

4-17-2003

# State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Annual Report, October 2001 - September 2002

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Rehabilitation Council

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## Recommended Citation

Maine Department of Labor and Maine Rehabilitation Council, "State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Annual Report, October 2001 - September 2002" (2003). *Rehabilitation Services/Disability Services Documents*. Paper 67.  
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L12/9.10: B/L 648/2001-2002  
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**STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL  
FOR THE  
BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**



**ANNUAL REPORT  
October 2001 – September 2002**

APR 17 2003



## **MISSION:**

**The mission of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to provide leadership and diverse viewpoints in partnership with the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired to develop and evaluate programs and services; to identify priorities that help create opportunities, increase independence and broaden access to the workplace for citizens of all ages who are blind or visually impaired.**

## **PURPOSE:**

**The purpose of the Council is to work in conjunction with the Director of the Division concerning policy and program issues, including the delivery of services. The Council provides a formal means to influence the direction of services to the blind and visually impaired population of Maine at the systemic and policy level.**



## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

- **Accomplished 202 successful vocational rehabilitation closures, the 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of increases.**
- **Participated in Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation conference in Washington, D.C.**
- **Advocated with congressional delegation for rehabilitation needs of people with disabilities.**
- **Convinced Maine Department of Education to support accessibility of laptop computers for blind students.**
- **Analyzed results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.**
- **Reviewed client satisfaction survey results noting an extremely high rate of satisfaction with services provided. Compiled survey results for the past 5 years for comparison.**

- **Advocated for consumer choice to be ensured in the selection and provision of services provided.**
- **Updated the 2003 State Plan, which received approval by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.**
- **Participated in updating of state rules.**
- **Provided strong advocacy for Vocational Rehabilitation employment issues.**
- **Advocated improved outreach regarding Jobline.**
- **Advocated with Department of Labor and Governor regarding impact on direct client services of CRP accreditation and moratorium**
- **Participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> annual "Eye Opener" Golf Challenge with the Visual Impairment Program at the Togus VA Hospital, The Iris Network, the Blinded Veterans Association and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.**

- **Provided annual training for Council members regarding SRC roles.**
- **Celebrated White Cane Awareness Day with public events in Augusta, Bangor and Portland.**

### **GOALS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2003**

- **Hear and respond to the concerns and issues raised by blind and visually impaired Maine persons to ensure that the work of the Council is as effective as possible.**
- **Advocate for resources to meet the needs of persons with vision impairments in Maine.**
- **Continue to build partnerships with visually impaired persons, employers, providers of services and advocacy groups.**

## **PLANNED INITIATIVES:**

- **Make recommendations to Congress and RSA regarding reauthorization of the Rehab Act.**
- **Participate in system of mentoring for blind citizens seeking employment or higher education.**
- **Recruit additional Council members from under-represented groups especially business and labor, and clarify status and process of gubernatorial appointments.**
- **Continue to measure consumer satisfaction.**
- **Conduct Legislative awareness day to raise visibility of services to people who are blind and of their unmet needs.**
- **Monitor Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired performance on standards and indicators.**
- **Participate in revision of VR rules.**
- **Improve informed choice performance and public awareness.**



**CONSUMER SATISFACTION  
SURVEY SUMMARY  
2002**

**“How would you rate our staff on  
courtesy and helpfulness?”**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Good/Poor</b>	<b>5%</b>

**“How would you rate the promptness  
with which we responded?”**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Good/Fair/Poor</b>	<b>13%</b>

**“How did we do in treating you as an  
individual?”**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Good/Fair/Poor</b>	<b>10%</b>

**How do you rate:**

**- Mobility Instruction?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>89%</b>
<b>Good/Fair</b>	<b>11%</b>

**- Rehabilitation Teaching?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>15%</b>

**- Low Vision Services?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>85%</b>
<b>Good/Fair/Poor</b>	<b>15%</b>

**- Personal Adjustment Counseling?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Good/Fair</b>	<b>8%</b>

**- Computer Skills?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>72%</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>28%</b>

**- Job Placement?**

<b>Excellent/Very Good</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>Good/Fair</b>	<b>37%</b>

**“Did you help choose your goal and services?”**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>30%</b>

**“Did you achieve your goals with the help of this program?”**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>27%</b>

**“Were you informed of your right to appeal decisions, and of the services available from the Client Assistance Program?”**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>93%</b>
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**“Overall how satisfied are you with services received from the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired?”**

<b>Delighted/Very Satisfied</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Satisfied/Somewhat Satisfied</b>	<b>13%</b>

**Additional detailed information  
is available on request**

## **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP:**

**Daniel T. Bence, Chair - Augusta  
Representing Blind Veterans**

**Dale Morgan, Vice-Chair - Gardiner  
Representing Maine Parent Federation**

**Tony Ackerman - Windham  
Representing Consumers**

**Marjorie Awalt - Augusta  
Representing Consumers**

**Andrea Bickford - Bangor  
Representing Vocational  
Rehabilitation Counselors**

**Jane Boutilier - Sangerville  
Representing Parents**

**Anisio Correia - Portland  
Representing Consumers and CRP**

**Senator Beverly Daggett - Augusta  
Representing the Legislature**



**Benita Davis - Augusta**  
**Representing State Library Services**

**Jack Desjardins - Lewiston**  
**Representing Consumers and Business**

**Patricia Ellis - Augusta**  
**Representing Consumers**

**Debbie Fillyaw - Augusta**  
**Representing Consumers**

**Diane Frigon - Augusta**  
**Representing Client Assistance Program**

**Susan Hall - Bangor**  
**Representing Parents**

**Leona McKenna - Augusta**  
**Representing Consumers**

**Steven Obremski - Portland**  
**Representing Consumers and CRP**

**James Phipps, Esquire - Portland  
Representing Consumers and Business**

**Patricia Sarchi - Bangor  
Representing Deaf-Blind Consumers**

**Jean Small - Bangor  
Representing Education Services**

**For more information  
contact Daniel Bence (207) 621-7307**







