

**2021-23  
Joint Ways & Means  
Budget Presentation  
March 4, 2021**



# COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND



**BLINDNESS WITHOUT BARRIERS**



## *Our* MISSION:

**Empower Oregonians  
Who Are Blind to Fully  
Engage in Life.**



### VISION

**Blindness Without  
Barriers: A State of  
Inclusion for  
Oregonians with  
Vision Loss**



### KEY GOALS

- Engaged and Proficient Team
- Effective Education and Outreach
- Operational Excellence
- Exemplary Service
- Successful Client Outcomes



### VALUES

- Operational Excellence
- Customer Service
- Professionalism
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Leadership
- Integrity

# KEY SERVICE OBJECTIVES

Help Oregonians who are blind get and keep jobs that allow them to support themselves and their families.

Train Oregonians, new to vision loss, skills related to living with blindness including adaptive technology, white cane travel, braille and activities of daily living.

Support in-school youth who are blind as they transition from high school to further education, training and employment through the provision of pre-employment transition services.

Assist senior citizens and individuals who experience vision loss to acquire adaptive skills so that they may remain independent in their homes and active in their communities.

License and support business owners who are blind who operate food service and vending businesses in public buildings throughout the state.

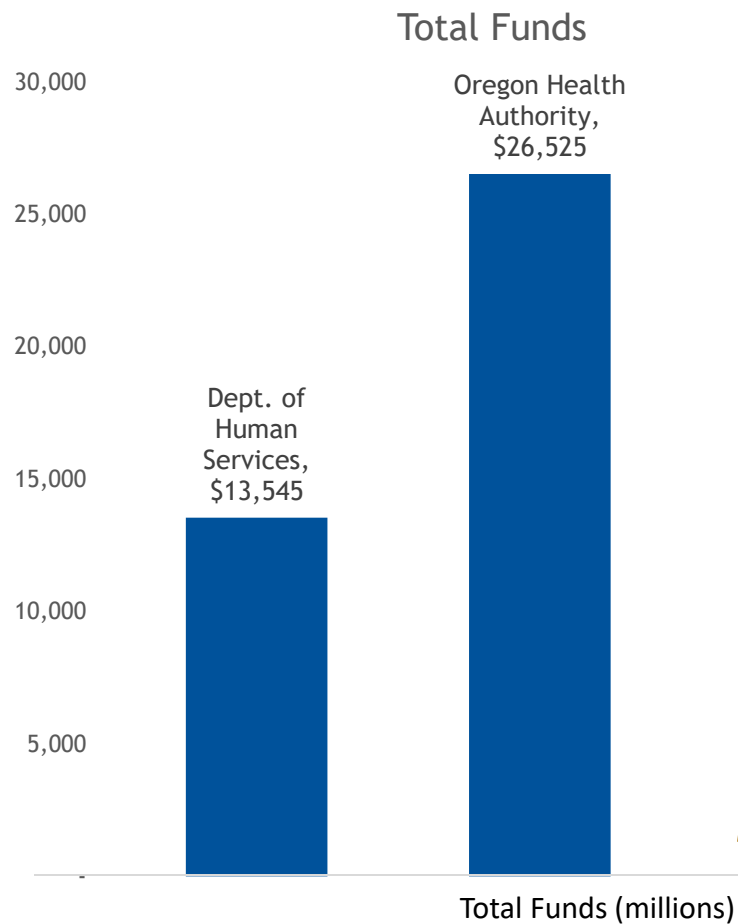
Assist Oregon businesses to attract and retain qualified job seekers who are blind as part of their overall hiring and diversity initiatives.



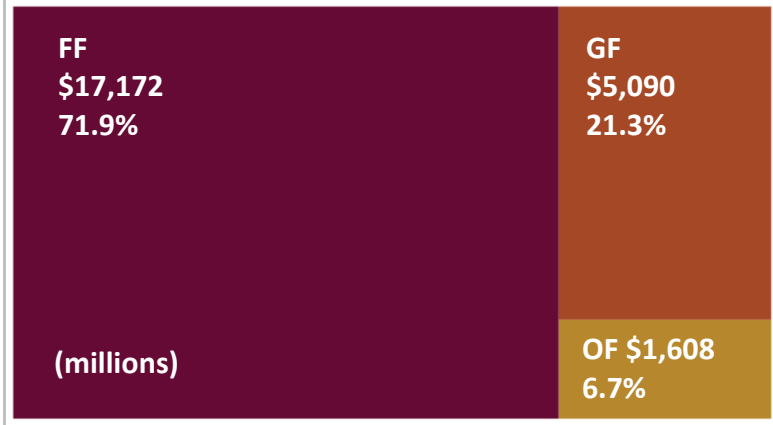
# HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM AREA BUDGET (TF) AT CSL

Total Funds: \$40.1 billion

OCB Total Funds at CSL: \$23.87 million

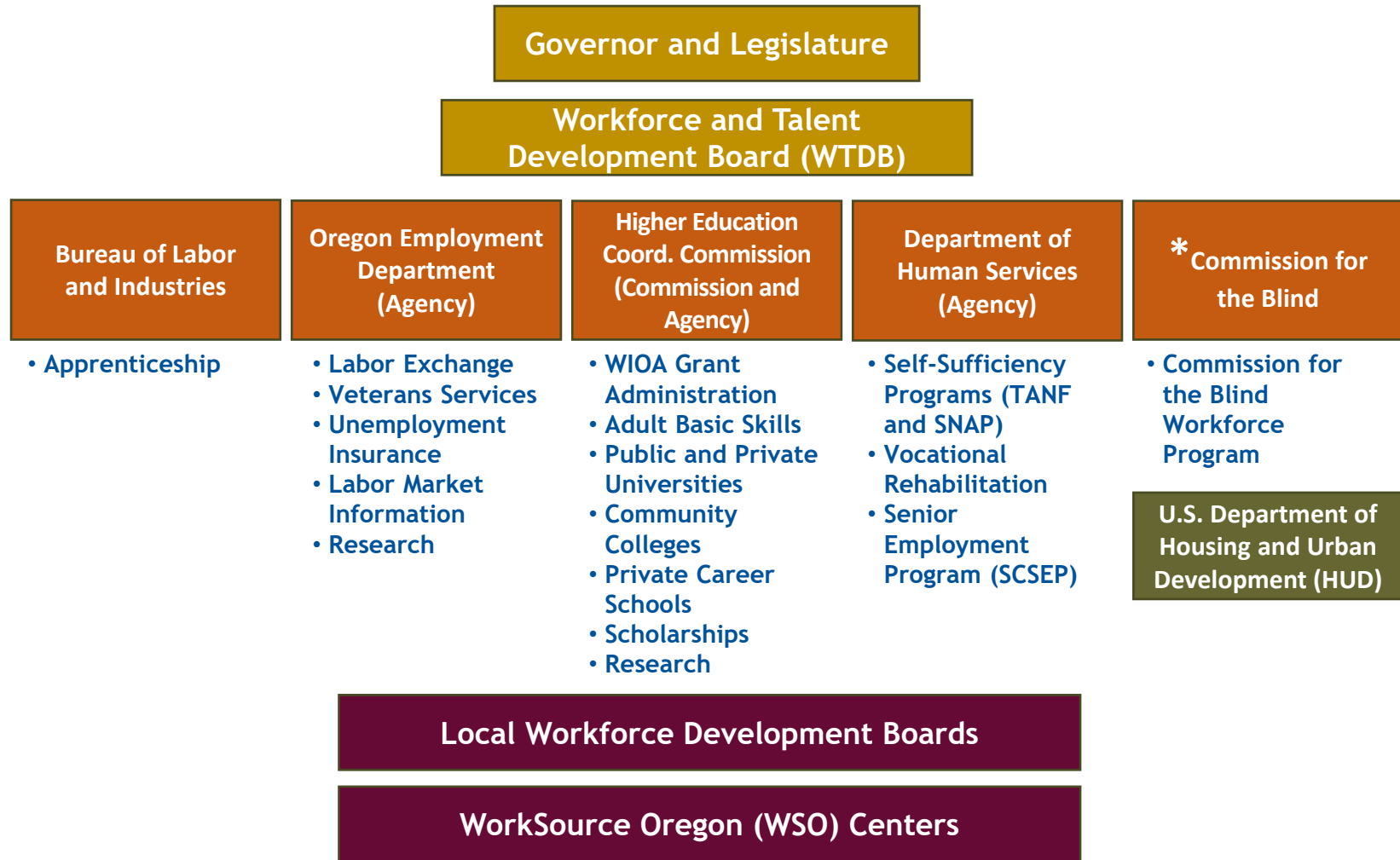


OCB comprises 0.06% of Total Funds and 0.063% of General Fund



OCB, PSRB, LTCO, \$38

# OREGON'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM



# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Under Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

## OCB's Role Within the Workforce System

For Oregonians who are blind:

- Specialized vocational rehabilitation training services.
- Services to obtain, maintain, or return to employment.

Coordinate transition services for youth who are blind.

- Ensure they exit school with an individualized plan for employment.

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

Help plan and implement the Workforce System at state and local level.

Share data reporting on Congress' workforce performance measures.

# VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN OREGON

*The Commission for the Blind is the only agency in Oregon to provide specialized rehabilitation services for adults who experience blindness.*

**101,405 Oregonians Experience Visual Difficulty**

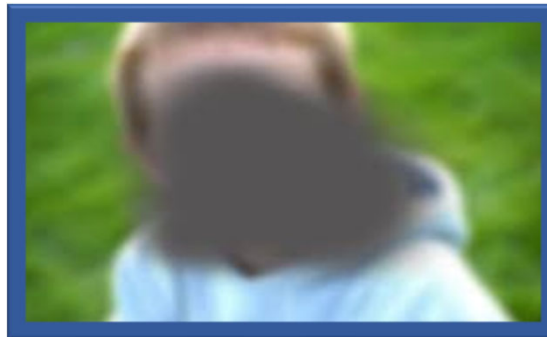
## Age Breakdown

- 0 - 17 Years: 5,825.
- 18 - 64 Years: 48,379.
- 65 and Older: 47,201.
- Source: US Census 2019 American Community Survey for Oregon

**Macular Degeneration: Leading Cause of Blindness for Seniors 75 and older.**

Age-related macular degeneration affects:

- Two percent for those aged 50-59.
- Nearly 30% for 75 and older.



*A young boy's face as seen by a person with Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD)*

**Diabetic Retinopathy: Causes Blindness for Working-age Adults**

- Approximately 375,847 people in Oregon, or 11.2% of the adult population, have diabetes.

# IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

*Oregonians who are blind are at increased risk of serious complications from COVID-19 infection due to underlying health conditions and age.*

## Service Delivery

- The majority of individuals served by the agency are new to vision loss.
- Outreach to clients reduces isolation and increases community access.
- Nearly all services are best-delivered in person.
- Have initiated and continued services using remote methods.
- Many seniors are unfamiliar with digital technology and will need in-person follow-up and training to address lighting, glare, and other indoor variants.

## Challenges and Impacts

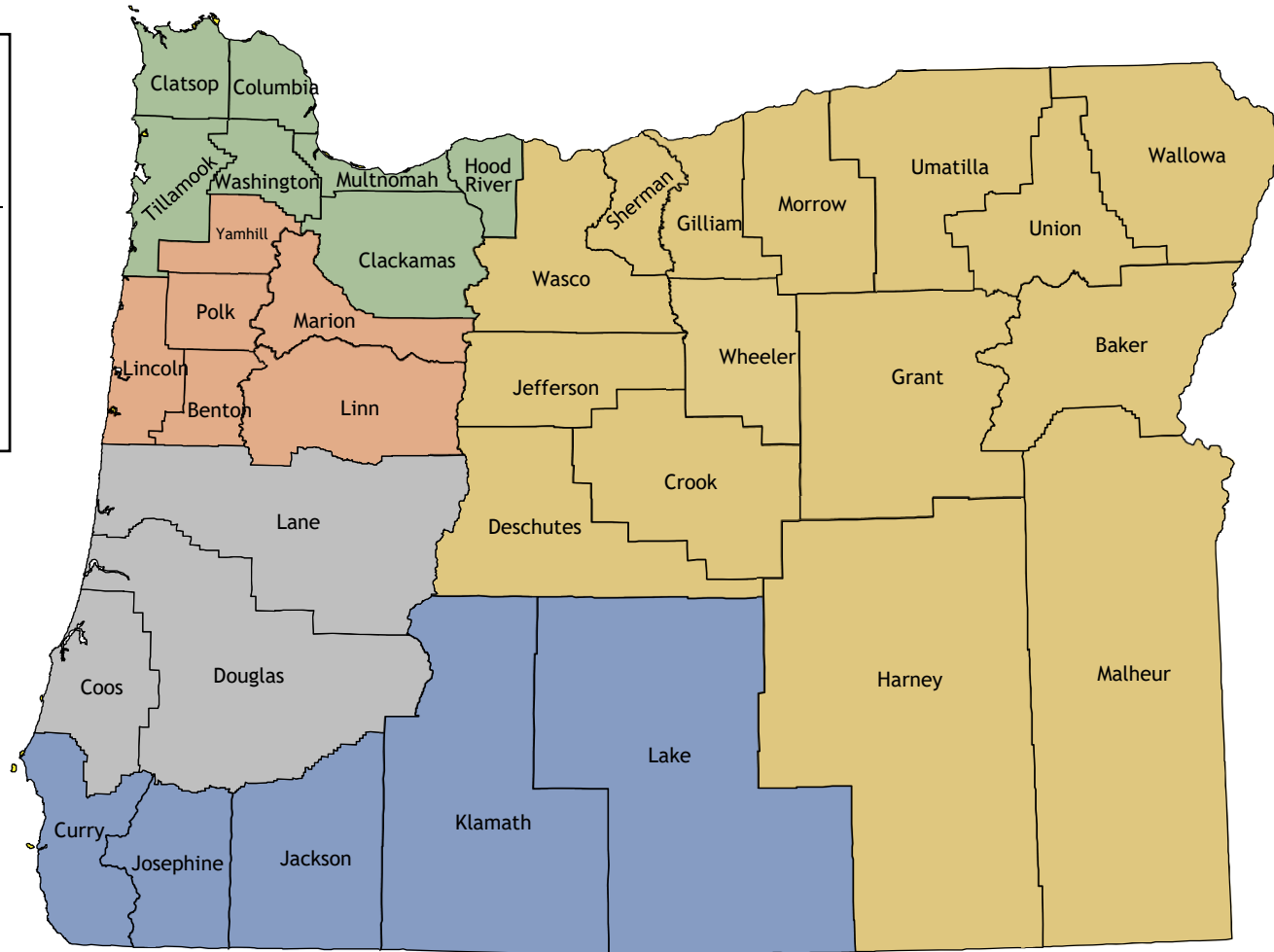
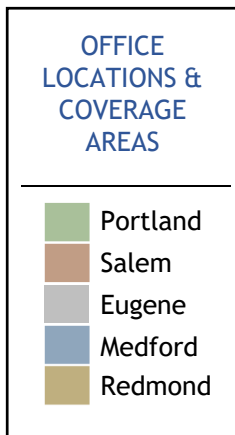
- Business Enterprise Program food service and vending facilities have had limited operations or been closed since March, 2020.
- Online, web-based forms and applications for publicly-available benefits and resources are often inaccessible or unusable by people who are blind.
- Individuals rely on public transportation to navigate their community.
- We anticipate increased and urgent needs related to individuals who are blind returning to employment.

## Opportunities for Innovation

- Drop-off and Pick-up Equipment and lesson materials.
- Remote Low Vision Assessments.
- Zoom Cooking Lessons.
- Zoom Statewide “Living with Blindness” Course Increased Geographic Delivery.
- Virtual Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP).
- Established internal lesson library.



# STATEWIDE SERVICE DELIVERY



# ORGANIZATION CHART

## 2021 - 2023 GB 65.42 FTE

Oregon Commission for the Blind  
 7 Members, Governor-Appointed Board  
 Scott McCallum, Chair

Executive Director (1 FTE)  
 Executive Support Specialist (1 FTE)  
 Chief Auditor/WIOA Compliance (1FTE)

**ADMINISTRATION,  
 FINANCE  
 & IT**

Chief Financial &  
 Information Officer  
 1 FTE

Admin/Finance/IT  
 Team  
 14 FTE

**BUSINESS  
 ENTERPRISE  
 PROGRAM**

Business Enterprise  
 Director  
 1 FTE

Business Enterprise  
 Team  
 4 FTE

**INDEPENDENT  
 LIVING SERVICES**

Independent Living  
 Services Director  
 1 FTE

Independent Living  
 Services Team  
 6.75 FTE

**VOCATIONAL  
 REHABILITATION  
 SERVICES**

Vocational  
 Rehabilitation  
 Services Director  
 1 FTE

Vocational  
 Rehabilitation  
 Services Team  
 24.63 FTE

**ORIENTATION AND  
 CAREER CENTER  
 FOR THE BLIND**

Orientation &  
 Career Center  
 Director  
 1 FTE

Orientation and  
 Career Center  
 Team  
 8.04 FTE

# AGENCY PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	ORIENTATION & CAREER CENTER	BUSINESS ENTERPRISE	INDEPENDENT LIVING
<p>Vocational Rehabilitation assists Oregonians who are blind to develop skills of blindness in order to obtain or maintain employment and supports businesses so they may attract talent to diversify their workforce and retain employees who experience vision loss.</p>	<p>The Orientation and Career Center for the Blind is an in-depth, residential training center in Portland where individuals, new to vision loss, receive skills training such as adaptive technology, braille, techniques of daily living, and orientation and mobility (O&amp;M) instruction.</p>	<p>The Business Enterprise Program trains, licenses and supports entrepreneurs who are legally blind to operate food service and vending businesses in public buildings and locations throughout the State of Oregon, through administration of a federal and state program.</p>	<p>Independent Living rehabilitation instructors support seniors who experience vision loss and want to regain or maintain their level of independence. They provide home and community-based training that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Techniques of daily living.</li> <li>•Low vision assessments.</li> <li>•Access to print and resources.</li> </ul>

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

PURPOSE	TARGET GROUP	INDIVIDUALIZED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give individuals who are legally blind the tools and training needed to obtain and maintain employment.</li> <li>• Assist Oregon businesses to hire, retain, and promote qualified employees who are blind.</li> </ul>	<p>Legally blind Oregonians who have barriers related to employment and want to work, including transition-aged youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional counseling from specialized rehabilitation counselors.</li> <li>• Evaluation of strengths and challenges.</li> <li>• Service coordination with educational and medical providers.</li> <li>• Adaptive skills evaluation and training.</li> <li>• Adaptive technology training for independent living and employment.</li> <li>• Job training, development, and retention.</li> <li>• Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) for youth.</li> <li>• Summer Work Experience Program (SWEP) early intervention for job readiness skills for youth.</li> <li>• Consultation with businesses for job placement and retention.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Services provided statewide from five regional locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portland</li> <li>Salem</li> <li>Eugene</li> <li>Medford</li> <li>Redmond</li> </ul>	

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

## PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

Under WIOA, all VR agencies must spend a minimum of 15% of their federal grant on very specific Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) for in-school youth.

### REQUIRED SERVICES

- Job exploration counseling.
- Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after-school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible.
- Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education.
- Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living.
- Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

### BUDGET CATEGORIES

#### Personal Services

- Direct personnel costs for providing required services.

#### Special Payments

- Purchasing from list of required services.
- All other needed services provided to in-school youth are excluded from 15% reserve requirement.

#### POP 101

- Provides general fund to match federal Vocational Rehabilitation funding to support these services.




# ORIENTATION & CAREER CENTER FOR THE BLIND

PURPOSE	TARGET GROUP	SERVICES PROVIDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide skills of blindness training/instruction in a comprehensive, coordinated and efficient way to Vocational Rehabilitation clients as part of their plan for employment.</li> <li>• Maintain specialized expertise in vision rehabilitation as the only training center for the blind in Oregon.</li> </ul>	<p>Individuals who are blind have comprehensive training needs required for full independence and employment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment to blindness.</li> <li>• Adaptive technology training.</li> <li>• Low vision assessments.</li> <li>• Traveling with a white cane.</li> <li>• Braille training.</li> <li>• Career exploration and evaluations.</li> <li>• Meal preparation/shopping.</li> <li>• Techniques of daily living.</li> <li>• Woodshop instruction.</li> <li>• Transition workshops/services.</li> <li>• Accessibility evaluations for business.</li> <li>• Job site modification, evaluation, and recommendations.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Services available in residential and commuter modalities.</p>	

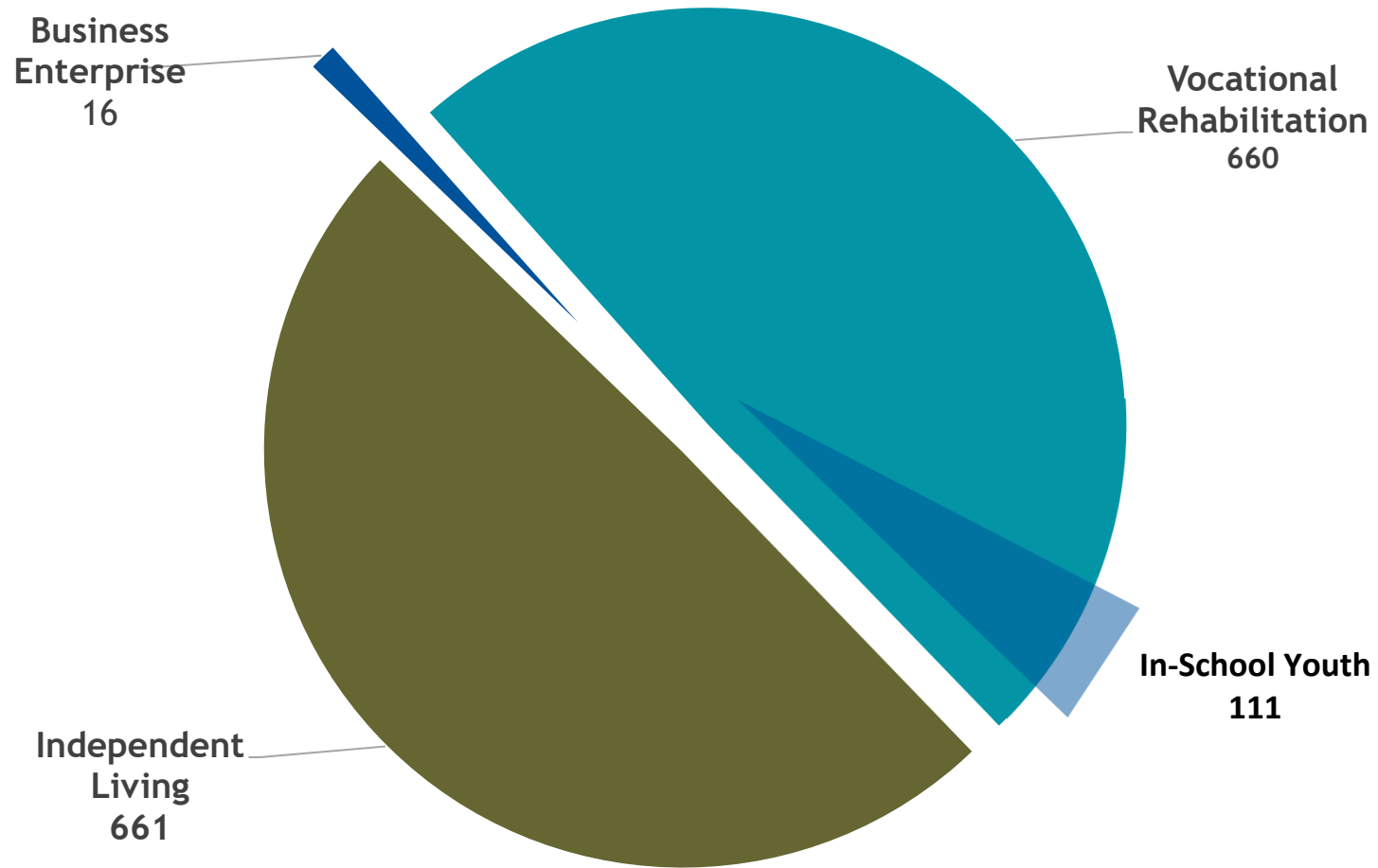
# BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

PURPOSE	TARGET GROUP	SERVICES PROVIDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide business management opportunities in food service and vending for Oregonians who are legally blind.</li> <li>• Provide customers with quality food service and vending programs administered under the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act.</li> <li>• As of January, 2021, the program serves 16 clients.</li> </ul> 	<p data-bbox="892 516 1234 662">Oregonians who are legally blind that are trained and licensed by the agency.</p> <p data-bbox="856 721 1270 834"><b>SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for new managers.</li> <li>• Licensing of qualified managers.</li> <li>• Continuing education &amp; technical assistance for managers.</li> <li>• Outreach to public agencies to expand opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p data-bbox="1318 521 1822 667">Food service and vending facilities located throughout Oregon in federal, state, and other Oregon governmental buildings.</p> <p data-bbox="1318 683 1667 711"><b>LOCATION BREAKDOWN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 cafeterias.</li> <li>• 5 snack bars.</li> <li>• 5 coffee carts.</li> <li>• 7 vending routes.</li> <li>• 648 vending facilities.</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1318 976 1835 1235"><b>COVID-19 Impact:</b> Due to many government buildings being closed and government employees teleworking, only two cafeterias, one snack bar and one coffee stand have remained open on a limited basis.</p>

# INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

PURPOSE	TARGET GROUP	SERVICES PROVIDED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help seniors with vision loss adjust, function, and live as independently as possible in their community.</li> <li>• Keep older individuals in their homes in lieu of moving into assisted living or care facilities.</li> <li>• Offer basic training to individuals under the age of 55 who are blind and unable to work.</li> </ul>	<p>Oregonians who are 55+ with significant vision loss.</p>  <p><b>SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEM</b></p> <p>Services provided statewide from five regional locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Portland • Salem • Eugene</li> <li>• Medford • Redmond</li> </ul>	<p><b>Provided or taught:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meal preparation.</li> <li>• Self-care and medication management.</li> <li>• Low vision assessments.</li> <li>• Use of lighting and magnifiers.</li> <li>• Use of Smart devices (phones, tablets).</li> <li>• Cane training and safe travel.</li> </ul> <p><b>Agencies we coordinate with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking Books Library.</li> <li>• Public Utilities Commission Telecommunications Device Access Program.</li> <li>• Department of Human Services.</li> <li>• Area Agency on Aging.</li> </ul>

# NUMBERS SERVED BY PROGRAM FFY 2020

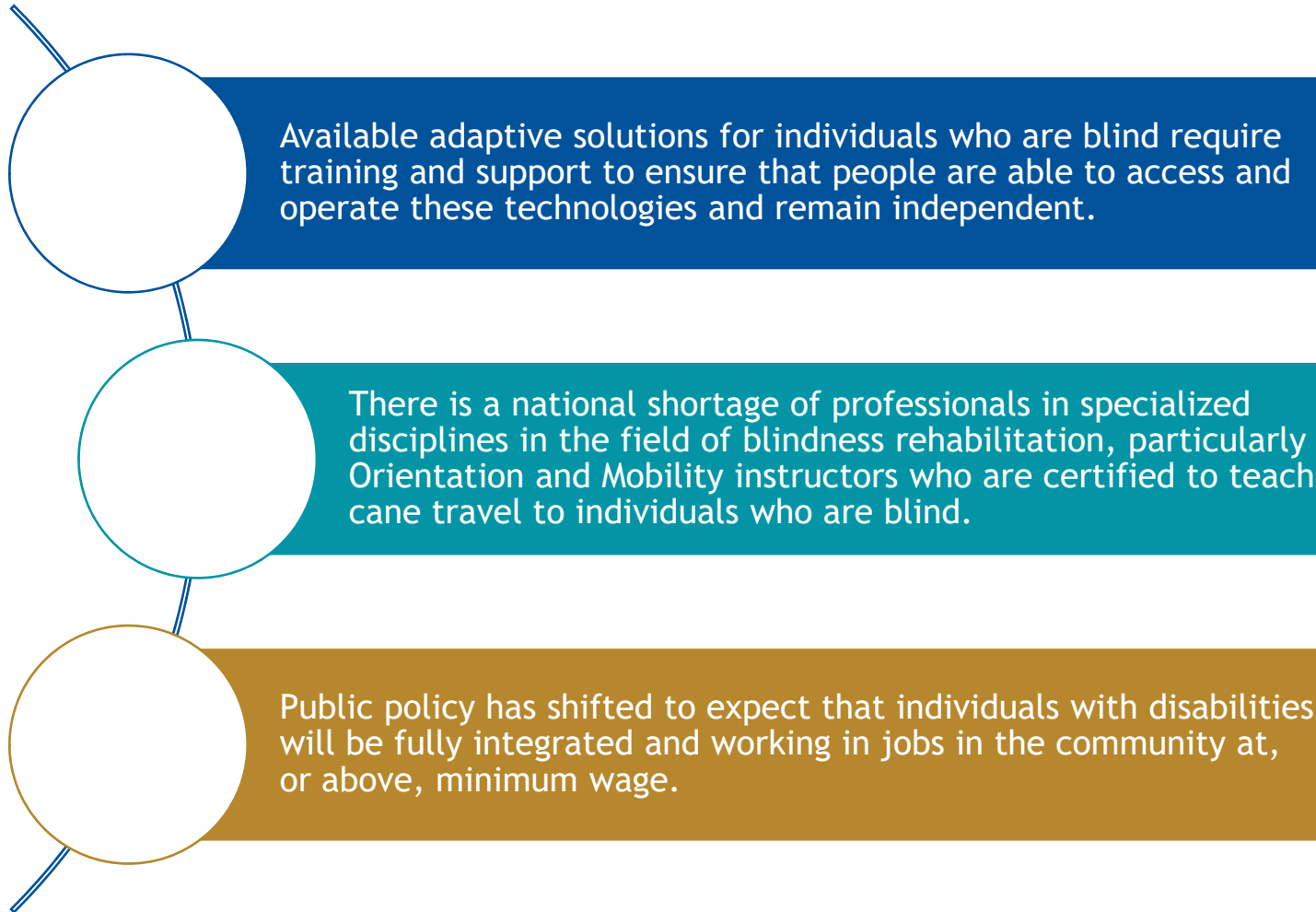


# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES





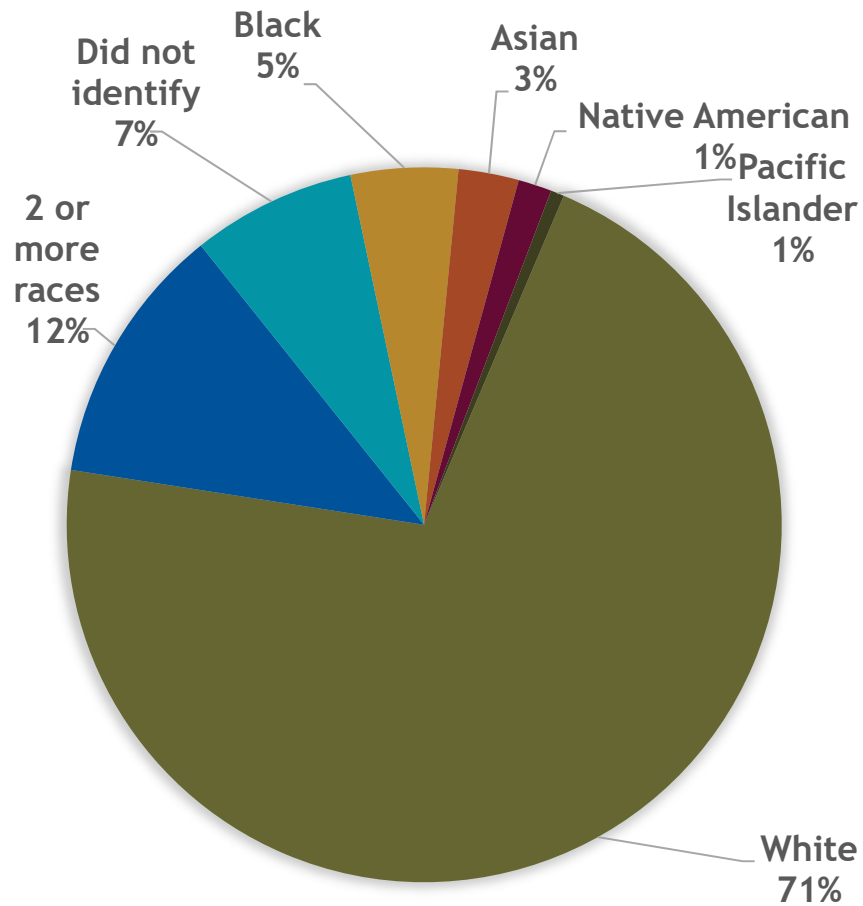
# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES



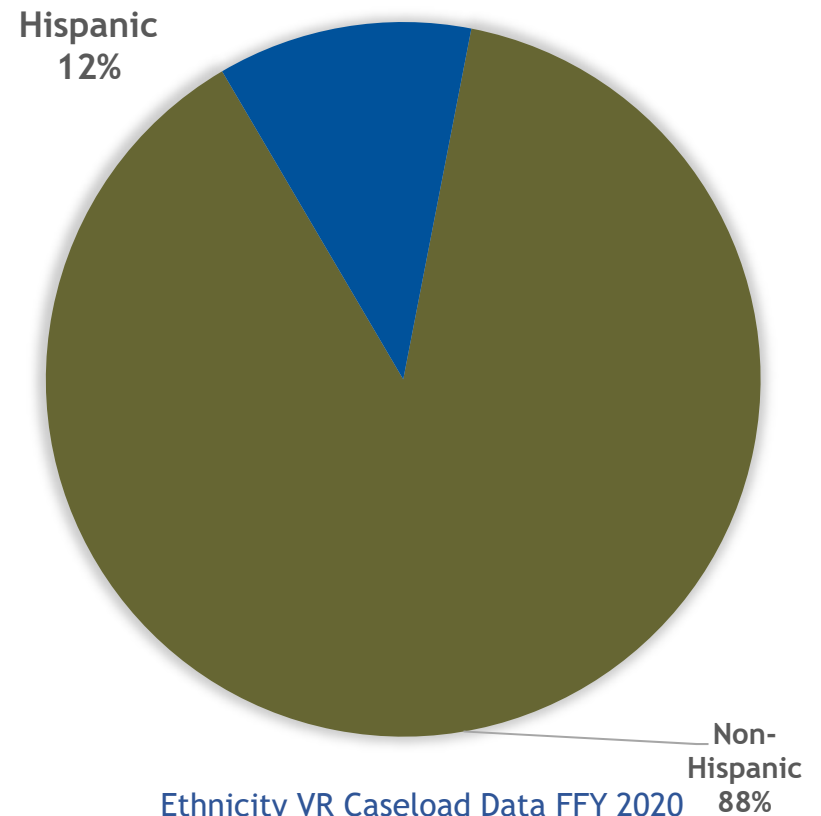
# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Service Equity	Aging Oregonians	Specialized Staff	Diverse Workforce	Open and Accountable Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Statewide access - for all of Oregon's citizens.</li><li>•Inclusive service delivery and equitable access to services.</li><li>•Increased visibility - Oregonians know who we are and the services available.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Aging citizens - with access to specialized education, training and support, seniors who experience vision loss may live safely and independently.</li><li>•Aging workforce - supporting skilled workers who experience vision loss and helping business retain talent.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Recruit trained rehabilitation professionals from training universities across the nation.</li><li>•Develop existing staff through continuing education.</li><li>•Retain skilled staff.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Lead efforts to diversify Oregon's workforce.</li><li>•Support Oregon businesses in their DEI efforts.</li><li>•Break through stereotypes and misconceptions about vision loss.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Effective and efficient operations.</li><li>•Information Technology and security.</li><li>•Stakeholder engagement and partnerships to improve outcomes.</li><li>•Public engagement and input into policy and decision making.</li></ul>

# SERVICE EQUITY BY RACE & ETHNICITY

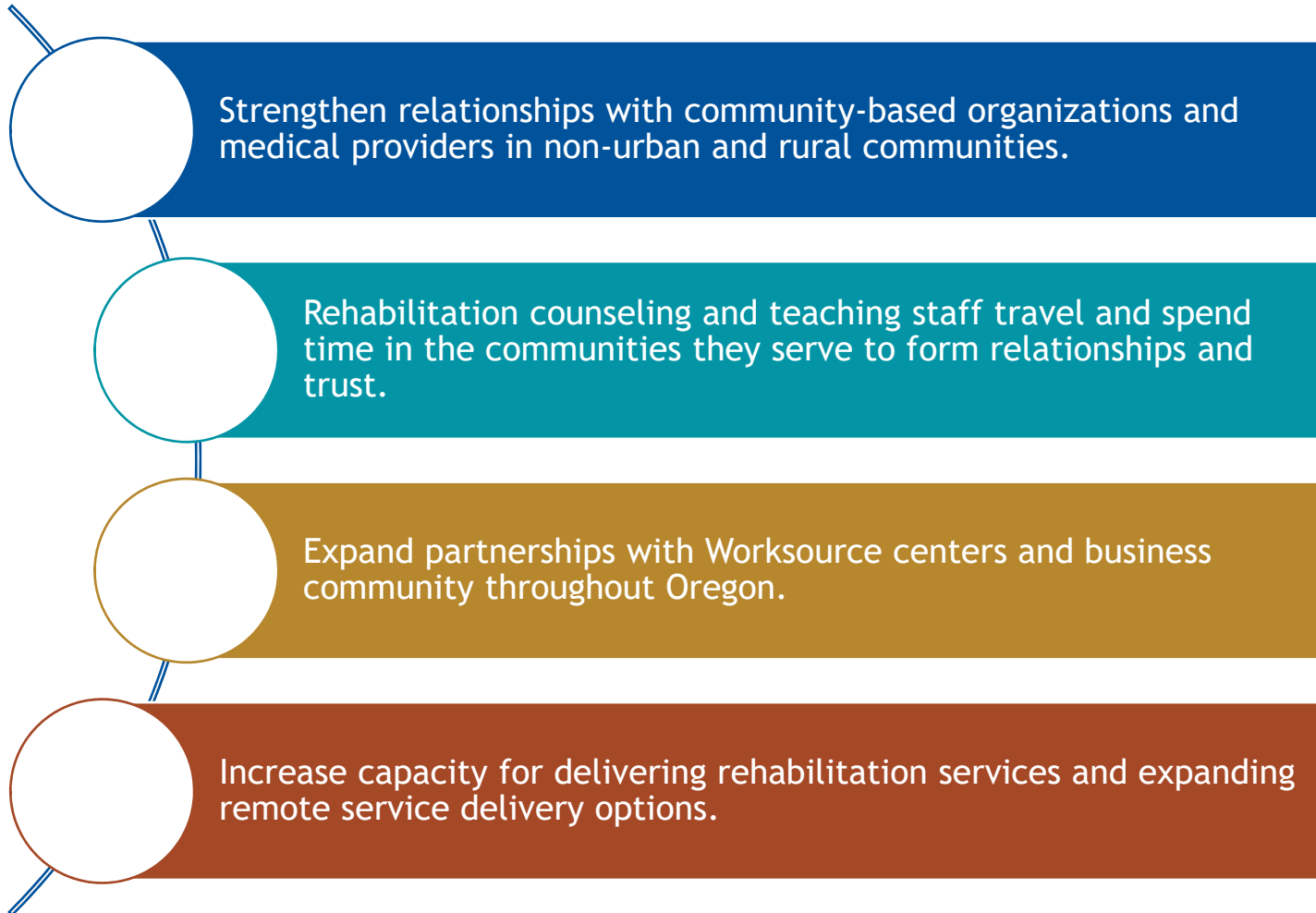


Race VR Caseload Data FFY 2020



Ethnicity VR Caseload Data FFY 2020

# AGENCY STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE EQUITY



# AGENCY BUDGET PRIORITIES

Maintain safety net of critical services for Oregonians who are blind.

Leverage all of the federal dollars available to the agency.

Support transition-aged youth to prepare for jobs and careers after high school.

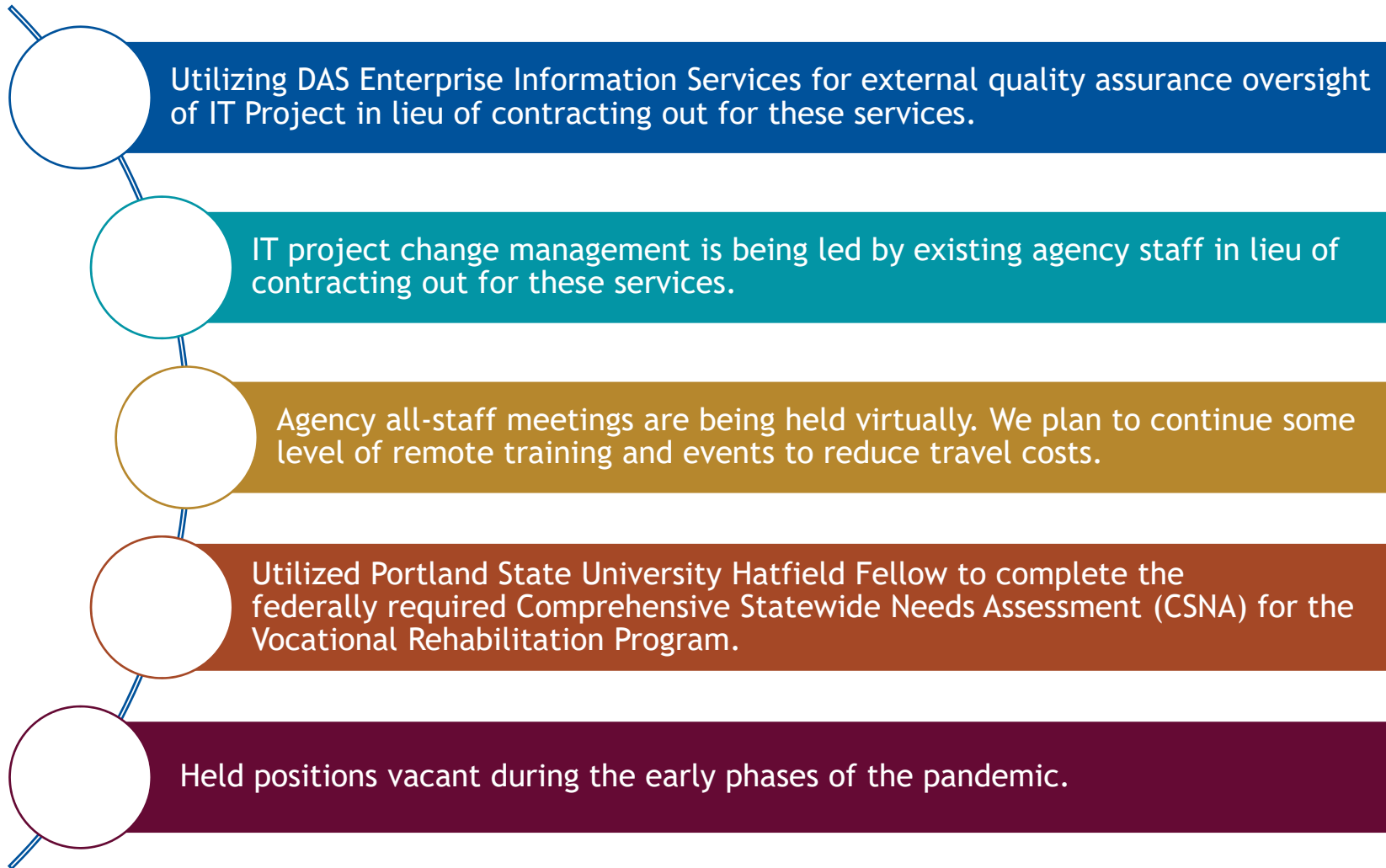
Align budget categories to meet the needs of the agency operations.

Expand opportunities in the Business Enterprise Program.

Information technology project completion and sustainable business continuity.

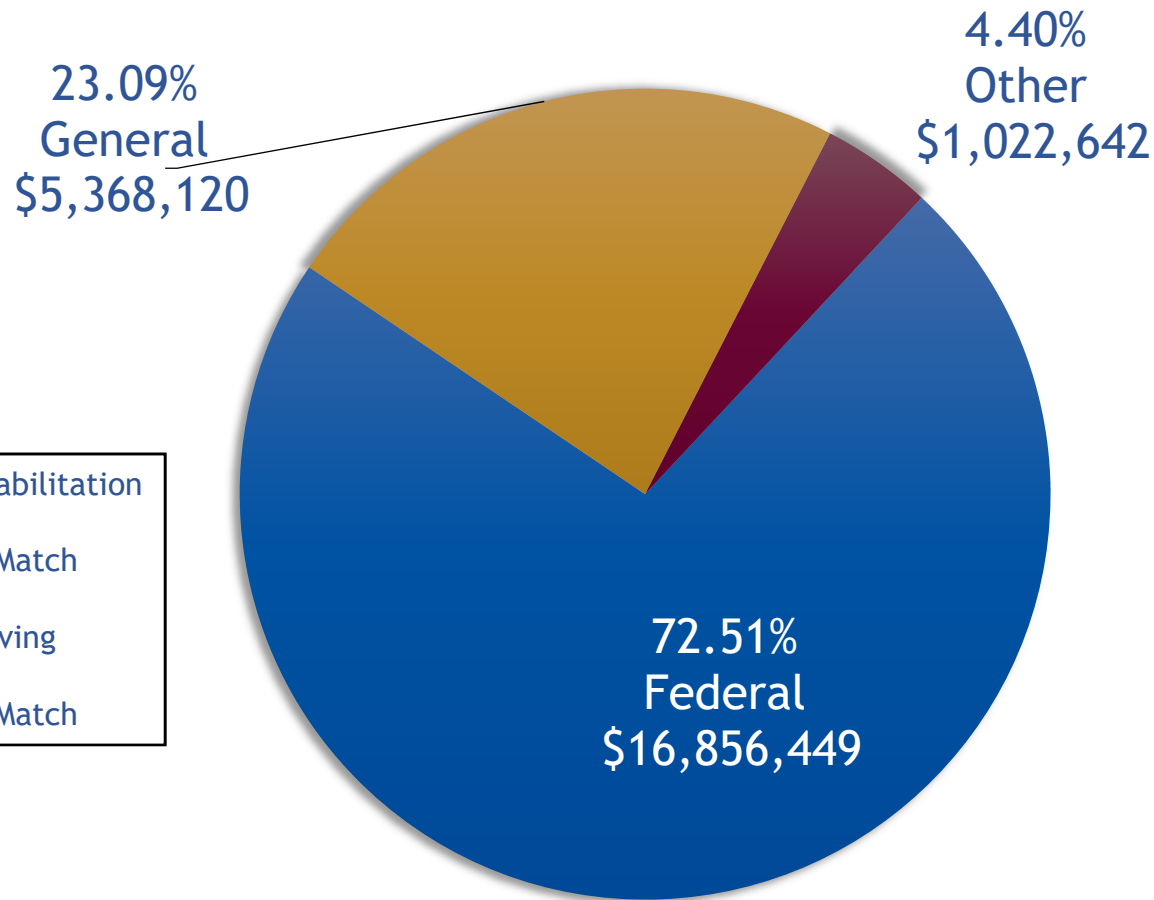


# COST CUTTING MEASURES



# 2021 - 2023 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

## Total Funds \$23,247,211

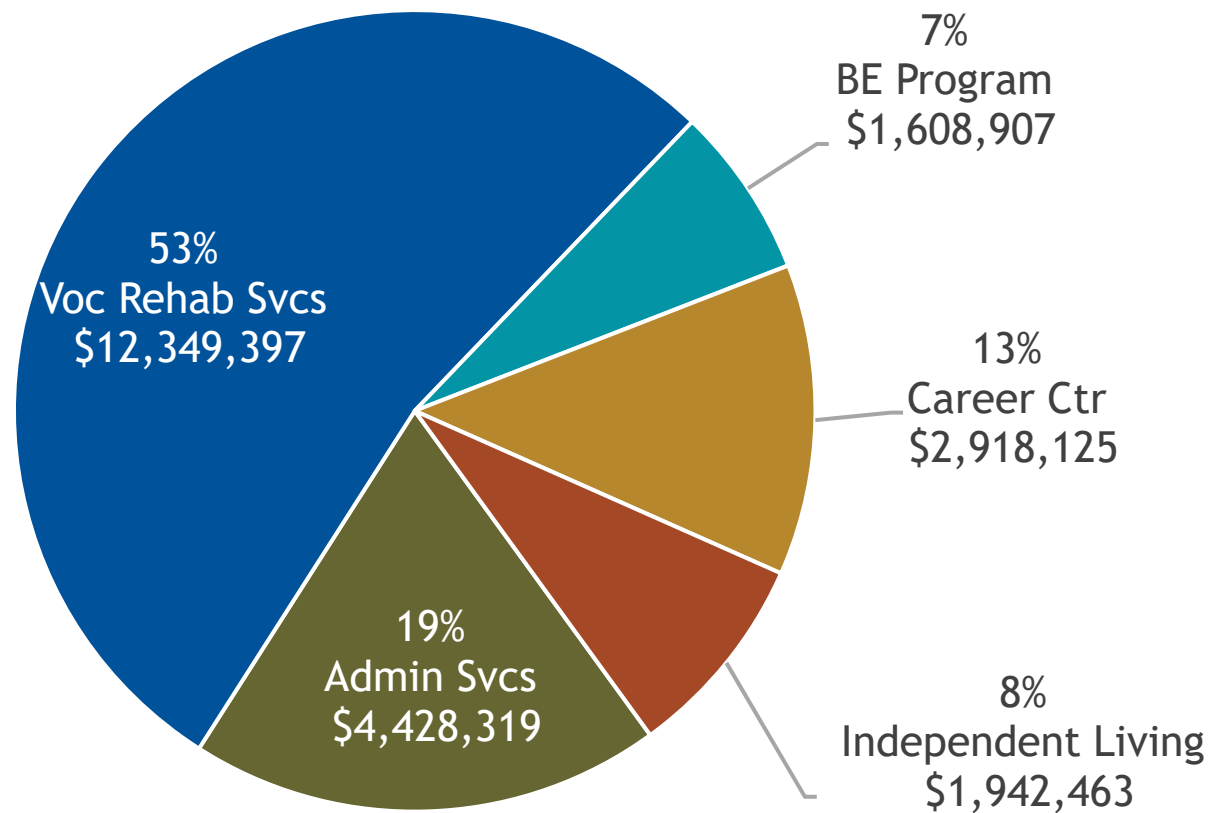


Vocational Rehabilitation receives a 4:1 Federal/State Match

Independent Living receives a 9:1 Federal/State Match

# 2021 - 2023 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

## Total Funds by Program \$23,247,211



# 2021-23 GOVERNOR'S BUDGET

## POP101: Pre-Employment Transition Services

Funds early intervention specialized services to in-school transition-aged youth.

## POP102: Operation Optimization for Good Government

Includes .04 FTE to one position, remainder of package not included due to General Fund constraints.

**Governor's budget retains the current level of staffing in programs and makes general fund reductions in personal services (vacancy savings) and services and supplies.**

## POP103: Business Enterprise Program Modernization Fund

Shifts funding of .5 FTE. Expansion efforts funding was not included due to General Fund constraints.

## POP104: Information Technology Infrastructure

Extends LD position for 9 months for IT Project; Repurposes existing position for ongoing agency IT needs.

# OVERVIEW OF AGENCY KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES (KPM)

## KPM #1 EMPLOYMENT:

New WIOA performance measure still in development.

- Percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation participants who are employed in unsubsidized, competitive, integrated settings the second quarter after exiting the program.

## KPM #2 INDEPENDENT LIVING:

FFY Performance for Total Closed: 2019 - 95.50%; 2020 - 94.15%

- Percentage of eligible individuals closed successfully and unsuccessfully in the Older Blind Independent Living Program who reported feeling that they are in greater control and more confident in their ability to maintain their current living situation as a result of services received.

## KPM #3 CUSTOMER SERVICE:

FFY Performance for Overall: 2019 - 91.1%; 2020 - 92.5%

- Percent of customers rating their satisfaction with the agency's customer service as "good" or "excellent": overall, timeliness, accuracy, helpfulness, expertise, availability of information.

## KPM #4 BEST PRACTICES:

FFY Performance: 2019 - 97.9%; 2020 - 99%

- Percent of total best practices met by the Commission.

# IT CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM MODERNIZATION PROJECT UPDATE

<b>OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>1.</b> Responds to increased reporting requirements under WIOA	<b>2.</b> Allows for data sharing capabilities as a part of the Workforce system	<b>3.</b> Maintains security of clients' personal and medical information	<b>4.</b> Follows Enterprise Information Services Stage Gate and State Procurement Processes
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**PROJECT PURPOSE**

A case management system is an essential application for the delivery of all of OCB's services to its clients. The client data stored in this application is critical to the agency and the fundamental building block for everything OCB does.

The software has to be accessible by screen readers and magnification software in order to accommodate individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

AWARE is a Vocational Rehabilitation case management system that is currently being used in 33 states. AWARE is a COTS (Custom Off the Shelf) solution offered by Alliance Enterprises, a Washington State based company.

The AWARE software is capable of tracking, storing, and retrieving data to meet all federally mandated reporting and data sharing requirements.

**PROJECT TO DATE**

- OCB has LFO/EIS/CFO Oversight and participation on Project Steering Committee that meets monthly.
- OCB Reported to the 2020 Legislative Session on Project Progress.
- Project is currently on time and on budget with an expected Project completion date of March, 2022.
- POP 104 continues LD Project Management position for 9 months.

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES ARE A GOOD INVESTMENT

*Successfully-Employed Clients Pay State and Federal Taxes throughout Their Working Life!*

Overall savings up to 10 times the cost of Rehabilitation\*

**78.7%**

FEDERAL FUNDS

**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**  
**\$392,553**

**MALES**  
**\$344,913**

**21.3%**

GENERAL/OTHER FUNDS

**On Average:**  
Oregon's contribution is paid back in state taxes in approximately 15 months.

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

**FEMALES**  
**\$211,455**

**MALES**  
**\$185,793**



# 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:

**\$26,561**

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

**\$26,061**

Each year per individual in lieu of foster home care.

**\$126,925**

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

**75%** of

*Oregon residents  $\geq$  55 experiencing vision loss live independently*

In FFY 2020, of 661 older blind served, 493 were still living in their own homes.



# THANK YOU/QUESTIONS?

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