIENCE VISUAL
DIFFICULTY**

Age Breakdown

0-17 Years: 6,155

18-64: 51,722

65 and older: 42,193

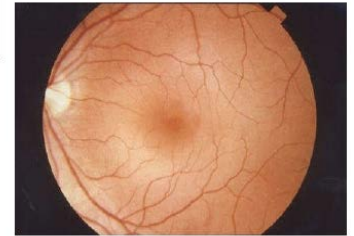
DiABETES



**ONE OF THE LEADING
CAUSES OF BLINDNESS
FOR ADULTS**

8% of adults in Oregon have
diabetes and are at risk to
develop diabetic retinopathy

Age-Related Macular
Degeneration

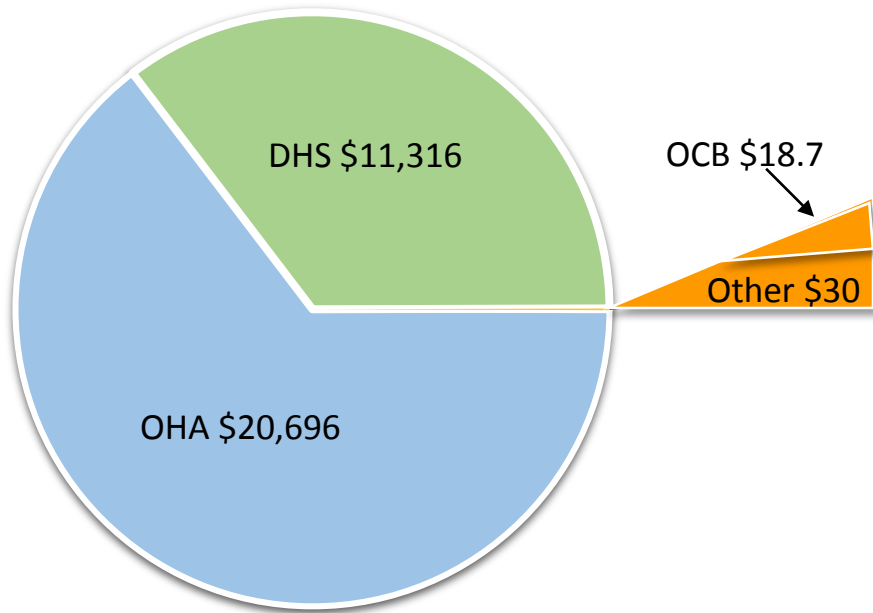


**THE LEADING CAUSE OF
BLINDNESS FOR
SENIORS 75+**

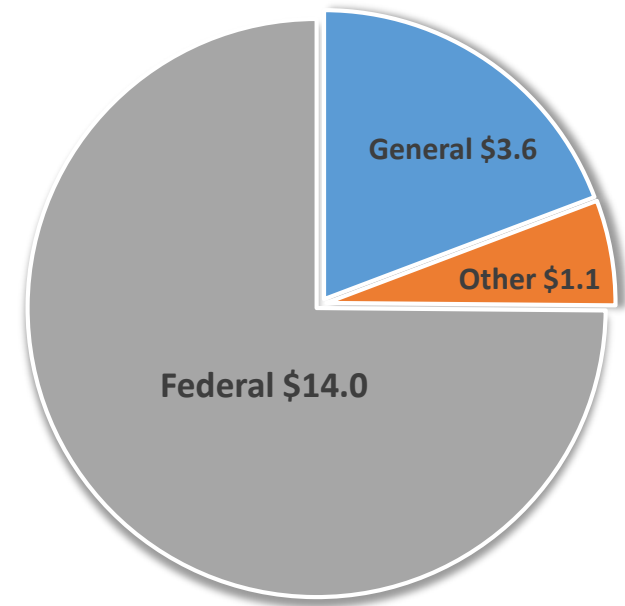
7% of individuals over the age of
75 develop this severe visual
impairment

CURRENT SERVICE LEVEL HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM AREA 2017-19

Total Funds \$32,043 Million

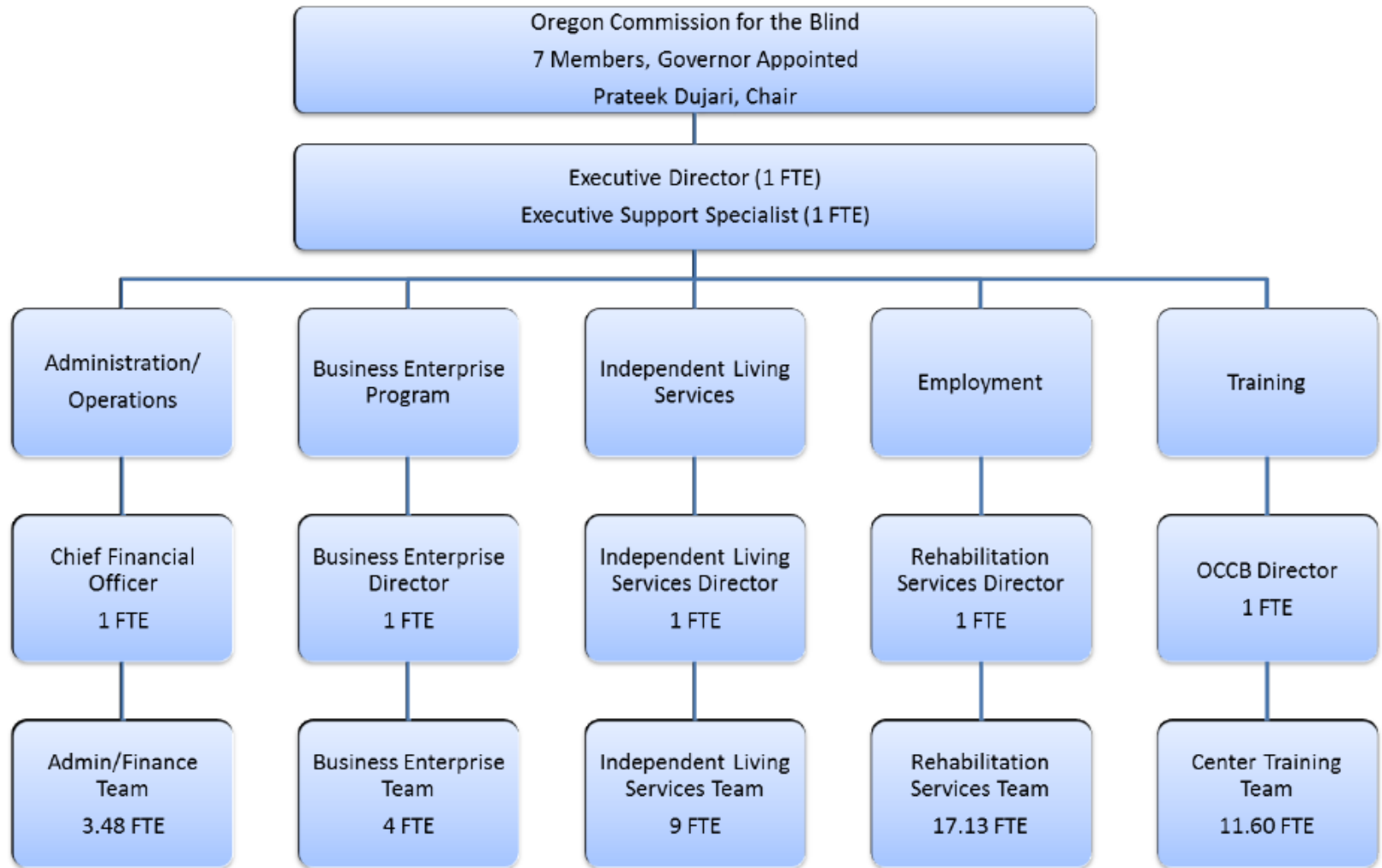


OCB at CSL by FUND



ORGANIZATION CHART

2015 – 2017 52.21 FTE



CORE VALUES



KEY AGENCY GOALS



EXEMPLARY SERVICE

Ensure services to clients & business functions meet and/or exceed stakeholder expectation



ENGAGED STAFF

Ensure the agency culture attracts & nurtures a committed, engaged staff



FINANCIALLY STRONG

Maintain stable funding to provide adequate level of infrastructure to plan for & execute services statewide



EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Increase outreach activities throughout Oregon to generate community awareness & engagement



MEASURABLE RESULTS

Utilize agency-developed real-time business intelligence strategy to gauge outcomes and success rates

KEY GOAL ALIGNMENT

The agency's key goals align with the Governor's Plan for Oregon in the following areas:

SEAMLESS SYSTEM OF EDUCATION & WORKFORCE TRAINING

As transition-aged youth who are blind prepare to exit high school, our Transition Specialists work with the student, their families and education planning team to develop a seamless transition into further post-secondary training and/or employment. Oregonians who are blind work with the Commission for the Blind's specialized vocational rehabilitation counseling and teaching professionals to build and implement individualized plans for employment consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.

THRIVING STATEWIDE ECONOMY

Vocational rehabilitation is about helping individuals who are blind and want to gain or retain employment to acquire the necessary adaptive skills for full participation in the workforce. In order for Oregonians who are blind to fully participate in the economic recovery, they need access to training, technology and other related vocational rehabilitation services. It is also critical that there be employers who want to hire qualified individuals with disabilities in order to enhance and diversify their workforce. We are committed to being an agency that leads by example and have many employees who are blind who are working at all levels of the organization.

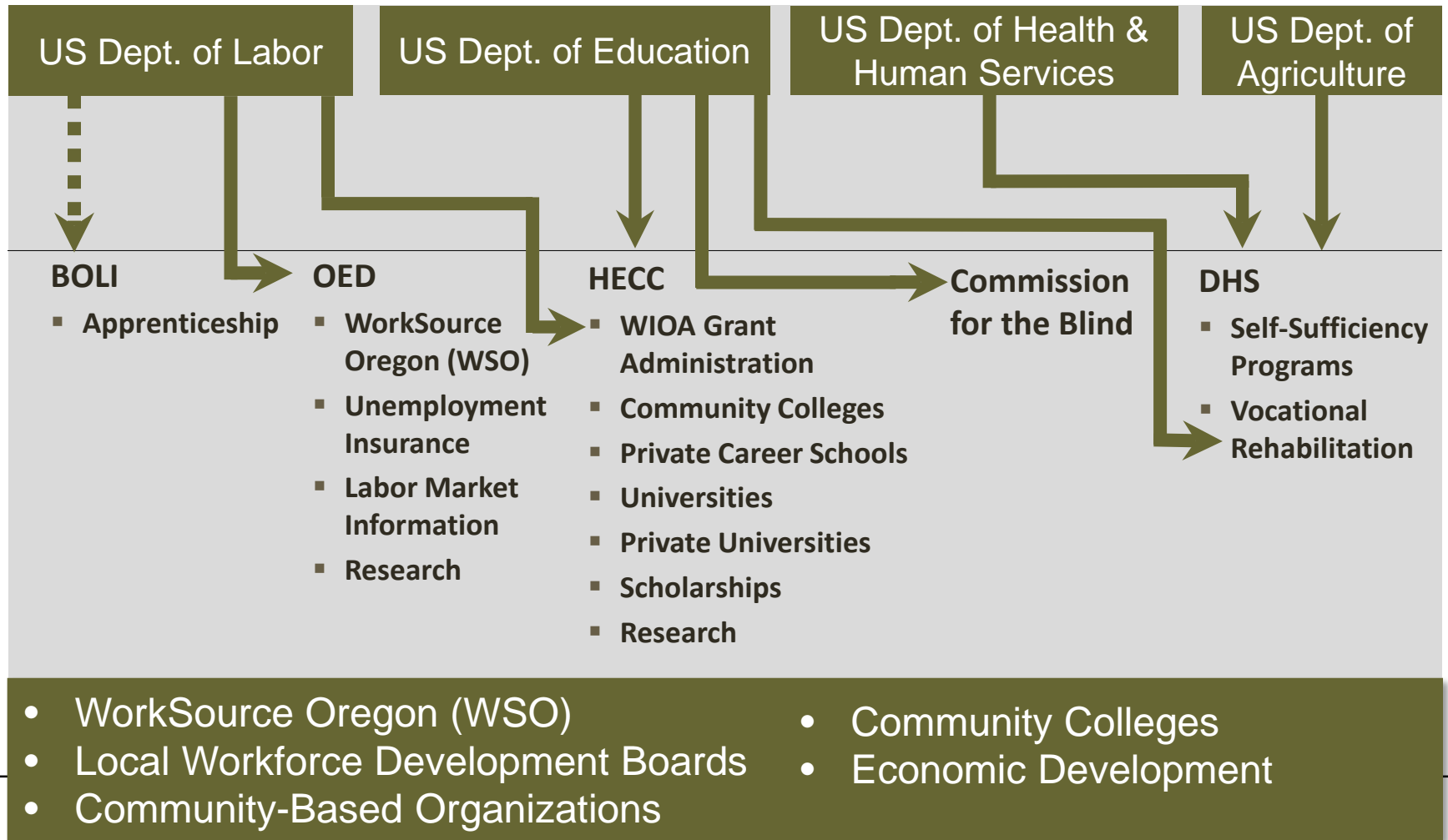
HEALTHY, SAFE OREGONIANS

Oregonians who are blind that can be actively engaged in their community and enjoy participation in hobbies, recreation, civic engagement, or whatever their interests take them. Seniors who lose their vision and desire to remain living in their own homes can learn to be safe and independent in their daily lives through specialized adaptive training designed for their own environment and life. This training is provided via the agency's specialized rehabilitation staff.

EXCELLENCE IN STATE GOVERNMENT

The agency's business intelligence strategy utilizes outcome-based management to emphasize accountability and transparency throughout the organization. We focus on measuring results that demonstrate how we are meeting the needs of our customers, delivering results, and focusing on the priorities established by the Governor and the Commission.

PART OF THE NATION'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The Commission for the Blind's role within the Workforce System:

Engage in the planning and implementation of the workforce system at a state and local level

Provide specialized vocational rehabilitation training services to Oregonians who are blind and need to maintain employment or return to work

Coordinate pre-employment transition services for in-school youth who are blind to ensure they exit school with an individualized plan leading to employment

Work with businesses to attract, hire and retain qualified workers who are blind

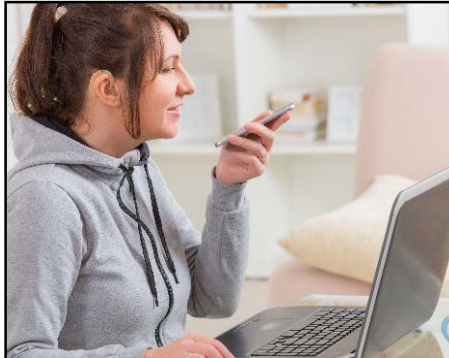
Participate in the shared data reporting on workforce performance measures identified by Congress

AGENCY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Assist Oregonians who are blind to develop skills of blindness to obtain or maintain employment and assist Oregon businesses to hire, retain and promote qualified employees who are blind



ORIENTATION & CAREER CENTER

Pre-vocational comprehensive training on skills related to blindness such as:

- Cane Travel
- Adaptive Technology
- Daily Living Skills
- Braille
- Low Vision



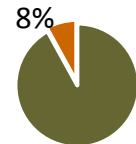
BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

Vocational training, licensing and supporting business managers who are blind to manage food service/vending businesses located in public buildings throughout the state of Oregon



INDEPENDENT LIVING

Teach skills of blindness for living independently with full participation and integration into the community

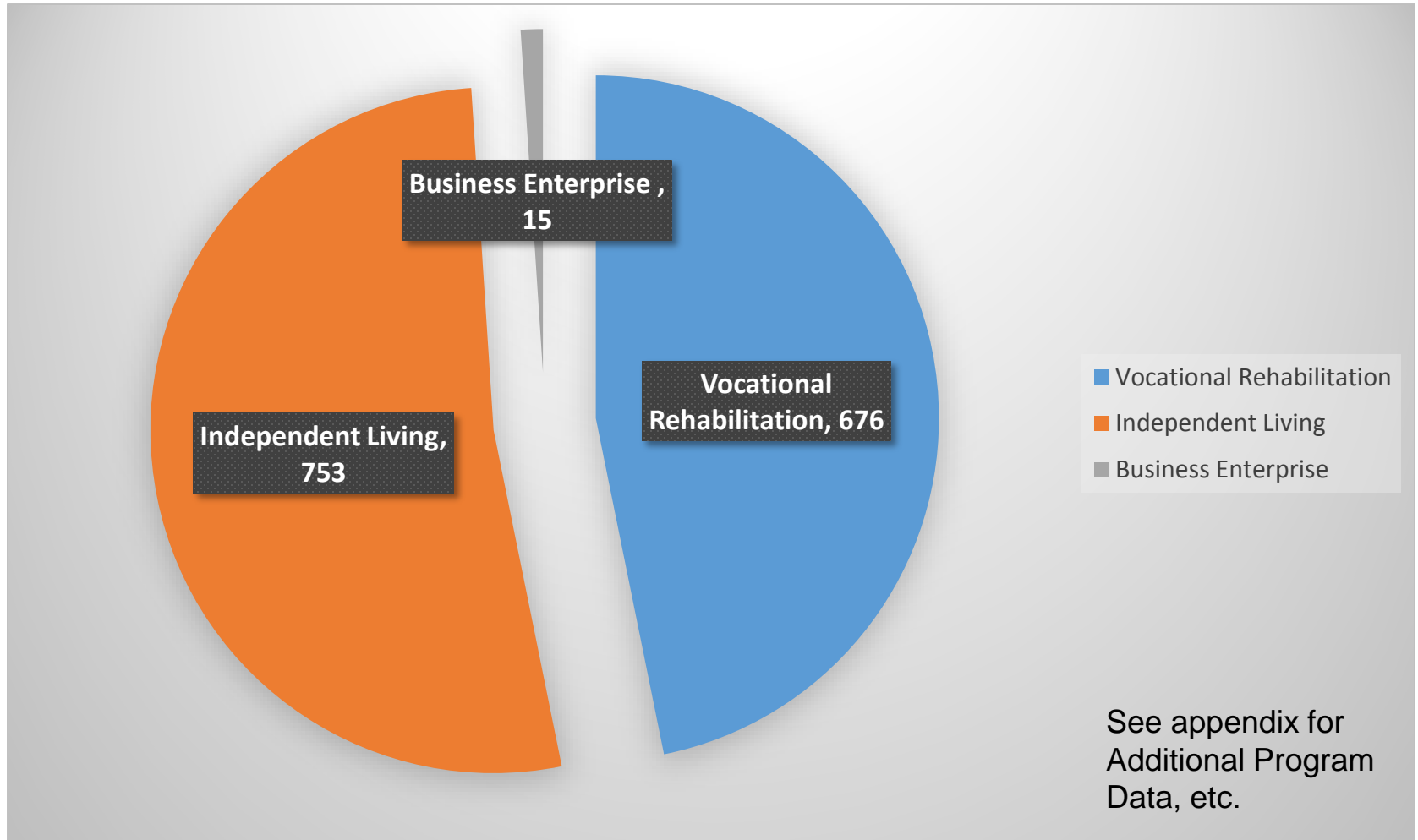


Funding for this program represents 8% of overall agency budget

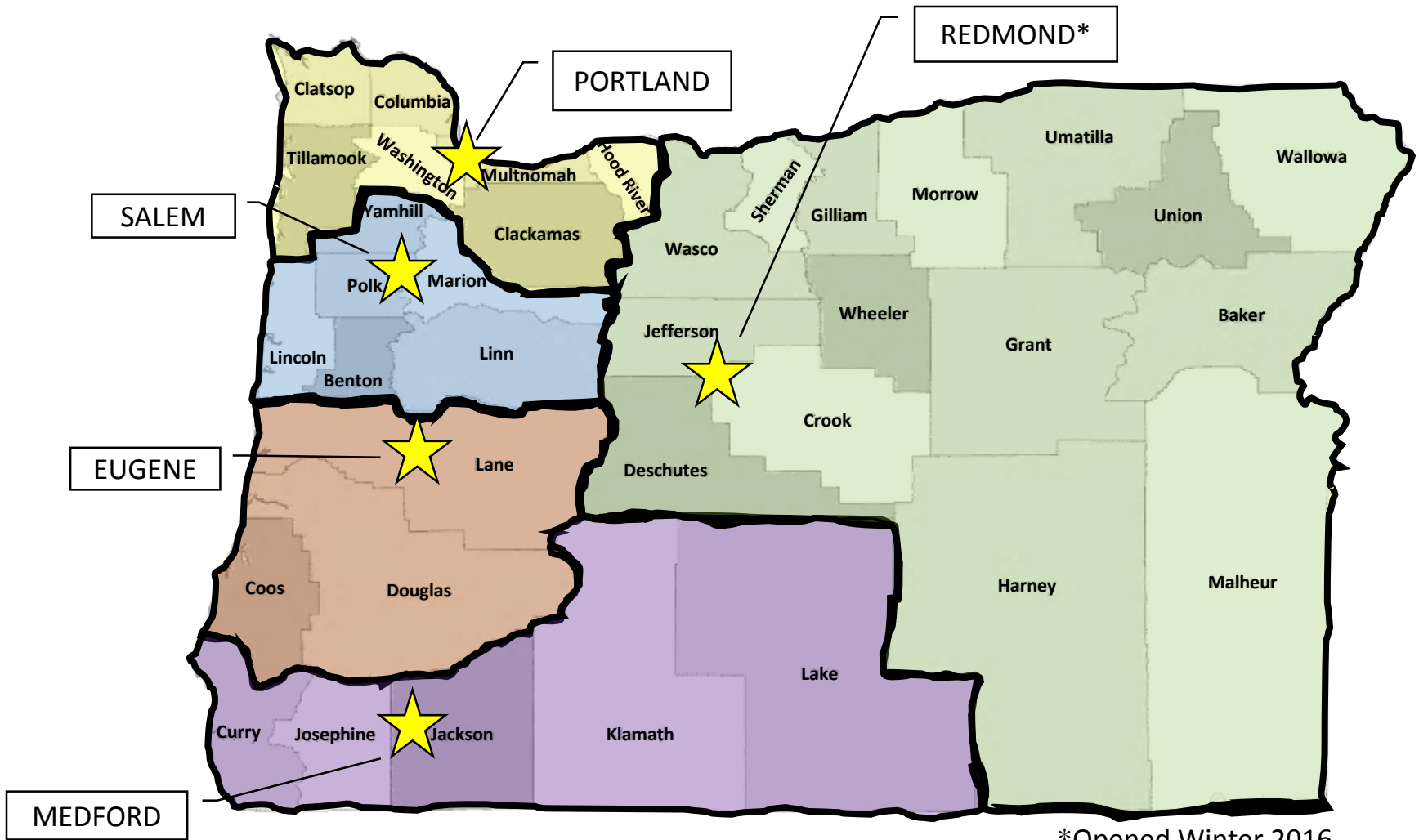


Funding for these 3 programs represents 92% of overall agency budget

NUMBERS SERVED BY PROGRAM FY 2016



GEOGRAPHICAL SERVICE AREAS



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION



PURPOSE

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

TARGET GROUP & SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

- Oregonians who are legally blind who have barriers related to employment and want to work, including transition-aged youth
- Services provided statewide from five locations

INDIVIDUALIZED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

- Professional counseling from specialized rehabilitation counselors
- Evaluation of strengths and challenges
- Service coordination with educational and medical providers
- Adaptive skills evaluation and training
- Adaptive technology for training and employment
- Job training, development and retention
- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for youth
- Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) – early intervention for job readiness skills for youth
- Consultation with businesses for job placement and retention

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CLIENT PROCESS



SUMMER WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

PURPOSE

- Provide community-based summer jobs for youth who are legally blind
- Assist youth in transitioning from school to work or post-secondary education
- Partner with Department of Education, Department of Human Services and Schools to enhance student preparedness for post graduation

ELIGIBILITY & SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

- Blind and visually-impaired youth aged 16-21
- Portland program housed at Portland State University
- Salem program housed at Willamette University
- Community-based work experience

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Work experience in community jobs
- Dormitory-style independent living opportunity
- Competitive and employment with supports
- Mentoring
- Independent living skills training
- Training on use of public transportation
- Development of leadership and problem solving skills

SWEP

SUMMER WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAM



ORIENTATION & CAREER CENTER

PURPOSE

- Provide skills of blindness training/instruction 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 & SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

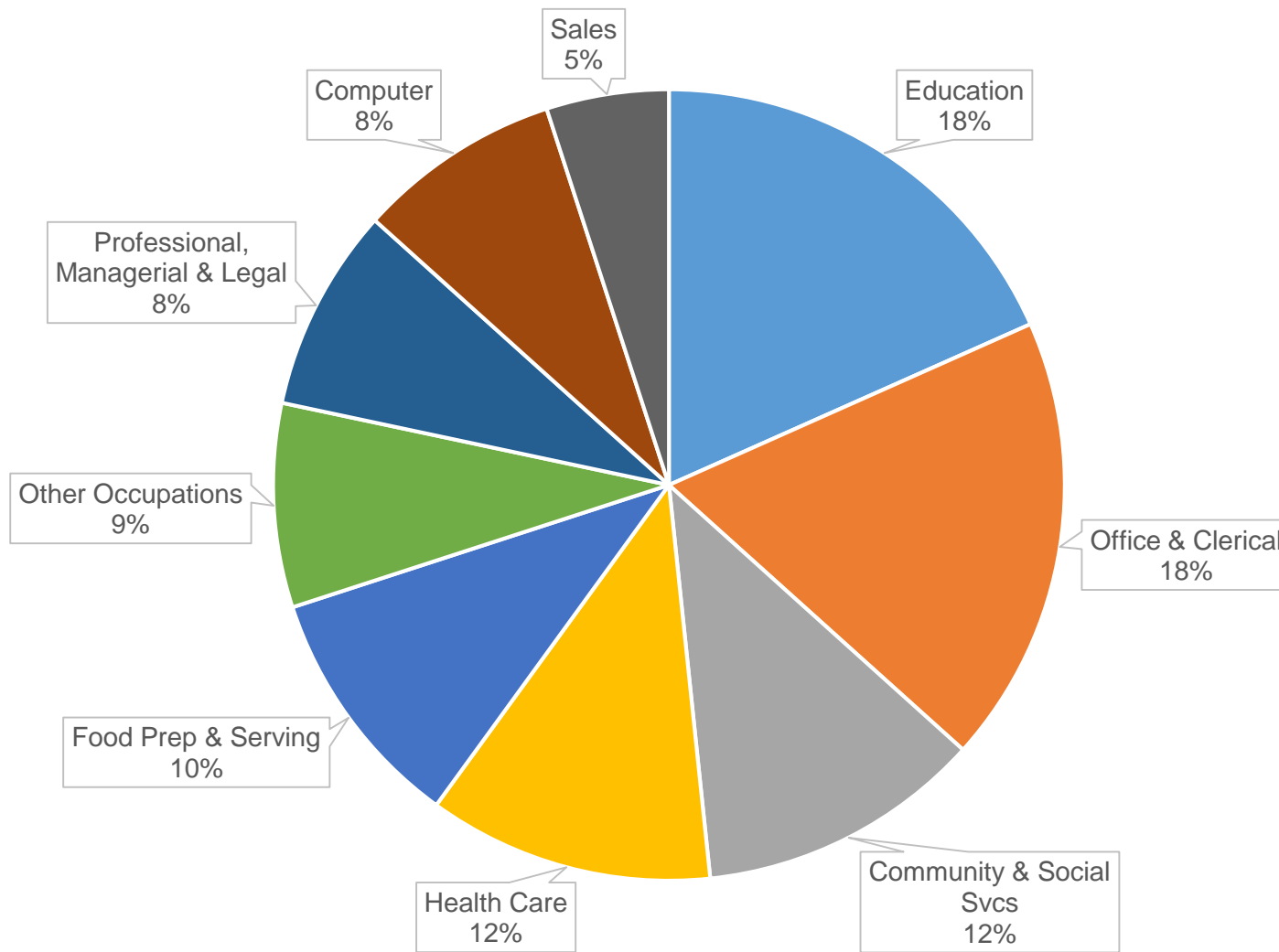
- Individuals who have comprehensive training needs in the alternative skills to blindness required for full independence/employment
- Services available in residential and commuter modalities

SERVICES PROVIDED

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



2016 JOB PLACEMENT DATA BY OCCUPATION



VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES ARE A GOOD INVESTMENT

Successfully Employed Clients Pay State and Federal Taxes Throughout their Working Life!

78.7%
FEDERAL FUNDS

21.3%
GENERAL/OTHER FUNDS

☀ On Average:

Oregon's contribution is paid back in state taxes in approximately **15 months**

☀ Services Reduce Dependence on Public Assistance:

Successfully employed clients are less likely to be dependent on public assistance programs.

Average savings over a lifetime per individual Social Security recipient (Supplemental Security Income or SSI) who goes off benefits:

FEMALES
\$343,044

MALES
\$301,703

\$
AVERAGE SAVINGS
\$

Average savings to the Oregon Health Plan over a lifetime per individual who goes off benefits:

FEMALES
\$178,692

MALES
\$157,157

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

PURPOSE

- Provide business management opportunities in food service and vending for Oregonians who are legally blind.
- As of May, 2017- program serves 15 clients
- Provide customers with quality food service and vending programs administered under the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act

TARGET GROUP & SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

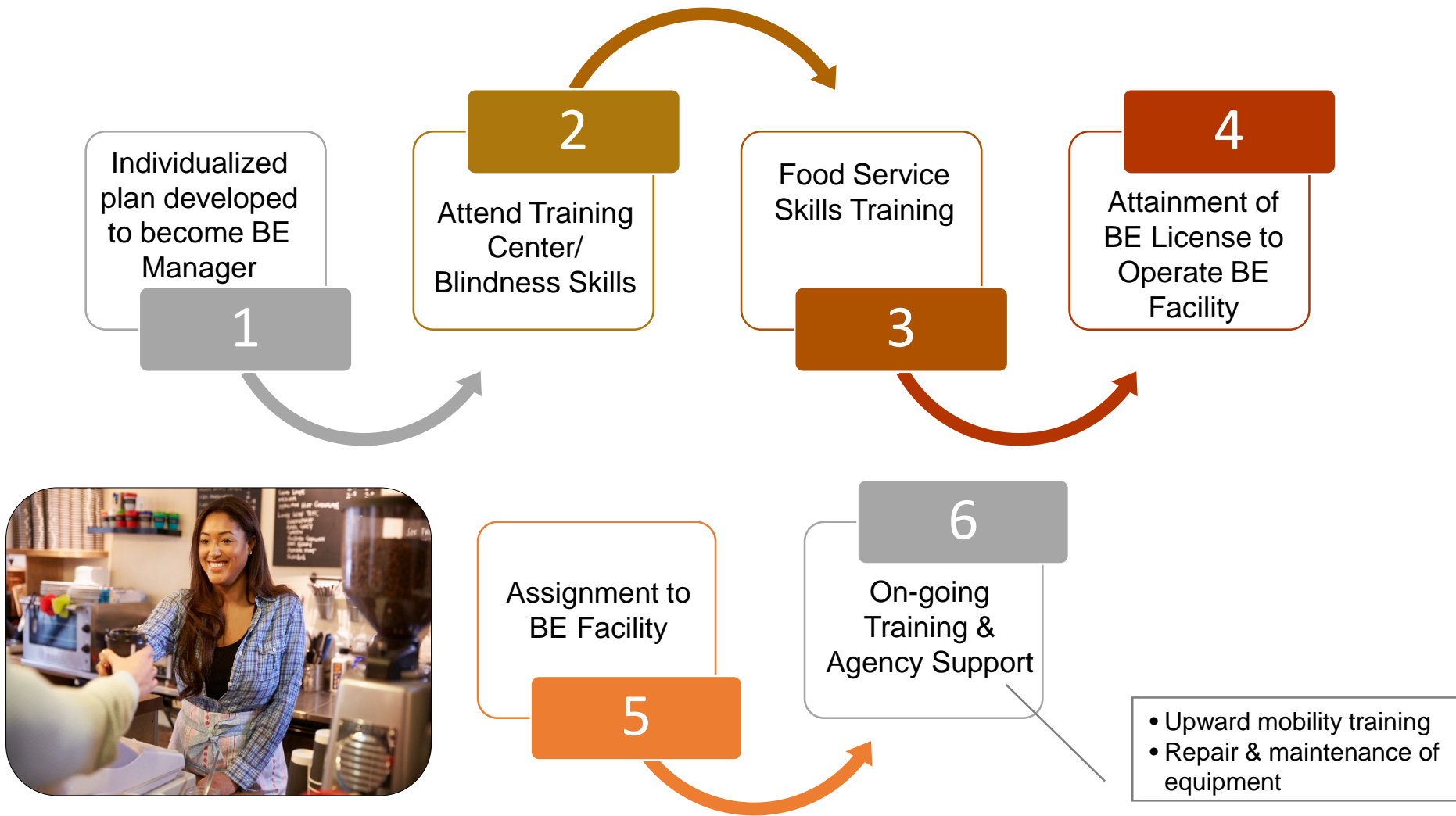
- Oregonians who are legally blind that are trained and licensed by the agency
- Food service and vending facilities located throughout Oregon in federal, state and other Oregon governmental buildings:
 - 648 Vending Locations
 - 4 Snack Bars
 - 7 Coffee Carts
 - 7 Full-Service Cafeterias

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Training for new managers
- Licensing of qualified managers
- Continuing education & technical assistance to managers



BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CLIENT PROCESS



INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM



PURPOSE

- Help seniors with vision loss adjust, function and live as independently as possible in their community
- Keep older individuals in their homes in lieu of moving into assisted living or care facilities

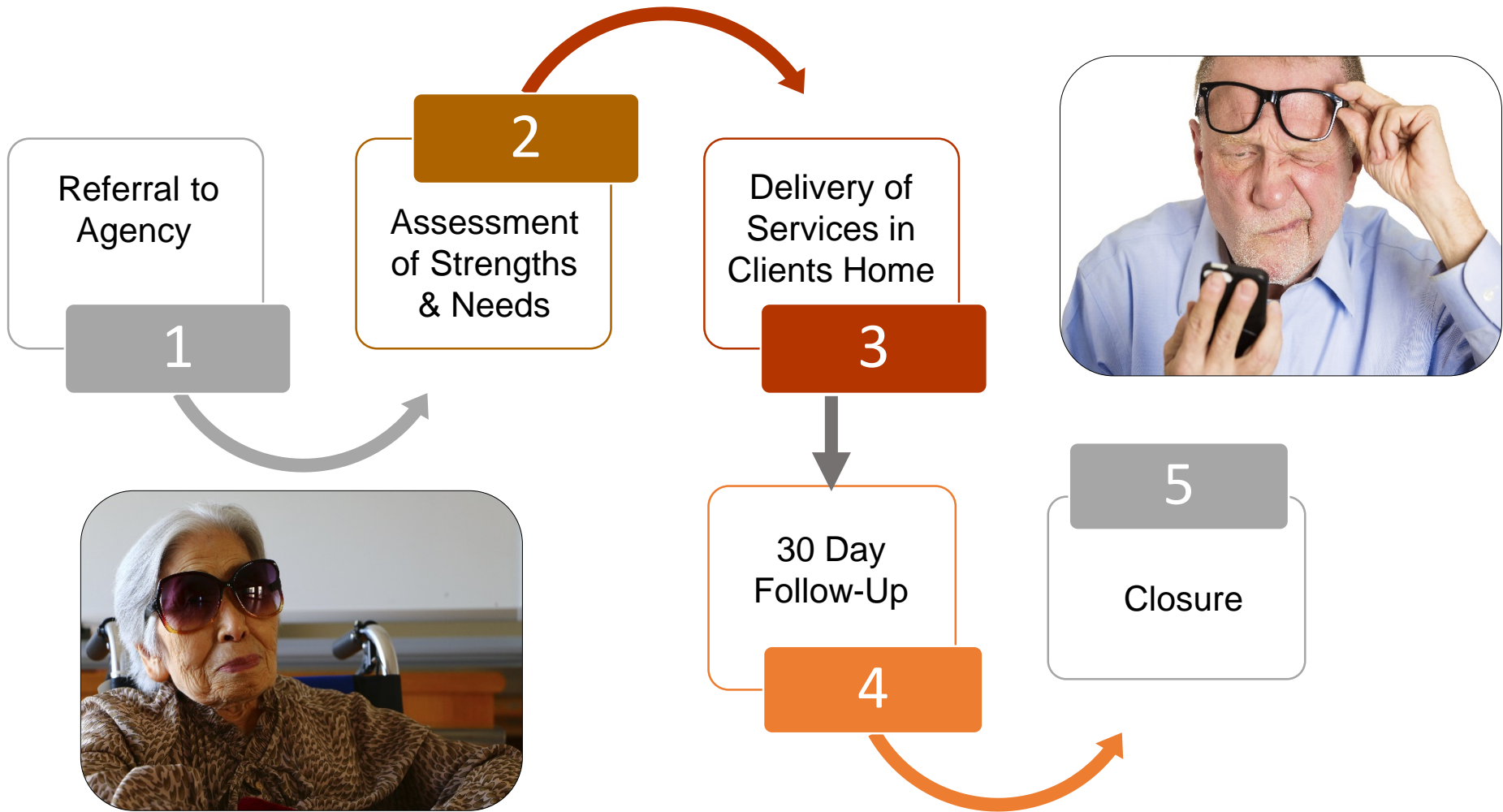
TARGET GROUP & SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM

- Serves Oregonians age 55+ with significant vision loss/ Individuals under 55 who are legally blind
- In client's home by specialized rehabilitation teachers

SERVICES PROVIDED

- Orientation & Mobility (white cane travel)
- Personal Management & Techniques of Daily Living:
 - Cooking
 - Calendar Management
 - Medication Management
 - Paying Bills
- Strategies for using limited vision
- Non-visual strategies for accessing information
- Referral to other blindness and low vision resources

INDEPENDENT LIVING CLIENT PROCESS



OLDER BLIND SERVICES ARE A GOOD INVESTMENT

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

The State of Oregon saves a minimum of:

\$20,669

Each year per individual receiving older blind services in lieu of moving into assisted living

\$19,992

Each year per individual in lieu of foster home care

\$101,346

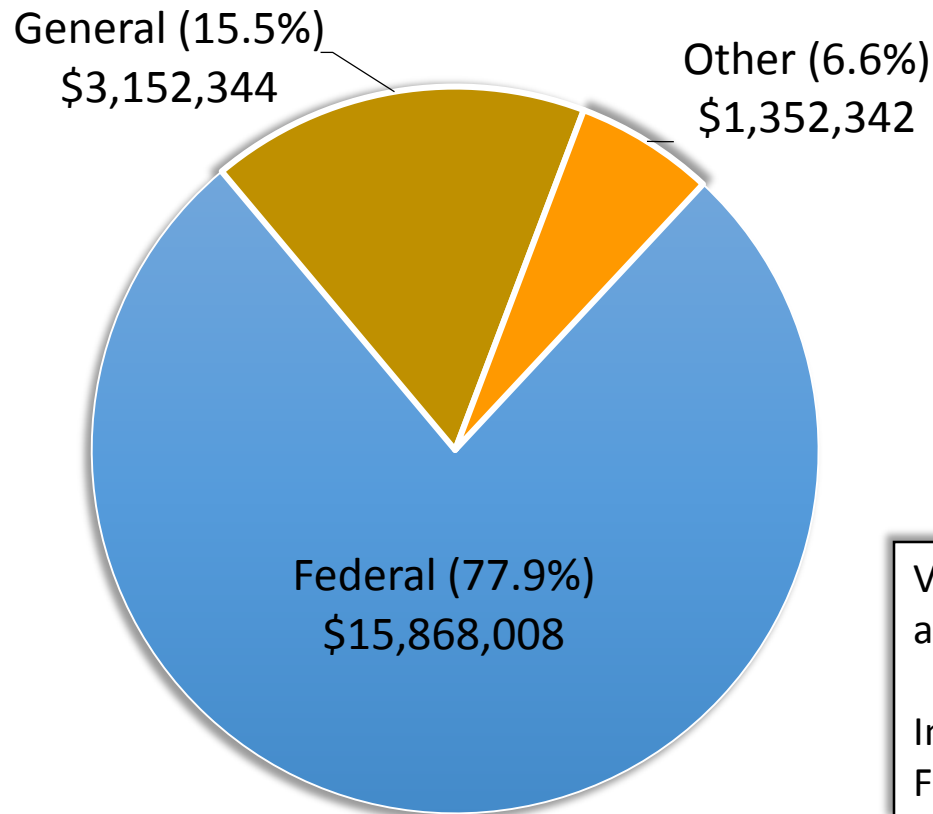
Each year per individual in lieu of intermediate nursing home care.



BUDGET DETAILS SOURCES

2017 – 2019 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

Total Funds \$20,272,694



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

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

2017-2019 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

1

Includes a 12% reduction in General Fund, which will equate to a loss of \$662,570 in federal funds due to insufficient match

2

Policy Package 101 was proposed to be 100% federal dollars, which is only feasible if the current service level of General Fund is maintained

3

Policy Package 103- Case Management System Upgrade was not included due to General Fund constraints

WHAT OUR CLIENTS ARE SAYING ABOUT US

“Without the help from the Commission for the Blind I would not be back to work and being inspired by the people like Kathleen DeNicola and Annie Holsworth who are also blind yet doing productive fulfilling jobs.”

*Rebecca Piros
OCB Client*



Testimonials

“Services from the Commission for the Blind allowed me as an adult to learn to read braille; which I was never taught as a child because people thought I looked like I could see.”

*Carla McQuillan, President
National Federation of the Blind, Oregon
Former OCB Client*

“Many of our members have been clients of the Commission including myself, receiving services that helped find employment, receive adaptive equipment or simply learn how to live independently with vision loss.”

*James Edwards, President
American Council of the Blind of Oregon
Former OCB Client*

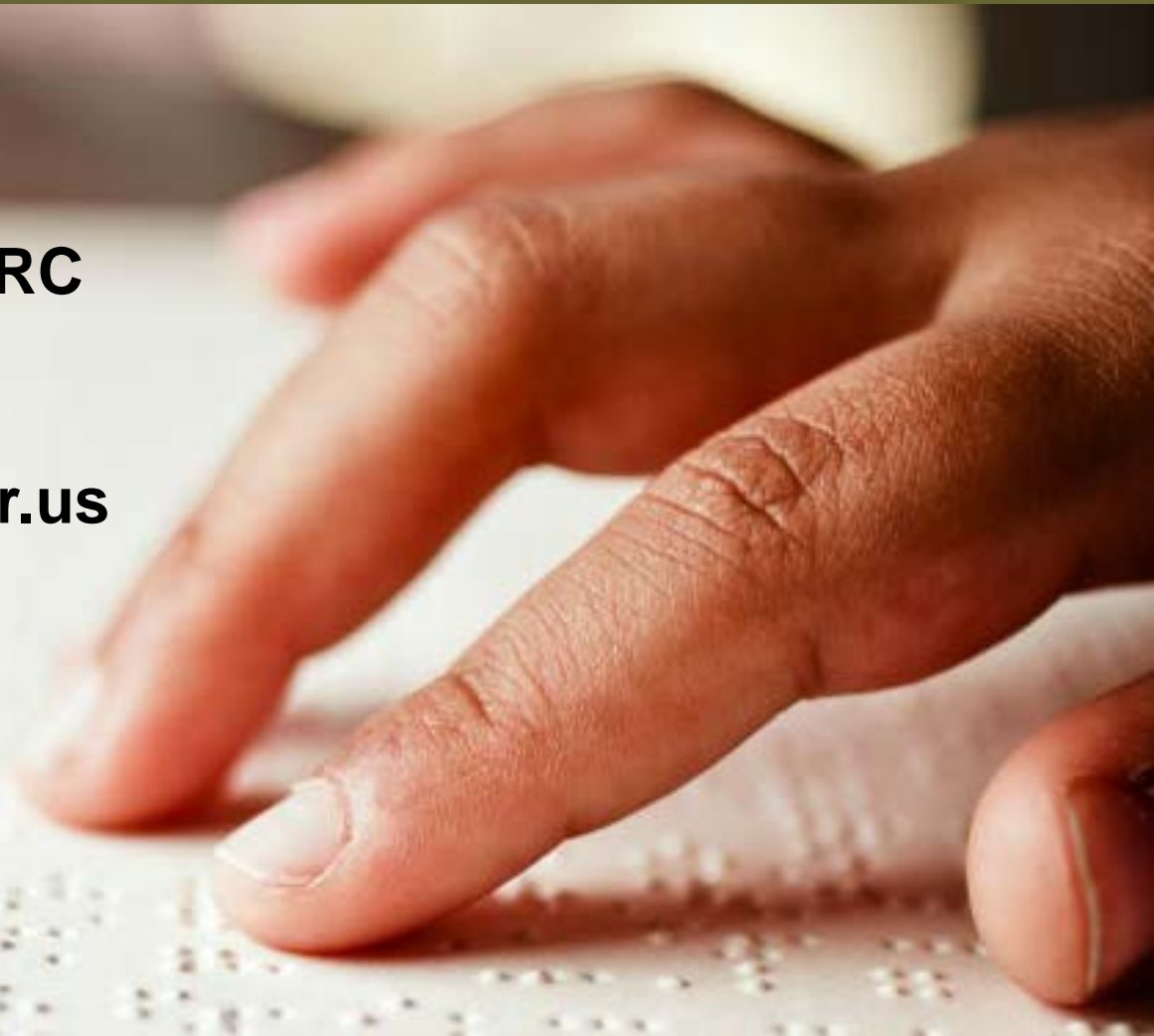
“The last year of my life has been really turbulent. A lot of trial and errors in anger and depression wrapped in with a lot of blessings. And I find most of my blessings through the Commission for the Blind.”

*Connie Murphy
OCB Client*

Client testimonials from the March 23rd Oregon State Legislature Joint Subcommittee on Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

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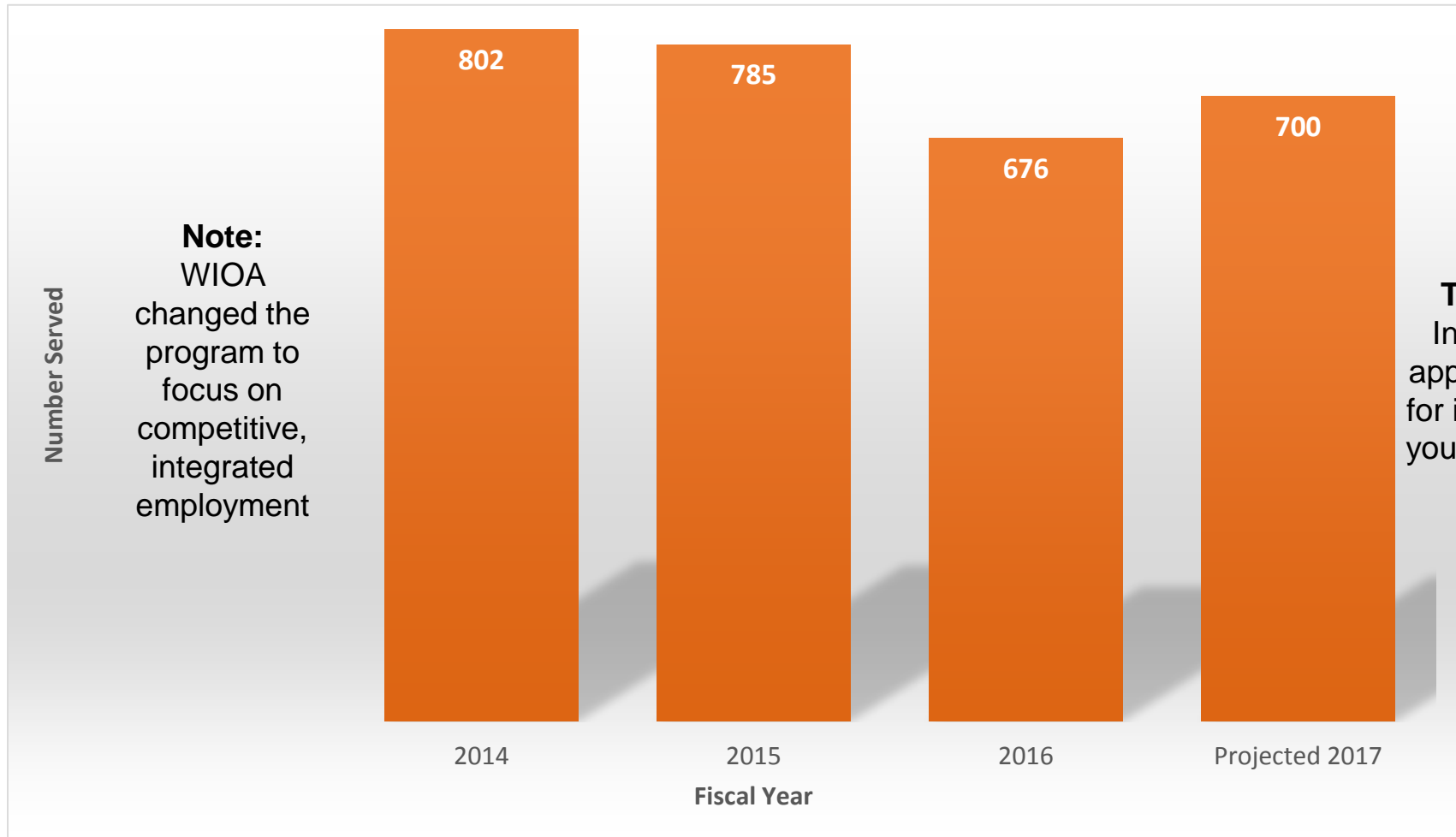
OREGON COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

APPENDICES

A close-up photograph of a person's hand with fingers resting on a document with Braille text. The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with the index and middle fingers pointing towards the left. The Braille dots are clearly visible on the white paper. The background is softly blurred, showing a white cup and a wooden surface.

VR PROGRAM DATA

Number of Individuals Receiving VR Services by FFY

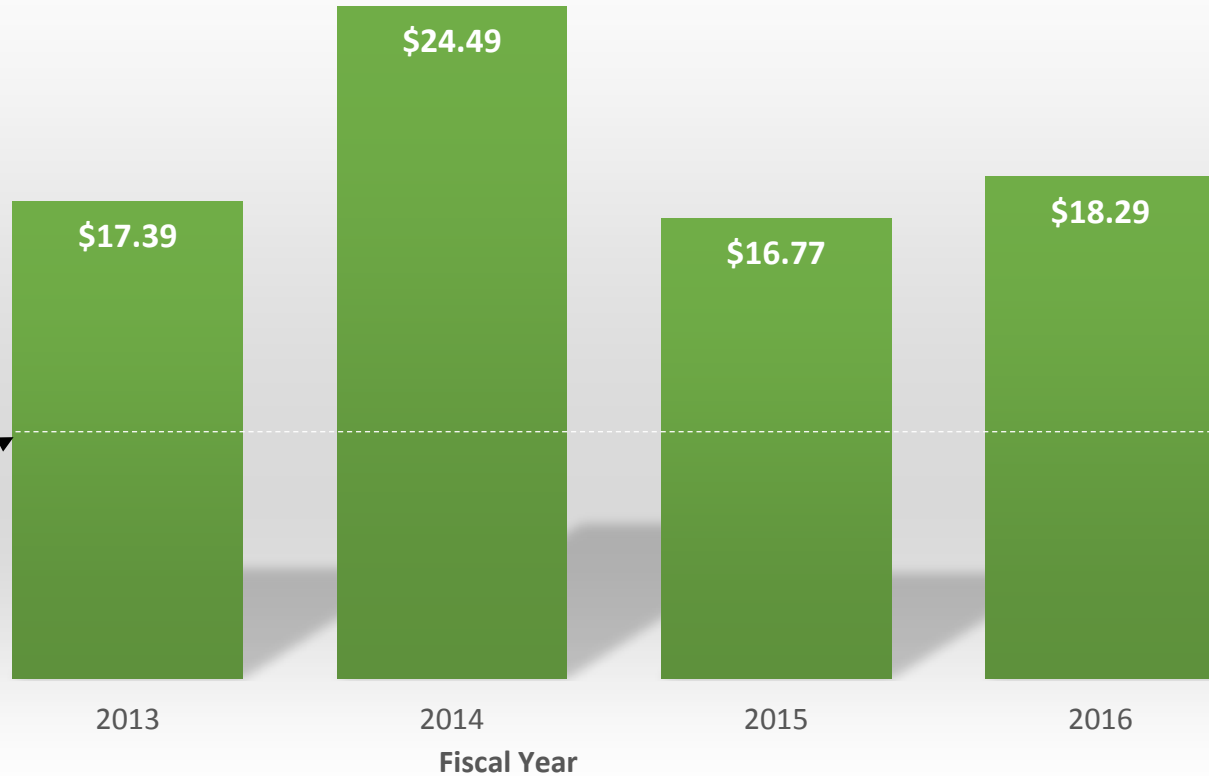


VR PROGRAM DATA

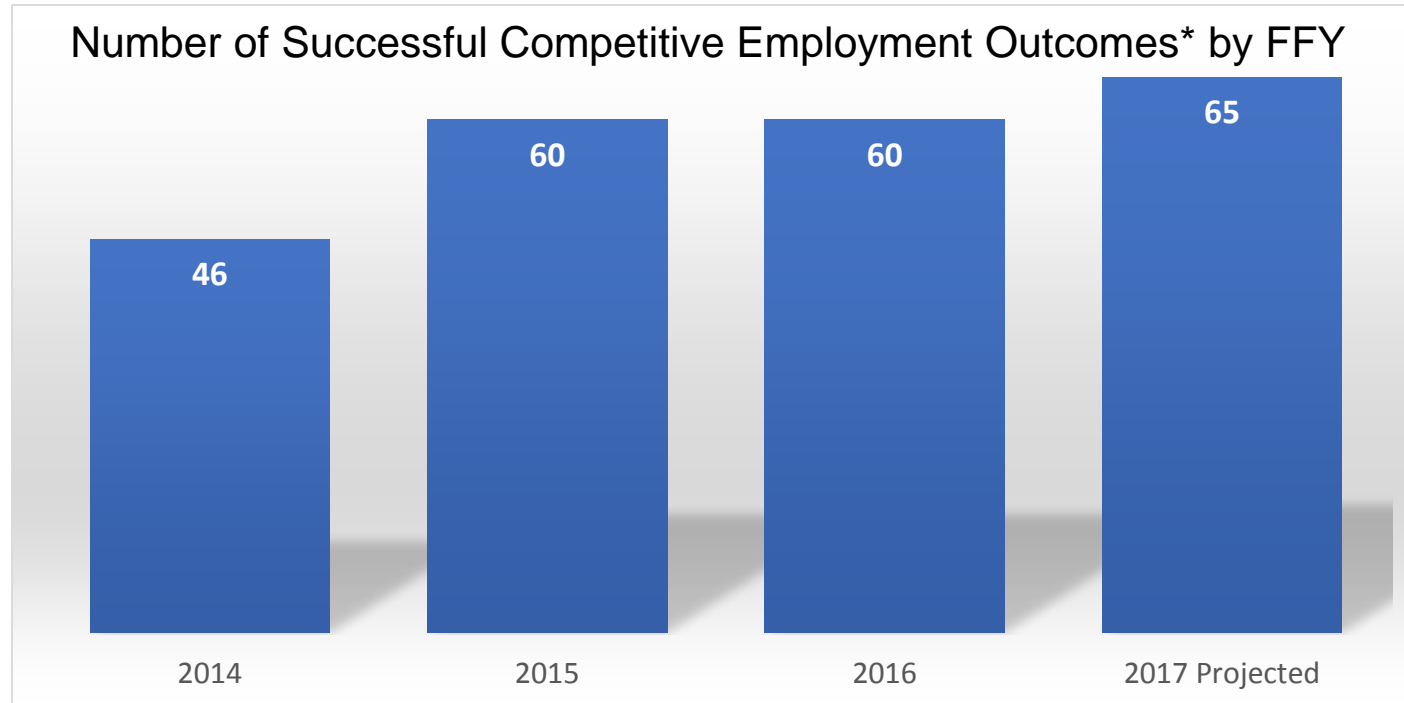
Average Hourly Wages at Closure

Target:
Maintain average hourly wage at closure above 25% of highest minimum wage in the state

State Minimum Wage
\$9.75 per hr. *
*2017 Maximum



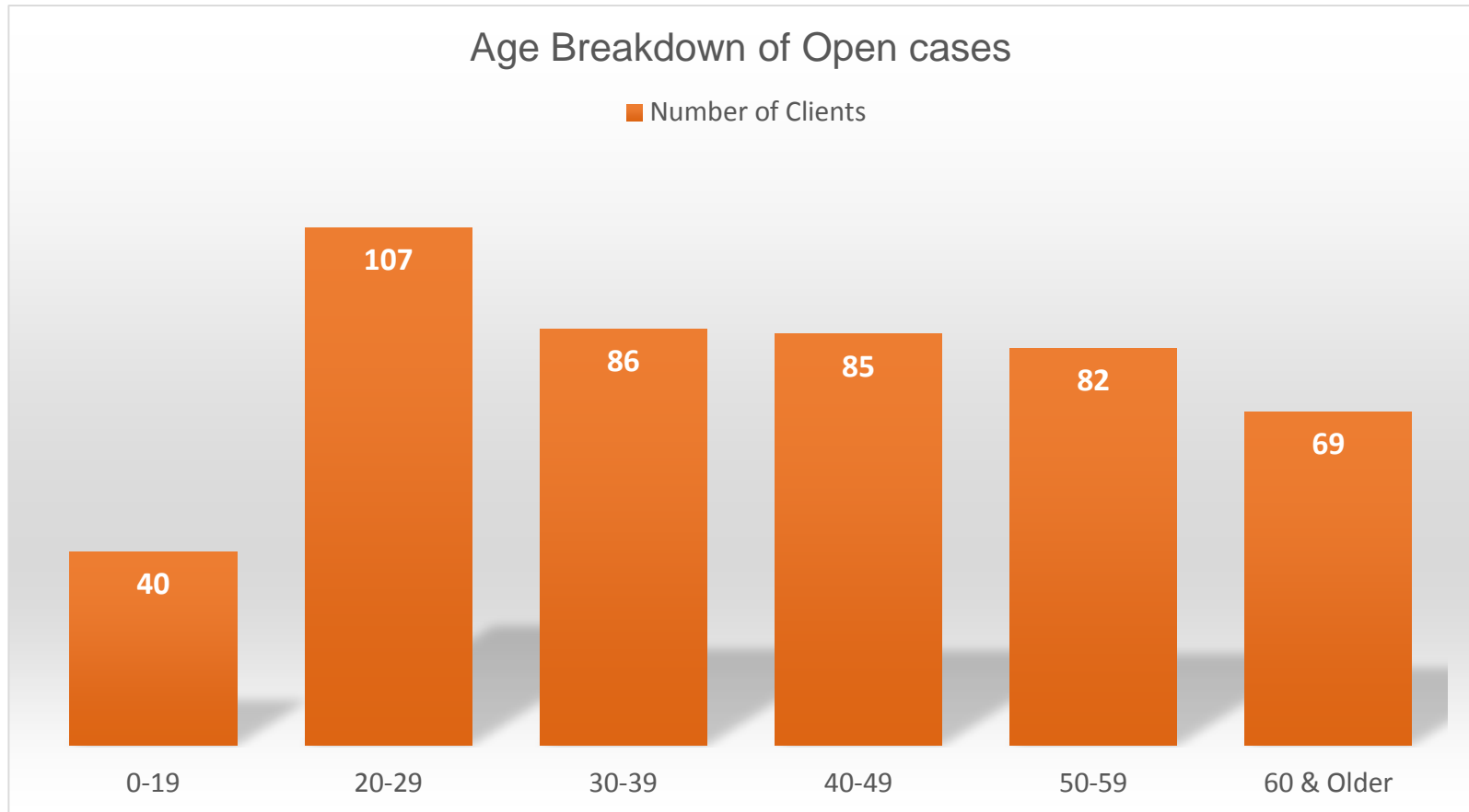
VR PROGRAM DATA



Percentage of individuals successfully closed in FFY 2016 who were significantly disabled: 100%

- *Defined as maintaining employment for a minimum of 90 days as a result of a comprehensive rehabilitation plan. This measure was eliminated under WIOA.
- Average length of time from eligibility to closure was 2.89 years for 2016.

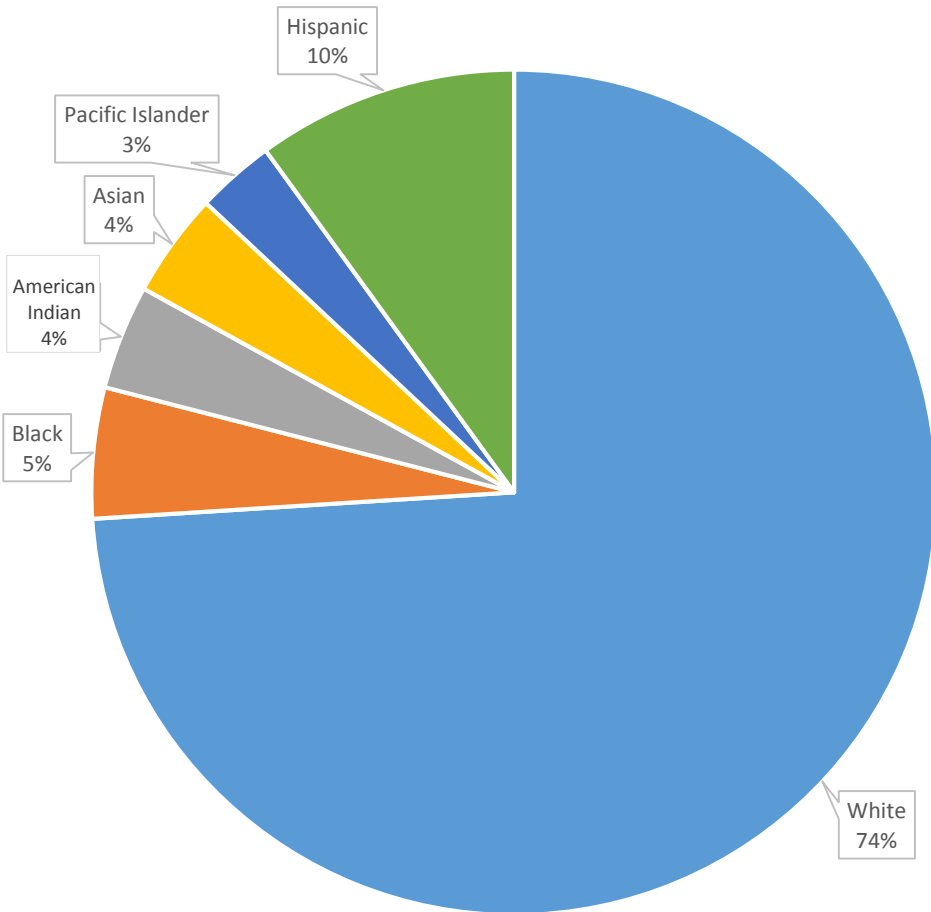
VR CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS BY AGE



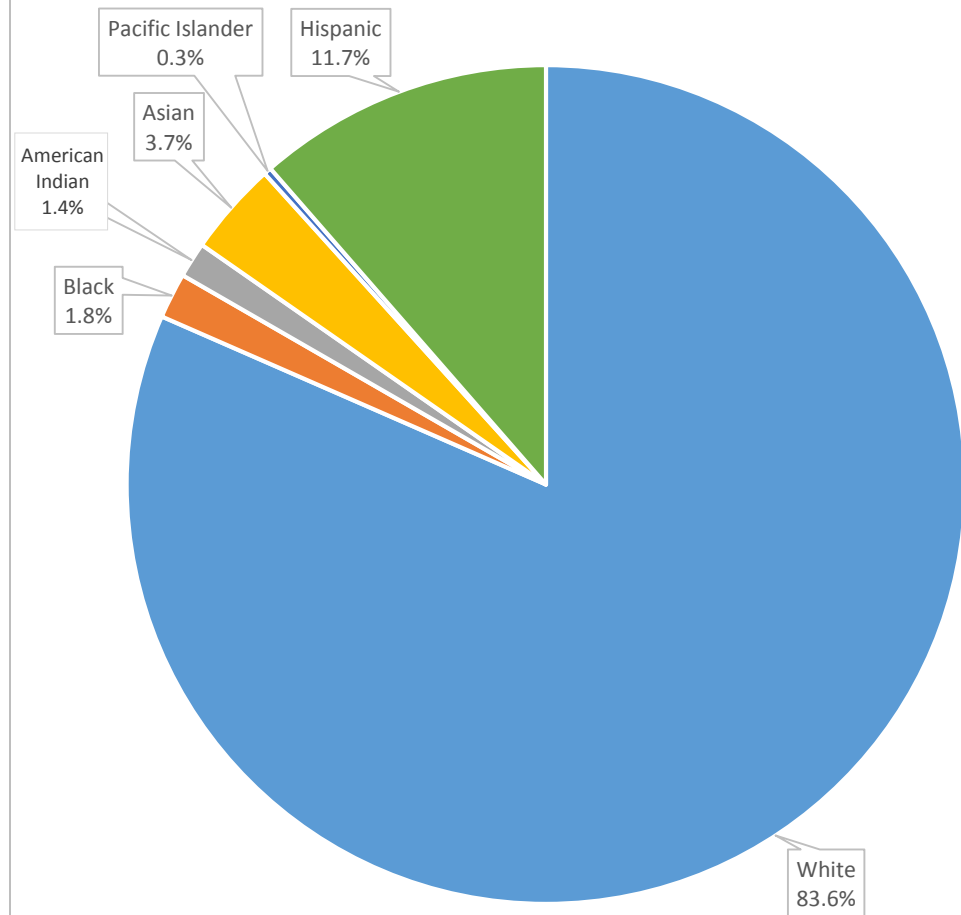
* 469 open VR cases (February 2017)

VR CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS BY RACE/ETHNICITY

2016 VR Client Demographics



2010 State of Oregon US Census Data



BE PROGRAM DATA

PERCENTAGE OF REPORTS RECEIVED ON TIME

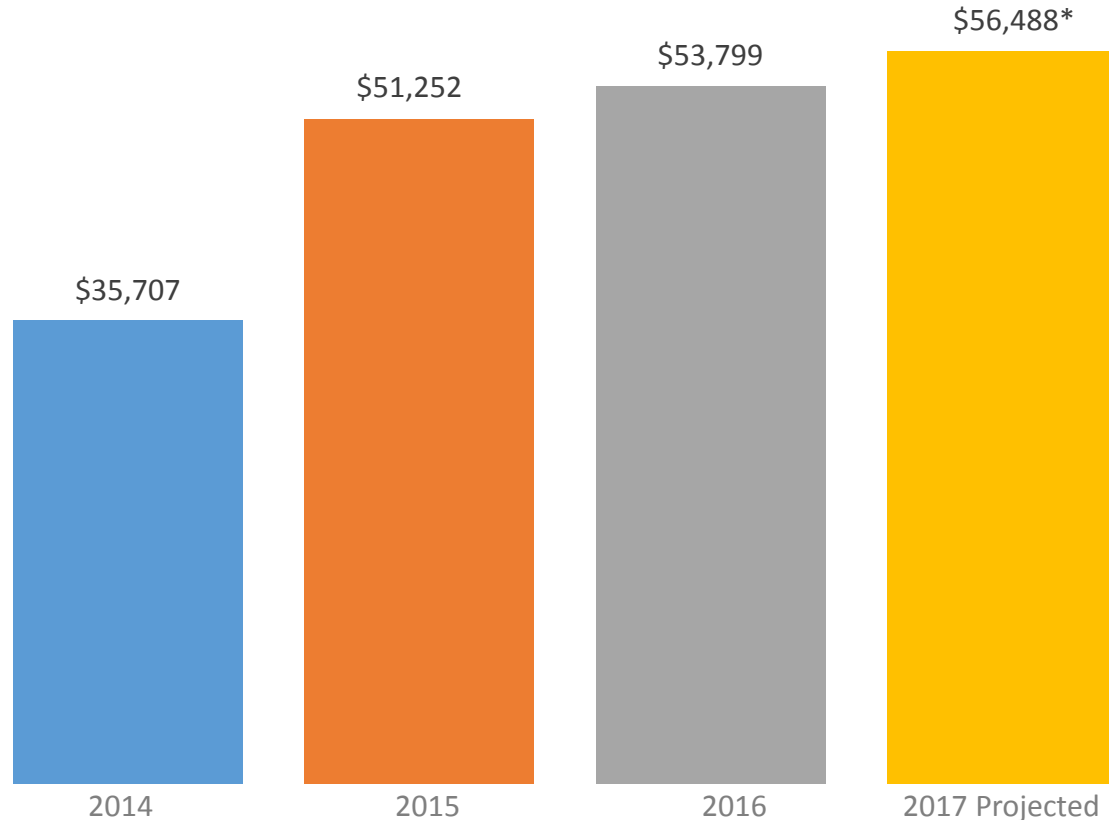
2015
67%

2016
75%

Projected
2017 Target
85%

AVERAGE ANNUAL BE MANAGER INCOME

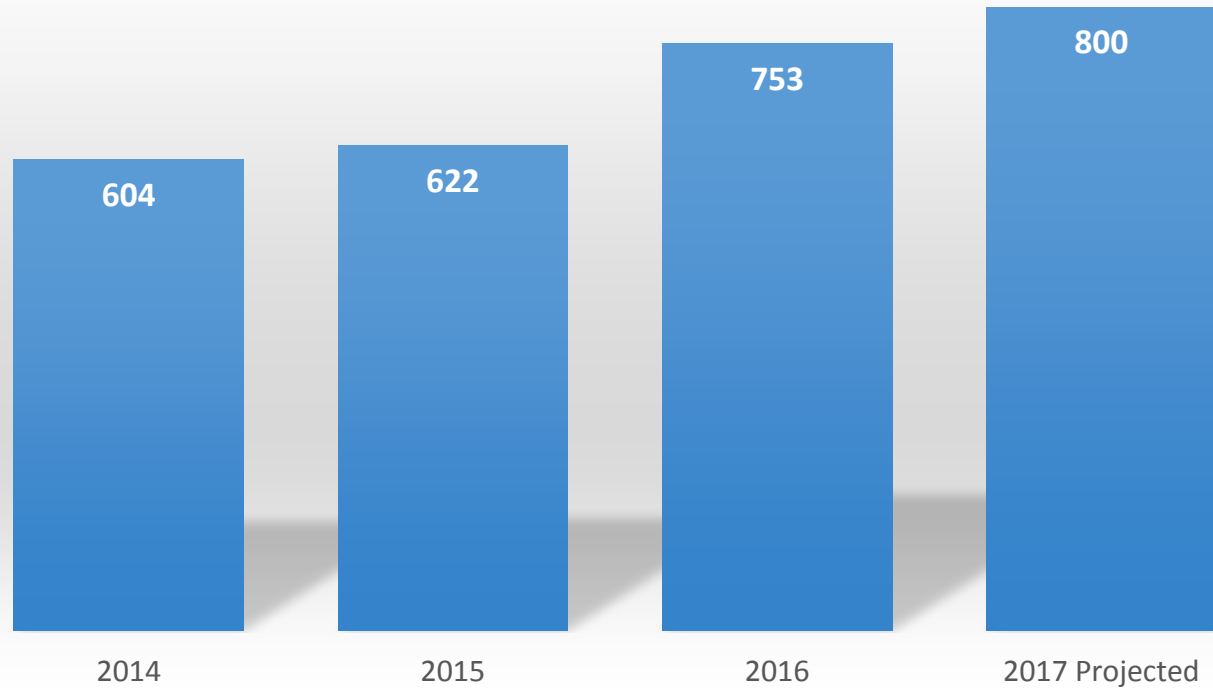
(*Projected
Target 5%
increase)



OLDER BLIND PROGRAM DATA

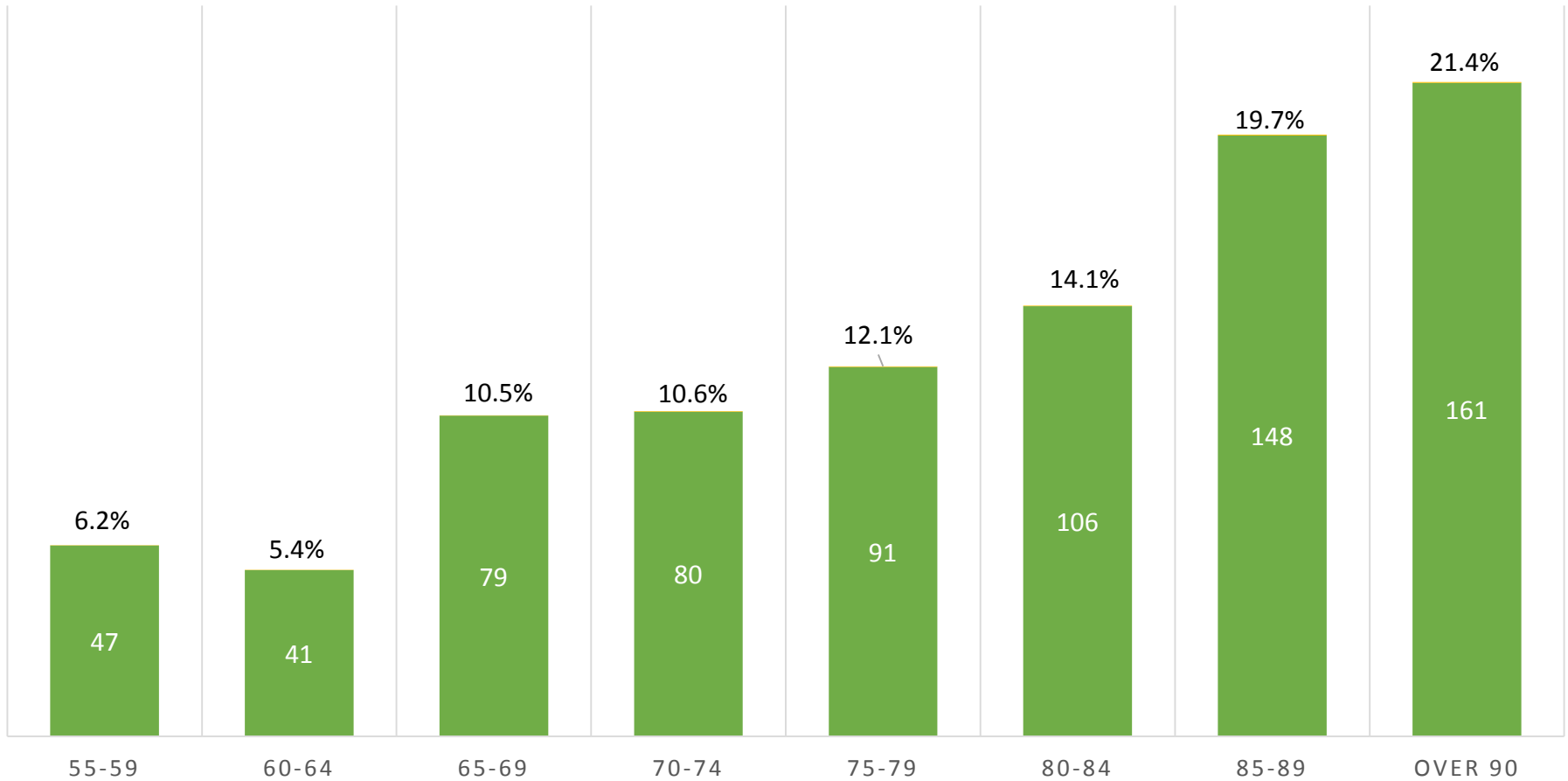
Number of Individuals Served in Older Blind Program

Target:
Average wait
time is less
than two weeks
between
referral and
initial visit.



OLDER BLIND FFY 2016 CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

Number of older blind clients by age



ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

**MOST JOBS
REQUIRE BASIC
TECHNOLOGICAL
PROFICIENCY**



Individuals who are blind need to learn how to access technology with adaptive training and devices

**PUBLIC POLICY
HAS SHIFTED**



There is an emphasis on individuals with disabilities achieving integrated, competitive employment

**DISABILITY OFTEN
INCLUDED IN
EMPLOYER'S
DIVERSITY INITIATIVES**



Employers want to attract and retain a skilled workforce that reflects the communities they serve

**INDIVIDUALS ARE
LIVING LONGER**



Older blind individuals want to remain independent in their homes and active in their communities for as long as possible

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Investment in Efficient & Effective Statewide Services

The agency leverages the maximum available federal dollars available to Oregon

Client Independence

Oregonians who are blind are able to get and keep jobs at living wages, have access to the critical training and technology to live full and productive lives

Timely Service Delivery

Services are provided statewide in a timely manner so that every Oregonian is able to receive services when they need them

Innovative Pre-Employment Transition Services

Ensuring that in-school youth who are blind have a seamless transition from high school to higher education or training after high school

MANAGEMENT OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK



IMPROVING AGENCY PERFORMANCE

Agency is working through process improvement to address key measures that are not performing. Focus is on timely service delivery to ensure Oregonians who are blind are getting services they need at the time they need them.



- 1** Time from application to eligibility in the Vocational Rehabilitation Program last quarter was 30.3 days, **49.5 % below the 60 days allowed by federal law.**
- 2** Time from eligibility to plan development was 55 days last quarter, **38.9% below the 90 days allowed by federal law.**
- 3** Reduced wait time from referral to initial visit in Older Blind Independent Living Program from (9) weeks average in July 2015 to (2.1) weeks in February 2017 representing a **76.7% decrease in wait time.**

IMPROVING AGENCY PERFORMANCE UTILIZING EVIDENCE-BASED METHODS

Agency has utilized evidence-based partnering opportunities offered through the US Department of Education that include the following:

1

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MANAGEMENT

Utilizing a management framework that includes:

- Communication
- Customer/Stakeholder engagement
- Data & metrics
- Organizational leadership
- Strategic planning
- Effective partnerships
- Process design
- Service delivery
- Workforce/human resources

2

VERMONT PROGRESSIVE EMPLOYMENT MODEL

- Dual-customer approach that reduces employer risk by providing work opportunities for job seekers on the path to competitive employment
- Meets the job seeker at his/her stage of job readiness
- Offers employers a menu of options to engage including but not limited to:
 - Work Experience with Stipends
 - On-the-Job Training
 - Temporary to Hire Opportunities
 - Company Tours & Job Shadows

IMPROVING AGENCY PERFORMANCE UTILIZING EVIDENCE-BASED METHODS

Agency has utilized evidence-based partnering opportunities offered through the US Department of Education that include the following:

3

JOB DRIVEN VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

Job driven methodology for vocational rehabilitation based on research-supported emerging practices shown to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities through:

- Improving the process of directly working with businesses to meet their hiring needs
- Increasing the number and quality of employment outcomes

4

TARGETED COMMUNITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

Provide State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies skills & competencies to address barriers to employment & community integration that focus on:

- Persons with disabilities residing in rural and remote areas
- Under-served individuals including: youth with disabilities in foster care, youth who did not complete high school, persons with multiple disabilities and persons from diverse cultural/ethnic communities

IMPROVING AGENCY PERFORMANCE BUSINESS ENTERPRISE INITIATIVES

1

INCREASE NUMBER OF FEDERAL LOCATIONS ACQUIRED

- Bonneville Power Admin. Headquarters Cafeteria
- General Service Administration Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Building snack bar
- Department of Veterans Affairs White City vending facility
- US Army Corps of Engineers Bonneville Dam vending facility

2

DEVELOP & IMPLEMENT BE TRAINING PROGRAM

BE has developed a training program for licensing new BE managers and providing continuing education for existing managers.

RESULTS THUS FAR:

- One new licensed BE manager
- Two clients in training program
- Three clients in exploration phase and considering the BE program as a career goal

3

IMPLEMENT VENDING MACHINE INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

- Phase I: Five volunteer BE managers will receive new vending machines and begin self-operation (March 2017)
- Phase II: 2nd wave of machine installation/self-operation begins (May 2017)
- Training: All BE managers received initial training (Fall 2016) on how to operate new vending machines. Upon installation, BE Managers will receive additional one-on-one hands-on training