

San Diego State University
Interwork Institute

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
And
The State Rehabilitation Council

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment
Report

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- Deborah Collard, Program Analyst

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Commonwealth of Virginia, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), the State Rehabilitation Council and the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University jointly conducted an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments residing in the Commonwealth of Virginia. A triennial needs assessment is required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and is intended to help inform the Unified State Plan developed by the core partners in Virginia's Workforce Development System. The data was gathered analyzed and grouped into the sections listed below. A summary of key findings in each section is contained here. The full results are found in the body of the report.

All of the qualitative information gathered for this report and the quantitative data for the last quarter of PY 2019 and all of PY 2020 should be interpreted within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The restrictions on in-person meetings, office closures and concerns for personal and public safety had a dramatic impact on all VR programs.

It is important to note that in the midst of the pandemic, DBVI did an admirable job of shifting to remote service delivery and gained national recognition for their innovative programming, especially in the area of pre-employment transition services. A list of the programs developed by DBVI includes, but is not limited to:

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) focused programs that include:

- Robotics and Cyber academy for hands-on career exploration
- Virtual and hands-on IT credential fairs
- Raspberry Pi and the Security Camera Academy
- Leap into Linux Academy
- Ethical Hacker Academy
- HTML Hero Academy

Other programs include:

- ACE Academy for College Success
- ACE Advocacy for College
- ACE Leadership for College Success
- Financial Literacy
- Advocating for Science

All of these programs and more were highlighted by participants in this assessment as examples of how effectively DBVI responded to the restrictions of the pandemic and the positive focus of the organization on helping youth and students with disabilities to prepare for the 21st century workforce.

It should also be noted that given the number of survey respondents and interview participants in this assessment, it is difficult to determine how well the summary statistics represent the entire

group of individuals served; as a result, please view the summary information as informative, and providing general guidance, rather than as definitive statements regarding the results of any specific subset of VR cases or individuals being served.

Section One: Overall Performance of DBVI

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods (data, surveys and interviews) related to this topic area:

1. The pandemic significantly impacted the number of applications and employment outcomes for DBVI and all VR programs in the last two years.
2. Although applications have decreased during COVID, staff and partners indicate that business is starting to pick back up and they are optimistic about the future.
3. The quality of employment outcomes achieved by DBVI consumers was overwhelmingly noted as being very good. Consumers are prepared for in-demand jobs that are high in pay and career-level. These outcomes reflect the agency-wide belief in the abilities and capabilities of people with blindness. DBVI staff have high expectations for their consumers and work hard to convey those expectations to the individuals they serve.
4. DBVI shifted and adapted to virtual service delivery quickly and efficiently as a result of the pandemic.
5. DBVI and VRCBVI were very creative in the development of virtual training, and the new platforms allowed the agency to reach many more individuals than they had when providing training in-person only. Outreach and training, especially for youth, increased significantly as a result of the shift to virtual training. DBVI has been recognized nationally among VR programs for the programs they have created during the pandemic.
6. The community awareness of DBVI is lacking in many areas of the state and needs to increase.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI is encouraged to increase marketing and outreach efforts as the pandemic restrictions continue to be lifted throughout Virginia, while being cognizant of available fiscal and staff resources so that there is not a need to enter an order of selection again;
2. The agency is encouraged to actively recruit interns to help address the need for qualified counseling and instruction staff. DBVI is encouraged to embark on a “grow your own” program whereby consumers are supported to achieve their graduate degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and can serve as interns for the agency during their practicum requirements. This can result in a steady pipeline of qualified individuals to work for the agency upon graduation;
3. DBVI should continue the innovative work they are doing with virtual training and expand the opportunities in this area as resources allow;
4. DBVI is encouraged to identify and implement strategies and practices that can help reduce the administrative burden of gathering, tracking and reporting on counseling and direct service staff. The agency has considered participating in the SARA artificial

intelligence pilot program with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM). The agency should continue to pursue this possibility or look into programs or technology that may help in this area;

5. Where possible, DBVI should identify ways to streamline processes and reduce administrative duties of field staff; and
6. DBVI is encouraged to identify methods to ensure that the agency can gather and analyze data related to performance across multiple levels to support data-driven decision-making.

Section Two: The needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to this topic area:

1. Transportation and assistive technology were the two most commonly cited rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments. This need is consistent with other agency reports and past CSNAs and is common for this population
2. Assistive technology is especially important for Deaf-Blind individuals.
3. Common recurring rehabilitation needs other than transportation and AT included training, soft-skills (especially for youth), benefits planning, self-advocacy training and work experience.
4. Individuals that receive either SSI or SSDI or both have significant fears about losing benefits due to work, especially medical insurance. This fear limits their return-to-work behavior, resulting in them looking for part-time work that keeps their earnings level below that which would remove them from support by SSA. Consequently, these individuals do not pursue self-sustaining employment and do not achieve desired levels of employment. This is a common issue for SSA beneficiaries served by all VR programs nationally. The importance of reaching these beneficiaries as youth and helping them strive for self-sufficiency was noted as critical.
5. The pandemic exposed the need for individuals to have available broadband Internet access.
6. It has become increasingly common for DBVI consumers to have a secondary mental health impairment in addition to blindness or a vision impairment. Staff and partners need training on how to effectively work with these individuals.
7. Supported and customized employment are not common strategies or practices utilized by DBVI.
8. VRCBVI was praised for providing excellent adjustment to blindness and independent living skills training to consumers. In addition, the center has worked to increase its vocational focus, though there is still room for growth in this area. They shifted to remote services and responded as effectively as possible to the pandemic's effect on a residential training program.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI is encouraged to ensure that follow-up training on the use of AT is provided in the individual's home once they leave VRCBVI and return to their living environment. This training should include an initial set-up and training until the individual demonstrates independence in using the technology;
2. DBVI is encouraged to provide training to all staff on how to effectively work with individuals with mental health impairments. This training should be ongoing and is an area where the continued partnership with the General agency can be beneficial;
3. Since a large percentage of DBVI consumers are SSA beneficiaries whose fear of benefit loss affects their return-to-work behavior, it would be helpful for DBVI to augment benefits planning services with training for staff and providers on strategies that contribute to the pursuit of work above the level of SGA, including self-sufficiency. These interventions and strategies include:
 - a. Establishing and reinforcing high expectations for the individual;
 - b. Identifying role models, or peer mentors that will model positive behavior and provide a positive "push" for the individual to achieve their maximum potential (in many instances, the positive push can come from the rehabilitation counselor if there are no family members, friends or mentors available);
 - c. Maximizing the individual's ability to live and function independently;
 - d. Reinforcing the need for tenacity and persistence by the individual by helping them develop resiliencies, and then providing constant support and positive feedback;
 - e. Benefits planning that is ongoing and plans for overpayments when work occurs. Overpayments are planned for and the individual or the Benefits Planner is aware enough to calculate the effect of wages on benefits by themselves and set aside dollars that will likely occur as a result of overpayments for future payback to SSA;
 - f. Pursuit of higher education at the highest possible level for the individual; and
 - g. Work experience, internships or any exposure to work in the beneficiary's field of choice;
4. Training in supported and customized employment strategies should be a regular and ongoing for DBVI staff;
5. DBVI is encouraged to continue to develop resources and training that promote financial literacy and empowerment for their consumers. It is recommended that DBVI avail themselves of the resources available through the National Disability Institute at <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/>;
6. DBVI is encouraged to conduct connectivity assessments for all consumers that are engaged in the comprehensive assessment process for plan development. When needed, DBVI should purchase the necessary equipment and service to ensure their participants are able to effectively access and function in the digital world. This includes broadband Internet where available and laptops, cell phones and hotspots in cellular service plans.

One possibility for adaption is the BPD Technology Assessment Checklist created by the Technology Committee for the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors. The tool is available in Appendix F. DBVI should adapt the tool for their own needs if they decide to use it.

7. DBVI is encouraged to market the services of VRCBVI in order to increase enrollment. The center has had low enrollment due to COVID, and as Virginia emerges from the pandemic, it will be important to ensure that individuals with blindness and vision impairments, especially youth and students, are aware of VRCBVI.

Section Three: The needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to this topic area:

1. As was the case in the last CSNA, the interview participants did not generally feel that any specific groups of individuals were underserved or unserved by the agency. They indicated that DBVI works with whomever is interested in services without regard to race.
2. Hispanic and Asian individuals were cited most commonly as the two ethnic groups that do not access DBVI services as frequently as others. Lack of knowledge about the program and available services, fear or mistrust of government agencies, lack of representative staff, language barriers and cultural factors were commonly cited as possible reasons for this lack of access. The data supports that Hispanic individuals appear less in the DBVI consumer population than in Virginia's overall population.
3. Individuals with intellectual disabilities in addition to vision loss were cited as possibly being underserved.
4. The rural areas of Virginia were commonly mentioned as an underserved geographic area primarily due to the lack of transportation and Internet access. The lack of Internet access was especially noted as problematic for rural areas during the pandemic when services were delivered virtually.
5. The barriers to employment experienced by minority populations are similar to those experienced by all other populations of DBVI consumers except that they face language barriers when looking for employment and when trying to access DBVI services.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI is encouraged to recruit bilingual Hispanic counselors when they have vacant positions. In addition to being able to speak to consumers in their native language, these counselors can help build trust and relationships with the Hispanic community and increase DBVI's ability to reach this population;
2. DBVI is encouraged to establish liaison and referral relationships with community programs serving minority populations in the State. Targeted outreach to these

community service organizations can help increase the awareness of DBVI and build trust among traditionally underserved populations. The agency is encouraged to collaborate with Virginia Department of Health's Division of Multicultural Health and Community Engagement. Information is available at

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-equity/division-of-multicultural-health-and-community-engagement/>;

3. DBVI is encouraged to provide training for staff and partners on diversity, equity and inclusion. These efforts can impact the perspectives and beliefs of agency staff and partners and improve outreach efforts;
4. DBVI is encouraged to continue to partner with the General program (DARS) and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Service to increase awareness of their services to individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities that have vision impairments. This partnership may have the secondary effect of increasing the number of individuals who can benefit from the supported employment model; and
5. DBVI needs to increase its ability to gather and analyze its own data related to case movement and outcomes for individuals from minority populations so that it can make evidence-based decisions on how to improve services.

Section Four: The needs of youth and students with blindness or vision impairments in transition

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to this topic area:

1. Transportation to and from school and work was the most common rehabilitation and employment need mentioned for students and youth with blindness and vision impairments. The lack of reliable or available transportation, especially in the rural areas, affects every area of the lives of youth and can significantly limit their work options.
2. Low vision technology and other assistive technology is needed for youth and students with blindness and vision impairments to prepare for their career and perform the essential functions of their jobs.
3. All of the five required pre-employment transition services required activities were consistently cited as needed by students with disabilities. Work--based learning experiences were the most frequently cited need, but self-advocacy and soft-skills training were also noted frequently.
4. Although the pandemic adversely affected enrollment at VRCBVI and in-person attendance at school, the agency found that the shift to virtual training and programming opened the doors for more students and youth to participate, which was a positive outcome.
5. DBVI's counselors work closely with the Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVIs) in most of the school districts. When the relationship between the TVIs and DBVI are close, services for students with blindness and vision impairments are coordinated and

comprehensive. In many rural areas where schools have limited resources and there may not be a TVI, services to youth are adversely impacted.

6. The agency added resiliency and financial literacy training to their pre-employment transition services programs. These new offerings were considered as positive, needed and helpful for students.
7. The transition from secondary school to college can be a major challenge for youth with blindness or vision impairments as they have had someone in secondary school actively work to meet their accommodation needs, but when they get to college, this must be a self-directed process. It generally takes at least one, and often two semesters before consumers get their technology and reasonable accommodation needs met in college. This creates a slow start to their higher education pursuits which can be frustrating and result in a delay in achieving their goals.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI should continue to develop virtual and in-person options for training and pre-employment transition services. The agency has received national recognition for the training for students and youth with blindness and vision impairments, especially the training that is offered in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) occupations. DBVI should continue to develop these options that contribute to training students and youth to work in high-demand, high-paying career-level occupations;
2. The use of advanced technology such as AI programs to interact with students with blindness and vision impairments can contribute the ability of DBVI to recruit students and youth and help keep them engaged in the VR process. DBVI is encouraged to explore these possibilities as resources allow and to expand their use of social media platforms to attract and engage youth;
3. DBVI is encouraged to connect youth that are transitioning to college from secondary education with the college student ability centers prior to beginning their first semester of college work to ensure that all of their reasonable accommodation needs are met. This will help ensure these individuals get a good start to their education pursuits; and
4. DBVI is encouraged to consider developing a peer mentoring program for youth with disabilities in Virginia. One possibility is an online peer mentoring program available through PolicyWorks at <https://disabilitypolicyworks.org/peer-mentoringworks-2/>. A key component of this mentoring program is the development of self-advocacy skills in youth and students with disabilities.

Section Five: The needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments served through other components of the statewide Workforce Development System

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to this topic area:

1. There has been considerable progress in the relationship between DBVI and the core partners at the State level since the previous CSNA. Joint planning and frequent communication are common among partners.
2. Virginia DARS (the General agency) is an important Workforce partner for DBVI. The relationship between DARS and DBVI was characterized as helpful and beneficial. DBVI staff and partners indicated that the relationship with DARS is especially helpful when a DBVI consumer has a mental health impairment, and they can take advantage of the expertise and resources of the General agency.
3. Although the State-level relationship between DBVI and the core partners was described as good and improved, relationships at the local levels were primarily based on referral alone. AJC staff were generally described as struggling to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments, uncertain what to do, and untrained on how to use the AT in the AJCs when it is functioning. AJC staff need frequent and regular training in order to effectively work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI is encouraged to continue to work with the core partners to ensure that the common intake form is accessible. This will help develop the ability to track and analyze data on co-enrollment with core partners;
2. DBVI should identify successful partnerships with the AJCs and other core partners and tell the story of these successes to the field throughout the State so that they can try and be replicated. This may help the partnership to go beyond one of referral in many areas of the State;
3. DBVI is encouraged to continue to collaborate with the core partners to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility of their programs for individuals with blindness and vision impairments;
4. DBVI is encouraged to create customized training programs with their core partners in order to increase opportunities for braided funding and productive outcomes; and
5. DBVI should consider allowing a representative from the other core partners to come to VRCBVI and make presentations to participants on core program services and how they can be of assistance when the participants complete their adjustment to blindness training and return to their communities to look for work. DBVI should consider allowing core partners to outstation staff at VRCBVI on a regular basis to facilitate the exchange of information and an increase in co-enrollment.

Section Six: The need to establish, develop or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs in Virginia

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to **this topic area:**

1. DBVI continues to provide most of their consumer services through their own staff. They do use CRPs and other individual service providers for some services, but in-house service provision is the most common method of service delivery.
2. The focus on in-house service provision was beneficial for the agency during the pandemic as they were not as adversely affected by the loss of external service providers due to layoffs or high turnover as some other VR programs nationally.
3. There is a need to develop the ability of Employment Services Organizations (ESOs) to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments.
4. There is a need to develop either internal or external vocational evaluation services for DBVI consumers. There is a lack of professional vocational evaluation services that are tailored to the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.
5. There is a need to develop peer mentors for individuals with blindness and vision impairments, especially youth.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. DBVI is encouraged to provide training for CRP staff that work primarily with the general agency on how to effectively work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments. This training may help with ensuring that DBVI consumers have qualified CRP staff to work with them when receiving employment services;
2. DBVI should consider recruiting for vocational evaluation services from a certified vocational evaluator. One possibility would be to identify experts in Virginia through the American Board of Vocational Experts at <https://abve.net/search/>;
3. DBVI is encouraged to establish a peer mentoring network for their consumers. One possibility would be to identify their successful consumers to act as mentors.

Section Seven: The needs of businesses and effectiveness in serving employers

This category captures the needs of businesses in Virginia as it relates to recruiting, hiring, retaining and accommodating individuals with blindness or vision impairments. It includes an analysis of how DBVI serves business and tries to meet their needs in each of these areas.

The following findings and recurring themes emerged from all of the research methods related to this topic area:

1. The Business Relations Team at DBVI was given high marks by multiple individuals interviewed during this assessment for their ability to shift to virtual services and meet the needs of employers during the pandemic.

2. Although there has been significant progress in serving the needs of business and in educating them through the efforts of DBVI since the last CSNA, there are still many employers that are fearful of the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments to perform the essential functions of jobs. Businesses continue to need to be educated about the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

The following recommendations are made to DBVI based on the findings and recurring themes that emerged from all of the research methods:

1. At the time of this CSNA, there were two vacancies in the Business Relations Team. DBVI is encouraged to fill these positions in order to sustain the momentum that the team has made since the previous assessment; and
2. DBVI is encouraged to continue to offer disability awareness training and other educational opportunities that promote awareness of the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
Impetus for Needs Assessment.....	17
Purpose of Needs Assessment and Utilization of Results	17
METHODOLOGY	18
Analysis of Existing Data Sources.....	18
Individual and Focus Group Interviews.....	19
Surveys.....	20
Totals for all Data Collection Methods.....	21
Analysis and Triangulation of Data	21
Dissemination Plans.....	21
Study Limitations.....	22
FINDINGS	23
SECTION 1:.....	24
OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE.....	24
NATIONAL, STATE, LOCAL AND AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE.....	24
AGENCY-SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO PERFORMANCE	74
SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE.....	79
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS	79
STAFF SURVEY RESULTS:	86
INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	90
RECOMMENDATIONS	92
SECTION 2:.....	93
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT.....	93
NATIONAL AND/OR AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT:	93
SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE.....	95

DBVI 2022 CSNA	14
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY – EMPLOYMENT RELATED NEEDS	95
PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS	114
STAFF SURVEY RESULTS	123
INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	136
RECOMMENDATIONS	138
SECTION 3.....	140
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM	140
NATIONAL AND/OR AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY DBVI.....	141
Agency Specific Data on Ethnicity:.....	145
SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE.....	147
INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS	147
PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS	148
STAFF SURVEY RESULTS	151
INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	155
RECOMMENDATIONS	156
SECTION 4.....	157
NEEDS OF YOUTH WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS IN TRANSITION	157
NATIONAL AND AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRANSITION	158
PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES	168
Movement from Required to Authorized Activities	171
SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE.....	172
PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS	172
STAFF SURVEY RESULTS	175
INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS	178
RECOMMENDATIONS	179
SECTION 5.....	180

NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS AND VISION IMPAIRMENTS SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE

DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM 180

 SURVEY RESULT BY TYPE: 181

 INDIVIDUAL SURVEY: 181

 STAFF SURVEY RESULTS 184

 INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS 187

 RECOMMENDATIONS 188

SECTION 6 189

NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA 189

 SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE 190

 INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS 190

 PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS 192

 STAFF SURVEY RESULTS 197

 INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS 202

 RECOMMENDATIONS 202

SECTION 7 204

NEEDS OF BUSINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS 204

 AGENCY-SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO EFFECTIVELY SERVING THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS 204

 SURVEY RESULTS 205

 BUSINESS SURVEY RESPONSES 205

 INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS 215

 RECOMMENDATIONS 215

 CONCLUSION 216

Appendices 217

 Appendix A: Individual and Focus Group Protocols 218

 Appendix B: Individual Survey 227

 Appendix C: Partner Survey 259

 Appendix D: Staff Survey 280

 Appendix E: Business Survey 304

Appendix F: BPD's Technology Assessment Checklist..... 315
Appendix F.....**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Impetus for Needs Assessment

Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) contains the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and requires all state vocational rehabilitation agencies to assess the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities within the respective State and relate the planning of programs and services and the establishment of goals and priorities to those needs. According to Section 102 of WIOA and Section 412 of the Rehabilitation Act, each participating State shall submit a Unified or Combined State Plan every four years, with a biannual modification as needed. In addition, Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 361.29 indicates that: The State Plan must include the “results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted by the designated State unit and the State Rehabilitation Council every three years describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State.” In response to this mandate, and to ensure that adequate efforts are being made to serve the diverse needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments in Virginia, the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council SRC), entered into a contract with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University for the purpose of jointly developing and implementing a comprehensive statewide needs assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments residing in Virginia.

Purpose of Needs Assessment and Utilization of Results

The purpose of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) is to identify and describe the rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments residing within Virginia. In particular, the CSNA seeks to provide information on:

- The overall performance of DBVI as it relates to meeting the rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in the State;
- The rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- The rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments who are minorities, and those who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
- The rehabilitation needs of youth and students with blindness and vision impairments in transition, including their need for pre-employment transition services;
- The rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce development system;
- The need to establish, develop and/or improve community rehabilitation programs within the State; and
- The needs of businesses in recruiting, hiring, accommodating and retaining individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

It is expected that data from the needs assessment effort will provide DBVI and the SRC with direction when creating the VR portion of the Unified State Plan and when planning for future program development, outreach and resource allocation. This CSNA covers quantitative data for Program Years (PY) 2017 through 2020 which reflects the time from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2021, and qualitative data through October 31, 2021.

METHODOLOGY

The comprehensive statewide needs assessment was conducted using qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry. The specific methods for gathering the data used in this assessment are detailed below. It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting restrictions on travel and in-person meetings significantly affected the methodology for the conduct of this CSNA. Interviews and focus groups were conducted using a hybrid model of in-person and virtual interviews. There was only one in-person week-long in-person interview process that occurred in Richmond in October 2021. All other interviews were conducted virtually.

Analysis of Existing Data Sources

The project team at SDSU reviewed a variety of existing data sources for the purposes of identifying and describing demographic data within Virginia including the total possible target population and sub-populations potentially served by DBVI. Data relevant to the population of Virginia, the population of persons with blindness or vision impairments in Virginia, ethnicity of individuals, income level, educational levels and other relevant population characteristics were utilized in this analysis. Sources analyzed include the following:

- The 2019 American Community Survey- One and Five Year Estimates;
- US Census Annual Estimates of Resident Population, 2019;
- U.S. Department of Labor Disability Employment Statistics
- 2020 Social Security Administration SSI/DI Data;
- The Virginia Department of Education;
- US Bureau of Labor Statistics at <https://data.bls.gov>;
- Virginia Employment Commission Economics and Analytics Division: Richmond, Virginia
- Cornell University's Disabilitystatistics.org;
- Houtenville, A. and Rafal, M. (2020). Annual Report on People with Disabilities in America: 2020. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability
- DBVI case service data compiled at the request of the project team; and
- The Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration's RSA 911 case service data for DBVI and data submitted and entered into RSA's Management Information System (MIS).

Individual and Focus Group Interviews

Instrument. The instruments used for the individual and focus group interviews (Appendix A) were developed by the researchers at SDSU and reviewed and revised by DBVI. The interview protocols act as guides for the interview process and were not limiting in their scope. The project team was able to adapt the questions and focus areas as needed and appropriate. The questions were consistent with those asked for the previous CSNA in order to maximize the ability to follow-up on themes that emerged from the 2018 CSNA. There were a series of questions added to the interview protocol for this CSNA related to the pandemic and its effect on service delivery.

Interview population. The individual and focus group population consisted of DBVI staff, community partners, individuals with blindness or vision impairments and businesses. A total of 65 participants were interviewed as part of this CSNA, 43 individually and 22 as part of a focus group.

Data collection. Individual and focus group interviews were conducted from August 2021 to November 2021. The general format of the interviews was consistent between participants regardless of their group. First, participants were asked questions to ascertain their personal and professional experience with or knowledge of DBVI. Participants were then asked open-ended questions about their perceptions of the employment needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments in Virginia. Finally, participants were asked to share their perceptions of how DBVI could improve their ability to help meet these needs, especially as it relates to helping consumers obtain and retain employment.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Names and other identifying characteristics were not shared with anyone by the interviewers. Participants were informed that their responses would be treated as anonymous information, would not be reported with information that could be used to identify them, and would be consolidated with information from other respondents before results were reported.

Data analysis. The interviewers took notes on the discussions as they occurred. The notes were transcribed and analyzed by the researchers at SDSU. Themes or concerns that surfaced with consistency across interviews were identified and are reported as common themes in the report narrative.

Surveys

Instrument. The instruments used for the electronic survey of individuals with blindness or vision impairments, community partners, staff and businesses (Appendices B-E) were developed by the project team and reviewed and revised by DBVI.

Survey population. Individuals identified for participation in this survey effort can be described as individuals with blindness or vision impairments who are potential, current or former clients of DBVI. Community partners include representatives of organizations that provide services, coordinate services or serve an advocacy role for persons with blindness or vision impairments in Virginia. DBVI staff members include those working for the organization between September 2021 and January 2022.

Data collection. Data was gathered from this population through the use of an Internet-based survey and by mail. In partnership with the SRC, DBVI identified individuals with blindness or vision impairments and invited them to participate in the electronic survey effort via e-mail. Once the survey was active, DBVI sent an invitation and link to the survey by e-mail. Approximately two weeks after the distribution of the initial invitation, another electronic notice was sent as both a “thank you” to those who had completed the survey and a reminder to those who had not. Another reminder was sent a month later and the survey completion date was extended by one month to maximize response totals. Survey responses were then analyzed using Qualtrics.

Efforts to ensure respondent confidentiality. Respondents to the surveys were not asked to identify themselves when completing the survey. In addition, responses were aggregated by the project team at SDSU prior to reporting results, which served to further obscure the identities of respondents.

Accessibility. The electronic survey was designed using an accessible, internet-based survey application. Respondents were provided with the name and contact information of the Research Director at SDSU in order to place requests for other alternate survey formats.

Data analysis. Data analysis consisted of computing frequencies and descriptive statistics for the survey items with fixed response options. Open-ended survey questions, which yielded narrative responses from individuals, were analyzed by the researchers for themes or concepts that were expressed consistently by respondents.

Number of completed surveys. A total of 182 surveys were completed from the different groups. Because the surveys were distributed electronically and recipients of the electronic survey links were encouraged to share these links as broadly as possible, it is not possible to identify a valid response rate for the survey groups. As indicated earlier, the reader is cautioned to interpret the findings informative and not definitive.

Totals for all Data Collection Methods

Table 1 identifies the totals for all data collection methods for the CSNA.

Table 1

Data Collection Totals by Type for 2022 Virginia DBVI CSNA

Data Collection Totals by Type and Group for 2022 Virginia DBVI CSNA					
Research Method	Research Group and Count				
	Consumer	Partner	Staff	Business	Total
Electronic Survey	96	21	59	6	182
Individual Interview	5	5	32	1	43
Focus Group					
Number of groups	1	1	1	1	4
Number of participants	10	7	2	3	22
Total participants	111	33	93	10	247

The total number of participants for this CSNA was lower by 180 individuals from the previous CSNA conducted for DBVI in 2018. The decrease is attributed primarily to the lower number of consumer and partner respondents. The reduction in the total of individuals served by DBVI resulting from the pandemic impacted the total population of possible respondents, which may account for some of the decrease in totals from 2018.

Analysis and Triangulation of Data

The data gathered from the national and agency-specific data sets, key informant interviews, surveys and focus groups were analyzed by the researchers on the project team. The common themes that emerged regarding needs of persons with blindness or vision impairments from each data source were identified and compared to each other to validate the existence of needs, especially as they pertained to the target populations of this assessment. These common themes are identified and discussed in the Findings section.

Dissemination Plans

The CSNA report is delivered to DBVI and the SRC. We recommend that DBVI publish the report on their website for public access and that they notify the public of the availability of the report by e-mail.

Study Limitations

Inherent in any type of research effort are limitations that may constrain the utility of the data that is generated. Therefore, it is important to highlight some of the most significant issues that may limit the ability to generalize the needs assessment findings to larger populations. Inherent in the methods used to collect data is the potential for bias in the selection of participants. The findings that are reported reflect only the responses of those who could be reached and who were willing to participate. Individuals who were disenfranchised, dissatisfied, or who did not wish to be involved with DBVI may have declined to participate in the focus group and individual interview research. A second significant concern is that the information gathered from respondents may not accurately represent the broader concerns of all potential constituents and stakeholders. Data gathered from service providers, for example, may reflect only the needs of individuals who are already recipients of services, to the exclusion of those who are not presently served. Although efforts were made to gather information from a variety of stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process, it would be imprudent to conclude with certainty that those who contributed to the focus groups and the individual interviews constitute a fully representative sample of all of the potential stakeholders in the vocational rehabilitation process in Virginia.

FINDINGS

Section 1: Overall agency performance

Section 2: Needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment

Section 3: Needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments that are minorities, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program

Section 4: Needs of youth and students with blindness or vision impairments in transition

Section 5: Needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce development system

Section 6: Need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs in Virginia

Section 7: Needs of businesses and effectiveness in serving employers

SECTION 1:

OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE

The first section of the CSNA reports on areas of general performance by DBVI. General performance refers to how well DBVI is fulfilling its mission of assisting people with blindness and vision impairments to increase their independence and employment. The area of general performance also refers to how effectively DBVI performs the processes that facilitate case movement through the stages of the rehabilitation process, how well DBVI adheres to the timelines for this case movement identified in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended by Title IV of WIOA, and DBVI's policies and procedures. Finally, overall performance also refers to how successfully DBVI achieves their common performance measures and the quantity and quality of employment outcomes achieved by their consumers.

The structure of this section, as well as the following sections, will include the following:

1. Data that pertains to the section in question, including observations based on the data;
2. Survey results pertaining to the section;
3. Recurring/consensual themes that emerged during the individual interviews and focus groups; and
4. Recommendations to address the findings in each area of the assessment.

The time-period covered by the data in this comprehensive statewide needs assessment is the four-year period from July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2021. The data on agency performance included in this section comes from the case management system used by DBVI and is compared to the available RSA 911 data submitted by DBVI where available.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following recurring themes emerged in the area of Overall Agency Performance:

1. The pandemic significantly impacted the number of applications and employment outcomes for DBVI and all VR programs in the last two years.
2. Although applications have decreased during COVID, staff and partners indicate that business is starting to pick back up and they are optimistic about the future.
3. The quality of employment outcomes achieved by DBVI consumers was overwhelmingly noted as being very good. Consumers are prepared for in-demand jobs that are high in pay and career-level. These outcomes reflect the agency-wide belief in the abilities and capabilities of people with blindness. DBVI staff have high expectations for their consumers and work hard to convey those expectations to the individuals they serve.
4. DBVI shifted and adapted to virtual service delivery quickly and efficiently as a result of the pandemic.

5. DBVI and VRCBVI were very creative in the development of virtual training, and the new platforms allowed the agency to reach many more individuals than they had when providing training in-person only. Outreach and training, especially for youth, increased significantly as a result of the shift to virtual training. DBVI has been recognized nationally among VR programs for the programs they have created during the pandemic.
6. The community awareness of DBVI is lacking in many areas of the state and needs to increase.

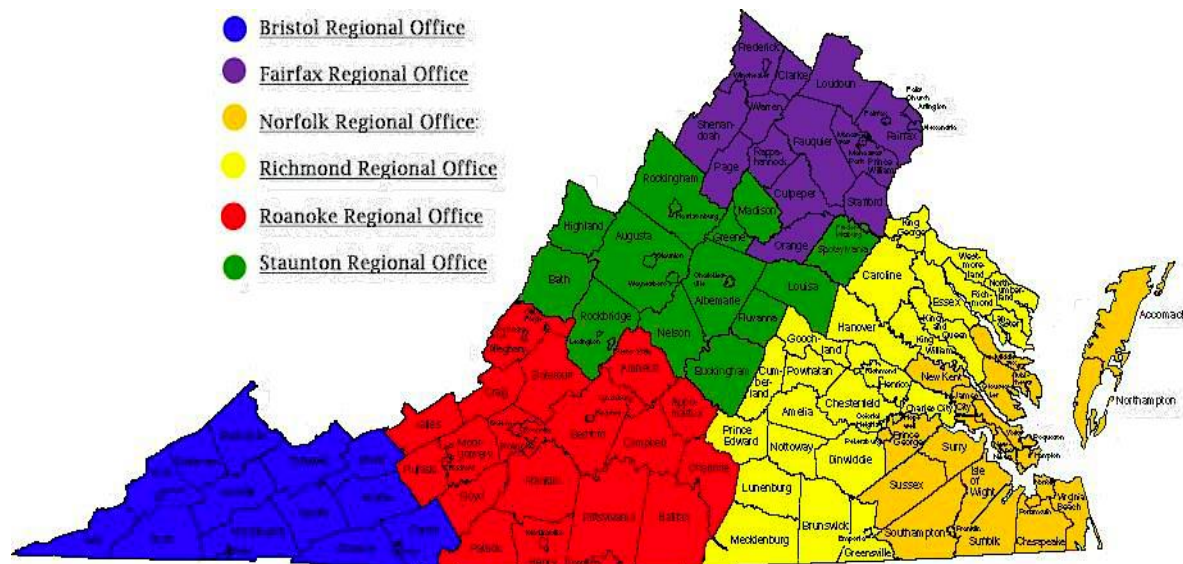
***NATIONAL, STATE, LOCAL AND AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA
RELATED TO OVERALL AGENCY PERFORMANCE***

The project team gathered data from national and state data sets to provide information to DBVI and to interested parties related to population, disability prevalence, income, poverty, educational attainment, unemployment and labor force participation in Virginia. Where available, we have included information specific to the six Regions identified by DBVI as their service areas. The project team is hopeful that this information will provide DBVI and their partners with data that can guide resource allocation and future planning.

General Trends of DBVI with State and National Comparisons

Geographic Composition

The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) divides the State into six service regions, with a regional office located within each designated area. Virginia government areas are divided into 95 counties and 38 independent cities. It is important to note that the State’s independent cities are not legally part of the county where the city is located and are treated as independent equivalents to counties. The data calculated for this report is based on the county and city entities as determined by State and local government agencies.



An alpha-numeric code has been applied to each regional office for ease of reference in reading this report.

Table 2

Regional Office Codes

Regional Office	Code
Bristol	RO1
Fairfax	RO2
Norfolk	RO3
Richmond	RO4
Roanoke	RO5
Staunton	RO6

Population

Population (raw number of people in area) and population density (number of people per square mile of land) provide a picture of where consumers may be located in the State and assists for developing service delivery strategies (i.e., DBVI office locations, number of staff members) in a region.

In 2021, Virginia ranked as the 12th most populous state in the Nation and makes up 2.6% of the United States' population. Table 3 contains the general population data for the state of Virginia.

Table 3

Local Area Population for Virginia: 2019 Estimates

Area	Total Population	Percent Rate of VA Population
United States	328,239,523	-----
Virginia	8,535,519	VA = 2.6% of US Pop.
RO1	376,114	4.4%
RO2	3,085,696	36.2%
RO3	1,874,871	22.0%
RO4	1,438,680	16.9%
RO5	1,007,374	11.8%
RO6	752,784	8.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties in Virginia: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019 and the World Population Review online.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines urban areas as “densely developed residential, commercial, and other non-residential areas” and defines rural areas as “areas not included in urban areas.” The total square miles for the State are 42,775, comprised of 39,490 square miles of land and 3,285 square miles of water.

In 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that approximately 6.8% of Virginia's total land area is classified as urban (approximately 2,665 square miles) and 93.3% of Virginia's land space is

comprised of rural areas (approximately 36,825 square miles). The report stated that approximately 75.5% of Virginia’s total population resides in urban areas and 24.6% of the population resides in rural areas. Thirty-one counties have greater than 99.5 percent of the people residing in rural areas. Table 4 denotes these counties.

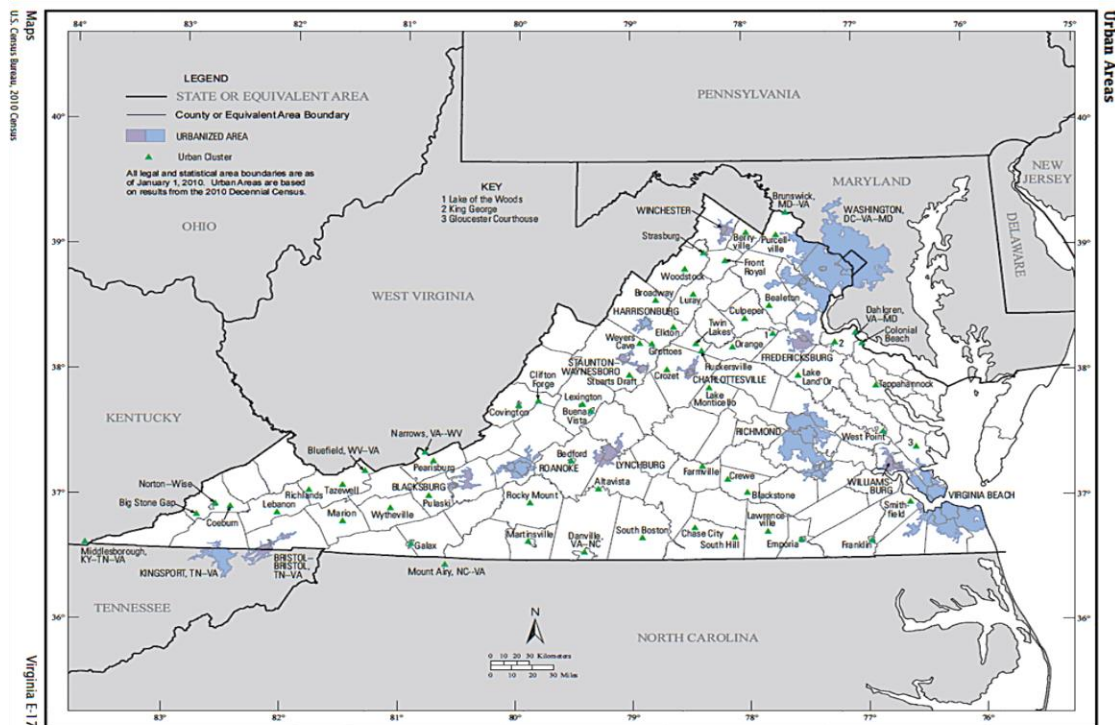
Table 4
Counties with 99.5 Percent and Higher Rural Population

RO	Counties with 99.5 Percent and Higher Rural Population
RO1	Bland, Buchanan, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee
RO2	Rappahannock
RO3	Accomack, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northampton, Surry, Sussex
RO4	Amelia, Charles City County, King and Queen, Lancaster, Lunenburg, Northumberland, Powhatan, Richmond County
RO5	Appomattox, Charlotte, Craig, Floyd
RO6	Bath, Buckingham, Highland, Louisa, Madison, Nelson

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

The Census Bureau defines an urbanized area as having 50,000 or more people and an urban cluster as having at least 2,500 people and less than 50,000 people. Virginia has 75 urban areas: 14 urbanized areas and 61 urban clusters. It is essential to note that 65 of the urban areas are entirely in the State and ten urban areas are partly in the State. Urban areas that are partly in the State share land space with the bordering states of Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Map 1 denotes the locations of the urban areas and clusters.

Map 1
Urban Areas and Clusters



The location of the regional office and the distance the consumer travels to the regional office influences the consumer's access to DBVI services. Table 5 identifies the counties and independent cities in each region in addition to the average mileage and travel times to each regional office from the "center" of the specified county and city. The data is classified from highest number of miles to lowest number of miles to the regional office. The information is presented to help inform DBVI as it engages in strategic planning for the future.

Table 5
Distance and Travel Times to the Regional Office

Travel to Bristol RO (RO1)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Galax city	106	1 hour 47 mins	Dickenson	65.4	1 hour 28 mins
Carroll	105	1 hour 36 mins	Norton city	63.7	1 hour 15 mins
Bland	84	1 hour 19 mins	Lee	57.8	1 hour 16 mins
Grayson	81.6	1 hour 31 mins	Smyth	44	46 mins
Buchanan	74.3	1 hour 40 mins	Russell	43.6	1 hour
Wythe	69.9	1 hour 7 mins	Scott	33.4	54 mins
Wise	69.7	1 hour 24 mins	Washington	21.8	31 mins
Tazewell	69.3	1 hour 19 mins	Bristol city	0.4	9 mins
Travel to Fairfax RO (RO2)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Shenandoah	80.9	1 hour 15 mins	Loudoun	33.4	41 mins
Frederick	79.3	1 hour 17 mins	Fauquier	28.2	35 mins
Page	79	1 hour 29 mins	Alexandria city	19.3	32 mins
Orange	69.9	1 hour 24 mins	Prince William	17.5	22 mins
Winchester city	61.6	1 hour 11 mins	Arlington	16.6	26 mins
Warren	59.3	1 hour 3 mins	Manassas city	13.1	25 mins
Clarke	53.7	57 mins	Falls Church city	12.2	20 mins
Rappahannock	53.5	1 hour 6 mins	Manassas Park city	10.9	20 mins
Culpeper	51.4	1 hour 1 min	Fairfax	7	20 mins
Stafford	37.6	51 mins	Fairfax city	1.5	5 mins
Travel to Norfolk RO (RO3)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Hopewell city	102	1 hour 40 mins	Williamsburg city	48.2	55 mins
Middlesex	77.5	1 hour 31 mins	York	39.7	53 mins

Mathews	75.8	1 hour 30 mins	Isle of Wight	39.6	49 mins
Sussex	74.4	1 hour 26 mins	Northampton	34.3	46 mins
Accomack	74.2	1 hour 31 mins	Poquoson city	31.9	42 mins
Prince George	73.1	1 hour 26 mins	Newport News city	28.5	35 mins
New Kent	71	1 hour 12 mins	Suffolk city	25.7	32 mins
Southampton	61.1	1 hour 7 mins	Hampton city	19.7	26 mins
Gloucester	58.1	1 hour 10 mins	Virginia Beach city	12.8	19 mins
Surry	57.1	1 hour 20 mins	Chesapeake city	11.4	15 mins
James City County	55.4	1 hour 5 mins	Portsmouth city	8.8	14 mins
Franklin city	49.2	56 mins	Norfolk city	6.9	12 mins
Travel to Richmond RO (RO4)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Mecklenburg	108	1 hour 48 mins	Essex	46.1	1 hour 3 mins
Greensville	81.6	1 hour 19 mins	Amelia	44.6	56 mins
Lunenburg	80.8	1 hour 36 mins	Caroline	40.1	46 mins
Brunswick	76.2	1 hour 18 mins	King and Queen	37.8	51 mins
Prince Edward	74.2	1 hour 26 mins	Goochland	36.8	40 mins
Lancaster	72.5	1 hour 31 mins	Powhatan	35.3	42 mins
Northumberland	72.2	1 hour 31 mins	Petersburg city	31.2	38 mins
Emporia city	72	1 hour 13 mins	Charles City County	30.3	39 mins
Westmoreland	61.8	1 hour 20 mins	Colonial Heights city	30	36 mins
Nottoway	60.2	1 hour 10 mins	Chesterfield	23	33 mins
Cumberland	55.3	1 hour 5 mins	King William	20.8	30 mins
King George	54.6	1 hour	Hanover	15.7	23 mins
Richmond	54.6	1 hour 12 mins	Henrico	10.6	24 mins
Dinwiddie	51.9	56 mins	Richmond city	8.4	14 mins
Travel to Roanoke RO (RO5)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Halifax	88.8	1 hour 56 mins	Henry	52	1 hour 1 min
Charlotte	88.4	1 hour 59 mins	Martinsville city	48.9	1 hour 4 mins
Appomattox	77.5	1 hour 28 mins	Radford city	46.9	49 mins
Amherst	74.4	1 hour 22 mins	Montgomery	41	44 mins
Danville city	71.6	1 hour 35 mins	Floyd	40.2	56 mins

Patrick	67.7	1 hour 24 mins	Craig	38.8	53 mins
Giles	63.4	1 hour 8 mins	Botetourt	33.8	44 mins
Alleghany	63	1 hour 28 mins	Bedford	31.4	49 mins
Covington city	62.3	1 hour 17 mins	Franklin	30.2	37 mins
Pittsylvania	61.3	1 hour 17 mins	Roanoke	18.4	26 mins
Lynchburg city	57.4	1 hour 12 mins	Salem city	12.4	16 mins
Pulaski	54.6	55 mins	Roanoke city	0.8	4 mins
Campbell	54.4	1 hour 18 mins			
Travel to Staunton RO (RO6)					
Highest			Lowest		
County/city	Miles	Minutes	County/city	Miles	Minutes
Fredericksburg city	99	2 hours 3 mins	Buena Vista city	40.6	41 mins
Spotsylvania	92	1 hour 44 mins	Nelson	39.8	47 mins
Buckingham	66.2	1 hour 23 mins	Rockingham	39.1	46 mins
Louisa	66	1 hour 7 mins	Lexington city	37	38 mins
Madison	65.3	1 hour 17 mins	Charlottesville city	34.3	38 mins
Bath	60	1 hour 14 mins	Harrisonburg city	28	31 mins
Fluvanna	54.9	1 hour	Albemarle	25.2	30 mins
Highland	53.8	1 hour 15 mins	Augusta	19.2	25 mins
Greene	51	1 hour 8 mins	Waynesboro city	6.6	13 mins
Rockbridge	45.4	48 mins	Staunton city	5.3	12 mins

Source: Table developed by Interwork Staff using information from distancefrom.com and googlemaps.com

Report Note:

Several tables throughout this report contain data from the United States Census Bureau. Due to the covid pandemic, it is the recommendation of the Bureau to utilize 2019 data. Unless otherwise noted, data for the United States and Virginia is taken from the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 1-year estimates and 1-year Supplemental estimates. Data for the service regions is taken from the U.S. Census Bureau 2014-2019 5-year estimates.

Age, Income, and Home Value

Understanding a population’s age composition provides insight into an area’s changing phenomena, and current and future social and economic challenges. Income is the gauge often used to determine well-being. Home value provides a picture of the housing situation in the area and insight into the local economic status.

Table 6 provides statistics for median age, median household income, and median home values for the U.S. and the state of Virginia. The median working age for all of the regional areas equal or exceed the National average. The State’s median working age is 0.1 percentage point higher than the median working age average of RO6.

The median household income for the State exceeds the National average by over \$10,700. RO5, which has four completely rural counties, has a median household income average that falls below the National and State rural averages by more than \$14,200. The median household income for RO2 exceeds the averages of the other regional areas by more than \$27,600 and exceeds Virginia's urban average by roughly \$11,400.

Thirteen of the 16 counties in RO1 are considered more than 50 percent rural. The median home value for RO1 is the lowest in the state (\$101,656). RO1's median home value falls below the National rural average by \$89,160 and is lower than the State's rural average by \$122,963. RO2 is considered over 68 percent urban and has a median home value average that is the highest in the state (\$392,365). RO2's median home value exceeds the National urban average by \$134,926 and exceeds the State's urban average by \$70,092.

Table 6 provides statistics for Median Age, Median Household Income, and Median Home Value.

Table 6

Median Age/Median Household Income/Median Home Values

<i>Geographic Area</i>	<i>Median Age</i>	<i>Median Working Age 16 to 64</i>	<i>Median Household Income</i>	<i>Household Income Ranges</i>	<i>*Home Value 2019</i>	<i>Home Value Ranges</i>
US	38.5	39.6	\$65,712		\$240,463	
US-Urban	37.4	38.9	\$66,047	-----	\$257,439	-----
US-Rural	43.6	42.8	\$64,314		\$190,816	
Virginia	38.5	39.7	\$76,456		\$288,833	
VA-Urban	36.6	38.6	\$80,602	-----	\$322,273	-----
VA-Rural	46.4	43.8	\$66,149		\$224,619	
RO #1	45	41.7	\$39,007	\$29,000 - \$49,364	\$101,656	\$72,300 - \$151,800
RO #2	39.6	41.4	\$92,003	\$51,792 - \$142,299	\$392,365	\$169,200 - \$789,300
RO #3	41.1	40.8	\$64,387	\$39,030 - \$97,118	\$228,375	\$122,900 - \$340,500
RO #4	43.5	42	\$59,031	\$27,063 - \$94,274	\$198,511	\$108,100 - \$375,200
RO #5	42.8	41.1	\$50,052	\$34,371 - \$71,110	\$147,988	\$72,900 - \$227,700
RO #6	40.9	39.6	\$58,349	\$32,455 - \$88,628	\$224,880	\$126,600 - \$367,200

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates Source and U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. *Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 1-year Estimates or 1-year Supplemental Estimates Detailed Tables and U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Poverty

Poverty is defined as not having enough money to meet basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter. Examining poverty in an area, in addition to income, provides more insight into determining the well-being of an area's population.

Radford city, an urban city in RO5, has a significantly higher poverty rate than the U.S. urban average by 31.5 percent and also has a significantly higher poverty rate than the State's urban average by 33.8 percent. Loudoun County, in RO2, has the lowest average poverty rate (3.3%), which is significantly lower than the National average by 8.2 percent and is lower than the State's average by 6.1 percentage points. Based on the 2012 Census report, Loudoun County has roughly 87.4 percent of the population residing in urban areas and 12.6 percent of the population residing in rural areas. When compared to National and State urban poverty rates, Loudoun County's poverty rate is significantly lower by roughly 6 to 8.5 percentage points.

Table 7 presents the average poverty rate and the range of poverty rates for each regional office area. Poverty rates are calculated for the civilian noninstitutionalized population ages 18 to 64 years by averaging data collected from 2019 U.S. Census 1-year estimates or from the 2014-2019 5-year estimates. It is important to note prior to reviewing Table 7, that the State's lowest and highest poverty levels are based on 5-year Census estimates.

Table 7

Poverty Rates: Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population Ages 18 to 64 Years

Area	Average Poverty Rate	Lowest Level	Highest Level
US	11.5%	New Hampshire 7.6%	Mississippi 18.0%
US-Urban	11.8%	-----	-----
US-Rural	10.3%	-----	-----
VA	9.4%	Loudoun 3.3%	Radford city 43.3%
VA-Urban	9.5%	-----	-----
VA-Rural	9.4%	-----	-----
RO1	20.0%	Bland 9.0%	Buchanan 28.8%
RO2	7.8%	Loudoun 3.3%	Winchester city 15.2%
RO3	11.6%	York 4.3%	Williamsburg city 26.6%
RO4	12.9%	King George 4.7%	Petersburg city 22.2%
RO5	15.6%	Botetourt 6.0%	Radford city 43.3%
RO6	15.3%	Fluvanna 6.2%	Lexington city 35.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Internet Accessibility

Access to fast and reliable high-speed internet service offers the opportunity to participate equally in society and engage in the global community.

Important for DBVI consumers is access to the internet. Past studies have concluded that rural communities lack infrastructure and access to internet and satellite networks.

Over 78 percent of households in Virginia's regional office areas have one or more computing devices and over 68 percent of the RO households have an internet subscription. RO1, where the majority of the population reside in rural communities, has a significantly lower rate of desktop/laptop only ownership when compared to National and State rural area rates. RO1 also has a significantly lower smartphone ownership average and less than 69% of RO1 households are without any type of internet access.

Tables 8 and 9 provides a picture of the availability of virtual accessibility in the U.S. and Virginia (including urban and rural areas), and for each of the ROs.

Table 8

Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions: U.S. and V.A., including Urban and Rural Areas

	US	US -- Urban	US -- Rural	VA	VA -- Urban	VA -- Rural
Total households	122,802,852	98,754,458	24,048,394	3,191,847	2,392,926	798,921
TYPES OF COMPUTERS						
Has one or more types of computing devices:	92.9%	93.4%	90.6%	93.0%	94.7%	88.1%
Desktop or laptop	77.3%	78.3%	73.5%	79.7%	82.4%	71.5%
Desktop or laptop with no other type of computing device	3.7%	3.4%	4.7%	3.5%	3.2%	4.5%
Smartphone	86.6%	87.6%	82.6%	87.0%	89.2%	80.4%
Smartphone with no other type of computing device	9.8%	9.6%	10.8%	8.3%	7.6%	10.5%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer	61.5%	62.2%	58.5%	64.8%	67.2%	57.6%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer with no other type of computing device	0.9%	0.8%	1.1%	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%
Other computer	2.4%	2.5%	2.0%	3.1%	3.4%	2.1%
Other computer with no other type of computing device	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
No computer	7.1%	6.6%	9.4%	7.0%	5.3%	11.9%
TYPE OF INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS						
With an Internet subscription:	86.6%	87.6%	82.7%	86.9%	89.6%	78.7%
Dial-up with no other type of Internet subscription	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Broadband of any type	86.4%	87.4%	82.3%	86.7%	89.5%	78.4%
Cellular data plan	78.0%	79.4%	72.3%	79.3%	82.7%	69.4%
Cellular data plan with no other type of Internet subscription	11.8%	11.0%	15.3%	11.6%	9.8%	17.1%
Broadband such as cable, fiber optic or DSL	70.8%	73.9%	57.8%	71.2%	78.1%	50.4%
Satellite Internet service	6.5%	5.3%	11.4%	6.0%	4.0%	11.7%
Without an Internet subscription	13.4%	12.4%	17.3%	13.1%	10.4%	21.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Table 9

Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions: Regional Office Service Areas 1 - 6

	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6
Total households	154,374	1,070,621	703,133	539,816	405,406	277,695
TYPES OF COMPUTERS						
Has one or more types of computing devices:	78.9%	95.7%	92.0%	89.7%	85.1%	89.7%
Desktop or laptop	61.7%	89.5%	79.8%	77.4%	70.5%	78.2%
Desktop or laptop with no other type of computing device	9.1%	4.8%	5.8%	6.5%	7.9%	7.9%
Smartphone	63.9%	87.9%	82.5%	79.5%	72.9%	77.7%
Smartphone with no other type of computing device	9.3%	3.2%	6.9%	7.1%	9.1%	6.3%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer	47.5%	71.5%	62.1%	59.1%	51.6%	57.3%
Tablet or other portable wireless computer with no other type of computing device	1.8%	0.4%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	0.7%
Other computer	2.3%	4.8%	3.2%	2.8%	3.9%	3.4%
Other computer with no other type of computing device	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
No computer	21.1%	4.3%	8.0%	10.3%	14.9%	10.3%
TYPE OF INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS						
With an Internet subscription:	68.4%	92.0%	84.3%	81.6%	76.0%	81.0%
Dial-up with no other type of Internet subscription	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%
Broadband of any type	67.8%	91.7%	84.0%	81.2%	75.4%	80.5%
Cellular data plan	47.8%	78.1%	70.0%	66.6%	58.7%	64.2%
Cellular data plan with no other type of Internet subscription	10.7%	6.4%	11.4%	10.3%	12.2%	13.8%
Broadband such as cable, fiber optic or DSL	50.9%	82.6%	69.7%	66.2%	56.3%	60.3%
Satellite Internet service	8.0%	4.8%	4.6%	6.3%	8.4%	7.1%
Without an Internet subscription	31.6%	8.0%	15.7%	18.4%	24.0%	19.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education completed in terms of the highest degree, or the highest level of schooling completed. Level of education influences the job market, both in public and private sectors.

Table 10 provides rates for both High School Graduation and Education at or above a Bachelor's degree for the State's total population ages 25 years and over. The National and State data reflects the 2019 U.S. Census 1-year estimates. Data for the regional service areas is taken from the U.S. Census 2014-2019 5-year estimates and are calculated by adding the total population data for each RO and dividing by population data for each category.

High School Graduation Rates:

The National average for the total population over the age of 25 whose highest level of educational attainment is a high school diploma or its equivalent, is 26.9 percent and the State's average is 23.6 percent. Three RO service areas have averages that are 2 to 8.5 percentage points higher than the National rates. The rate for attaining a high school diploma or its equivalent in RO1 is significantly higher than the State average by almost 12 percent.

Education Level at or above Bachelor's Degree:

The National and State averages for the total population over the age of 25 whose highest level of educational attainment is a Bachelor's degree is 20.3% and 22.4%, respectively. RO3's rate for achieving a Bachelor's degree exceeds the National rate by 8.1 percent and exceeds the State average by 6 percent. RO1's rate is the lowest in the State (10.2%) and is lower than the State's rate by 12.2 percentage points and lower than the National average by 10.1 percentage points.

Table 10

Educational Attainment: Population 25 years and over

Geo-graphic Area	HS Graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college, no degree	Assoc. degree	Bach. degree	Graduate or professional degree	Percent HS Graduate or higher	Percent Bachelor's degree or higher
US	26.9%	20.0%	8.6%	20.3%	12.8%	88.6%	33.1%
VA	23.6%	18.9%	8.0%	22.4%	17.2%	90.0%	39.6%
RO1	35.4%	20.4%	9.3%	10.2%	5.8%	81.0%	15.9%
RO2	16.6%	15.0%	6.3%	28.4%	25.3%	91.6%	53.7%
RO3	25.6%	24.4%	9.7%	19.1%	12.2%	90.9%	31.3%
RO4	26.0%	20.0%	7.4%	22.0%	13.6%	89.0%	35.6%
RO5	31.4%	20.9%	9.6%	15.3%	10.1%	87.4%	25.4%
RO6	28.9%	18.8%	6.6%	19.1%	14.9%	88.3%	34.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Disabilities Under the Age of 65

In addition to understanding the general trends of a geographic area, it is also important to gain knowledge of the State's structure of the disability population. In this section, demographic data regarding the State's disability population with reference to age, disability type, income, poverty and education are detailed with comparisons to the Nation and to local regions.

Disability Status

The estimated average for the number of people with disabilities residing in the Nation in 2019 is 12.7 percent. The State's percentage is lower than the National average by .5 percent, averaging at 12.2 percent. Of the civilian noninstitutionalized population ages 18 to 64 years in urban Virginia, 8.7 percent of the residents report a disability, which is significantly lower than rural Virginia's average of 13.3 percent, and roughly 1 percentage point lower than the Nation's urban average for the same age group. The average percentage rate for individuals 18 to 64 years reporting a disability in RO2 is recorded at 6.0 percent, which is lower than the State average by approximately 3.7 percent.

Disability Status estimates for the Nation, State and ROs are provided in Table 11. Disability Status estimates are calculated for the Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population (TCNP) by the U.S. Census Bureau, a population group which excludes those in the military and those residing in institutions. The RO averages for each category are calculated by dividing the total number of individuals within the RO who report a disability by the total number of civilian noninstitutionalized individuals residing in the RO.

Table 11

Disability Status: Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population

Geographic Area	With a disability	Under 18 years with a disability	18 to 64 years with a disability
US	12.7%	4.3%	10.3%
	Urban 12.2%	Urban 4.2%	Urban 9.8%
	Rural 15.0%	Rural 4.6%	Rural 12.5%
VA	12.2%	4.3%	9.7%
	Urban 10.9%	Urban 4.0%	Urban 8.7%
	Rural 16.2%	Rural 5.5%	Rural 13.3%
RO1	23.3%	6.6%	21.3%
RO2	7.9%	2.8%	6.0%
RO3	13.1%	4.8%	11.1%
RO4	13.0%	5.0%	10.6%
RO5	14.7%	4.8%	11.9%
RO6	12.1%	4.1%	9.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Disability Types

Knowledge of the types of disabilities reported by area residents helps VR programs anticipate and prepare for meeting service needs and assisting the consumer to obtain necessary accommodations relevant to the local population.

The data indicates that the State rates for disability types in the categories of “population under 18 years” and “population 18 to 64” vary by less than 1 percent when compared to the National rates for the same age groups. All disability type averages in RO1 for the ages 18 to 64 rank the highest when compared to the other regional office service areas. Four RO service areas have over 4 percent of individuals with disabilities ages 18 to 64 reporting cognitive disability. Important to note that mental health impairments are not included in the ACS data.

Disability types are classified into six categories and detailed by age in the U.S. Census data. Tables 12 and 13 provide specific data for the total civilian noninstitutionalized population. Table categories include the population under 18 years and the population ages 18 to 64. Disability type percentages are calculated by dividing the total number of individuals reporting the disability type within the area by the number of noninstitutionalized civilians residing in the area.

Table 12

Disability Types: U.S., V.A., including Urban and Rural Areas

Disability Type	Percent with a Disability					
	US	US-Urban	US-Rural	VA	VA-Urban	VA-Rural
With a hearing difficulty	3.6%	3.2%	4.9%	3.5%	3.0%	5.0%
Population under 18 years	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%
Population 18 to 64 years	2.0%	1.7%	2.9%	2.0%	1.7%	3.0%
With a vision difficulty	2.3%	2.2%	2.7%	2.2%	2.0%	3.0%
Population under 18 years	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Population 18 to 64 years	1.9%	1.8%	2.3%	1.9%	1.6%	2.6%
With a cognitive difficulty	5.2%	5.1%	5.6%	4.7%	4.3%	5.7%
Population under 18 years	4.4%	4.4%	4.6%	4.4%	4.1%	5.6%
Population 18 to 64 years	4.6%	4.5%	5.1%	4.0%	3.7%	5.0%
With an ambulatory difficulty	6.9%	6.6%	8.1%	6.4%	5.7%	8.7%
Population under 18 years	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%
Population 18 to 64 years	4.7%	4.4%	6.0%	4.3%	3.6%	6.3%
With a self-care difficulty	2.6%	2.6%	2.8%	2.5%	2.3%	3.1%
Population under 18 years	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.0%	1.4%
Population 18 to 64 years	1.8%	1.7%	2.1%	1.6%	1.5%	2.2%
With an independent living difficulty	5.9%	5.8%	6.4%	5.6%	4.9%	7.7%
Population 18 to 64 years	3.7%	3.6%	4.4%	3.6%	3.0%	5.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 13

Disability Types: Regional Office Service Areas

Disability Type	Percent with a Disability					
	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6
With a hearing difficulty	7.5%	2.3%	3.3%	3.3%	4.0%	3.7%
Population under 18 years	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.4%
Population 18 to 64 years	4.5%	1.3%	1.2%	1.7%	2.1%	2.0%
With a vision difficulty	4.9%	1.4%	2.6%	2.3%	2.6%	2.1%
Population under 18 years	1.2%	0.5%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%	0.5%
Population 18 to 64 years	4.5%	1.1%	1.4%	1.9%	2.0%	1.5%
With a cognitive difficulty	8.7%	2.8%	4.7%	5.0%	5.5%	4.5%
Population under 18 years	6.4%	2.8%	4.8%	5.2%	5.0%	4.3%
Population 18 to 64 years	8.8%	2.4%	2.6%	4.6%	5.3%	4.0%
With an ambulatory difficulty	13.2%	3.7%	6.7%	6.5%	7.9%	0.6%
Population under 18 years	1.1%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%

Population 18 to 64 years	11.8%	2.4%	3.1%	4.9%	6.1%	4.2%
With a self-care difficulty	4.6%	1.5%	2.5%	2.5%	3.1%	2.4%
Population under 18 years	1.8%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.4%	1.1%
Population 18 to 64 years	3.7%	0.9%	1.1%	1.8%	2.4%	1.5%
With an independent living difficulty	9.4%	2.7%	4.5%	4.4%	5.3%	4.3%
Population 18 to 64 years	9.4%	2.0%	2.3%	3.6%	4.5%	3.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Disablement Index

The environment contributes to the process of an individual’s ability to engage in meaningful tasks, by either enabling participation (enablement) or creating barriers to participation (disablement). An example, blindness or having serious vision difficulty even when wearing glasses (= vision disability) may be more disabling in areas without a mass transit system. Researchers at the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR) created the “Disablement Index” which is designed to take a snapshot of the disabling nature of one’s local environment.

The Disablement Index examines the reporting of an independent living disability among people who also reported a hearing, vision, ambulatory, and/or cognitive disability. In the 2020 Annual Disability Compendium, the Disablement Index for civilians in the United States with hearing, vision, ambulatory, and/or cognitive disabilities ages 18-64 living in community settings who also reported an independent living disability in the year 2019 was 34 percent. Researchers at the NIDILRR graciously calculated State data by request. Table 14 contains the Disablement Index for the 50 States and the District of Columbia in ranking order from lowest index rate to the highest.

Table 14

Disablement Index: Ranking Order – Lowest to Highest

Disablement Index – United States					
Ranking Low to High			Ranking Low to High		
Rank	State	Index	Rank	State	Index
1	South Dakota	19.8	27	Georgia	33.4
2	North Dakota	26.9	28	Minnesota	33.5
3	Idaho	28.7	29	West Virginia	33.6
4	Wyoming	29.3	30	North Carolina	34
5	Colorado	29.9	31	Virginia	34
6	Maryland	30	32	Montana	34.1
7	Alaska	30.1	33	Massachusetts	34.2
8	Nebraska	30.3	34	Arkansas	34.3
9	Iowa	30.5	35	Florida	34.3
10	Delaware	30.7	36	California	34.4
11	Utah	30.8	37	New Mexico	34.4

Disablement Index – United States					
Ranking Low to High			Ranking Low to High		
Rank	State	Index	Rank	State	Index
12	Wisconsin	31.5	38	Pennsylvania	34.5
13	Alabama	31.9	39	Michigan	34.6
14	Nevada	32.1	40	Mississippi	34.7
15	Kansas	32.2	41	Indiana	34.8
16	Arizona	32.3	42	South Carolina	34.8
17	Tennessee	32.4	43	Vermont	34.8
18	New Hampshire	32.5	44	Illinois	34.9
19	Connecticut	32.7	45	New York	35.5
20	Oklahoma	32.7	46	Maine	35.9
21	Oregon	32.7	47	Missouri	36
22	Texas	32.7	48	New Jersey	36.2
23	Washington	32.7	49	Hawaii	36.8
24	Louisiana	32.8	50	Rhode Island	39
25	Ohio	32.9	51	District of Columbia	41.2
26	Kentucky	33.2	NA	United States	34.0

Citation: Houtenville, A. and Rafal, M. (2020). Annual Report on People with Disabilities in America: 2020. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Institute on Disability.

Virginia ranks in the 31st position (lowest to highest rate scale) when examining how many individuals who reported a hearing, vision, ambulatory and/or a cognitive disability also reported an independent living disability (31.5%). South Dakota ranked in the first position, with less than 20 percent of individuals who reported a specific disability and also reported an independent living disability. Over 40 percent of individuals residing in the District of Columbia who reported a specific physical disability also reported an independent living disability.

When examining the Disablement Index, observations noted include: 1) South Dakota's population is roughly 56.7% urban and 43.4 percent rural while the District of Columbia is entirely urban; 2) Rhode Island and Hawaii are noted to have over 90% urban populations and higher disablement indexes; and 3) The top four states with the lowest ranking scores have urban populations of less than 71% while the four states with the highest disablement index have urban populations of over 90 percent. More in-depth analysis of the Disablement Index to State urban/rural population rates is needed to determine a correlation between Disablement Index rates and urban/rural population rates.

Income and Disability

People with disabilities in the United States earn approximately \$11,992 per year less than individuals without a disability. In the State of Virginia, people with disabilities earn roughly \$14,179 less than people without disabilities. Females with disabilities in RO5 have the lowest earnings in the State, with an average that is lower than the National average for females with a disability by \$3,175 and lower than the State average by \$5,286. In RO2, the median earnings for

males with disabilities is \$43,671, which exceeds the State and the National averages for males with disabilities by more than \$11,850. When examining data for the individual ROs, males with disabilities in RO2 make \$17,661 more than males in RO5. Tables 15 and 16 provide statistics for median earnings (income) for people with disabilities age 16 and over.

Table 15

Median Earnings for People with Disabilities 16 Years and Older: US and VI

	US	US – Urban	US – Rural	VA	VA - Urban	VA - Rural
Total:	\$36,595	\$36,676	\$36,251	\$40,390	\$40,976	\$37,175
With a disability:	\$25,270	\$25,159	\$25,687	\$26,774	\$26,930	\$26,367
Male	\$30,193	\$29,618	\$31,360	\$31,805	\$31,651	\$32,215
Female	\$21,185	\$21,428	\$20,166	\$23,296	\$24,184	\$21,560
No disability:	\$37,262	\$37,334	\$36,952	\$40,953	\$41,509	\$38,226
Male	\$43,568	\$43,040	\$45,308	\$47,655	\$49,883	\$44,670
Female	\$31,403	\$31,670	\$30,272	\$34,844	\$35,608	\$31,709

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Table 16

Median Earnings for People with Disabilities 16 Years and Older: ROs

	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6
Total:	\$28,766	\$46,084	\$34,826	\$33,879	\$30,431	\$30,800
With a disability:	\$22,148	\$34,393	\$27,683	\$24,964	\$20,681	\$24,603
Male	\$26,139	\$43,671	\$36,125	\$26,032	\$26,010	\$31,849
Female	\$20,622	\$29,865	\$22,253	\$24,808	\$18,010	\$20,470
No disability:	\$29,652	\$46,826	\$35,530	\$34,481	\$31,128	\$31,262
Male	\$34,499	\$56,316	\$42,663	\$39,817	\$36,580	\$36,606
Female	\$24,491	\$38,197	\$29,516	\$29,773	\$26,421	\$26,527

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Poverty and Disability

According to Cornell University Disability Statistics, in the year 2018, an estimated 26.0% of non-institutionalized persons aged 21 to 64 years with a disability in the United States were living below the poverty line. In Virginia, the rate was 22.5%. The poverty rates by disability type in Virginia are roughly 3 to 5 points lower than the National averages except for visual disability where there is less than one percentage point difference. Individuals with visual and independent living disabilities had the highest poverty rates in the State. Table 17 contains the 2018 Poverty by Disability Type rates for the Nation and State.

Table 17

Poverty by Disability Type for Non-institutionalized Civilians Ages 21 - 64

Poverty and Disability Type	United States	Virginia
No Disability	10.0%	8.1%
Any Disability	26.0%	22.5%
Visual	27.2%	26.9%
Hearing	19.6%	14.7%
Ambulatory	29.5%	26.1%
Cognitive	31.3%	26.4%
Self-care	31.6%	26.5%
Independent Living	31.2%	26.9%

<https://disabilitystatistics.org/>**Educational Attainment of Individuals with Disabilities**

Tables 18 and 19 contain educational attainment rates for individuals with disabilities for the total civilian noninstitutionalized population (TCNP) ages 25 and older. Data is available for 37 of the State's 133 counties and cities. Counties and cities with the lowest and highest disability population are listed in Table 18 in lieu of a regional office service area average. Data for the Nation, State and Fairfax County is taken from the 2019 one-year estimates and the remaining data is taken from the 2014-2019 five-year U.S. Census Bureau estimates.

Table 18

Educational Attainment for Individuals with: US and Virginia

	United States			Virginia		
	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability
Population Age 25 and over	220,658,920	35,950,412	184,708,508	5,695,268	887,512	4,807,756
Less than high school graduate	11.2%	19.5%	9.6%	9.8%	19.7%	8.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	26.7%	33.8%	25.3%	23.6%	31.9%	22.0%
Some college or associate's degree	28.6%	28.5%	28.6%	26.7%	27.0%	26.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	33.5%	18.2%	36.5%	39.9%	21.5%	43.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Table 19

Educational Attainment for Individuals with Disabilities: Regional Office Service Areas

<i>RO</i>	<i>County/city</i>		<i>Population Age 25 and over</i>	<i>Less than high school graduate</i>	<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency)</i>	<i>Some college or associate's degree</i>	<i>Bachelor's degree or higher</i>
<i>RO1</i>	<i>Smyth County</i>	TCNP	21,857	16.1%	37.4%	31.6%	14.8%
		With a Disability	6,546	27.7%	39.5%	23.8%	9.0%
		No Disability	15,311	11.2%	36.5%	34.9%	17.3%
	<i>Washington County</i>	TCNP	39,045	14.2%	34.0%	28.7%	23.1%
		With a Disability	10,025	25.2%	34.5%	27.7%	12.6%
		No Disability	29,020	10.4%	33.9%	29.0%	26.8%
<i>RO2</i>	<i>Frederick County</i>	TCNP	58,619	10.7%	32.1%	28.6%	28.6%
		With a Disability	9,067	15.3%	39.4%	25.2%	20.1%
		No Disability	49,552	9.8%	30.8%	29.2%	30.2%
	<i>Fairfax County</i>	TCNP	770,978	7.4%	12.1%	18.3%	62.2%
		With a Disability	76,778	12.5%	19.8%	24.5%	43.2%
		No Disability	694,200	6.8%	11.3%	17.7%	64.3%
<i>RO3</i>	<i>James City County</i>	TCNP	52,982	4.7%	17.7%	26.7%	50.9%
		With a Disability	8,675	9.8%	23.8%	26.0%	40.4%
		No Disability	44,307	3.7%	16.4%	26.9%	53.0%
	<i>Virginia Beach city</i>	TCNP	289,847	6.6%	21.3%	35.9%	36.1%
		With a Disability	42,022	12.9%	29.6%	34.0%	23.5%
		No Disability	247,825	5.6%	19.9%	36.3%	38.3%
<i>RO4</i>	<i>Hanover County</i>	TCNP	72,655	6.8%	25.4%	27.9%	39.8%
		With a Disability	9,673	15.8%	33.9%	27.6%	22.7%
		No Disability	62,982	5.4%	24.1%	28.0%	42.5%
	<i>Henrico County</i>	TCNP	224,785	8.1%	21.1%	26.8%	44.0%
		With a Disability	31,378	16.4%	30.7%	30.4%	22.5%
		No Disability	193,407	6.7%	19.6%	26.2%	47.5%
<i>RO5</i>	<i>Danville city</i>	TCNP	27,446	17.4%	31.4%	33.1%	18.2%
		With a Disability	6,903	30.9%	30.0%	30.0%	9.1%
		No Disability	20,543	12.8%	31.9%	34.1%	21.2%
	<i>Roanoke city</i>	TCNP	68,847	13.6%	34.1%	28.8%	23.6%
		With a Disability	11,814	22.5%	38.7%	27.2%	11.5%
		No Disability	57,033	11.7%	33.1%	29.1%	26.1%

RO	County/city		Population Age 25 and over	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college or associate's degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
RO6	Albemarle County	TCNP	71,686	7.7%	15.6%	21.2%	55.6%
		With a Disability	8,205	16.3%	22.5%	23.2%	38.0%
		No Disability	63,481	6.6%	14.7%	20.9%	57.8%
	Spotsylvania County	TCNP	87,552	8.8%	29.5%	30.0%	31.7%
		With a Disability	13,014	15.9%	36.0%	25.8%	22.2%
		No Disability	74,538	7.6%	28.3%	30.7%	33.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 1-year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

With the exception of Danville city, individuals with disabilities complete high school at higher rates, ranging between 0.6 percent and 11.1 percent higher, than individuals without disabilities in Virginia. Three counties have bachelor's degree attainment rates that are significantly high, starting at 38 percent up to 43.2 percent, for people with disabilities. However, the bachelor's degree attainment rates for people with disabilities are between 8.3 to 25 percent lower than the rates for those without disabilities throughout the State.

General Trends of Employment, Occupations, Industries and Labor Force Participation for the Civilian Non-institutionalized Population

Local economies thrive based on employment, occupations, and industries available to area residents and the individuals' participation in the labor force. Knowledge of the local area labor force internet accessibility, employment rates, occupations, industries, and labor force participation facilitates helping consumers find local job opportunities and securing appropriate job placement.

The labor force includes all people classified in the civilian labor force, plus members of the U.S. Armed Forces (people on active duty with the United States Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard). The civilian labor force consists of people classified as employed or unemployed and actively looking for work. The labor force participation rate represents the proportion of the population that is in the labor force.

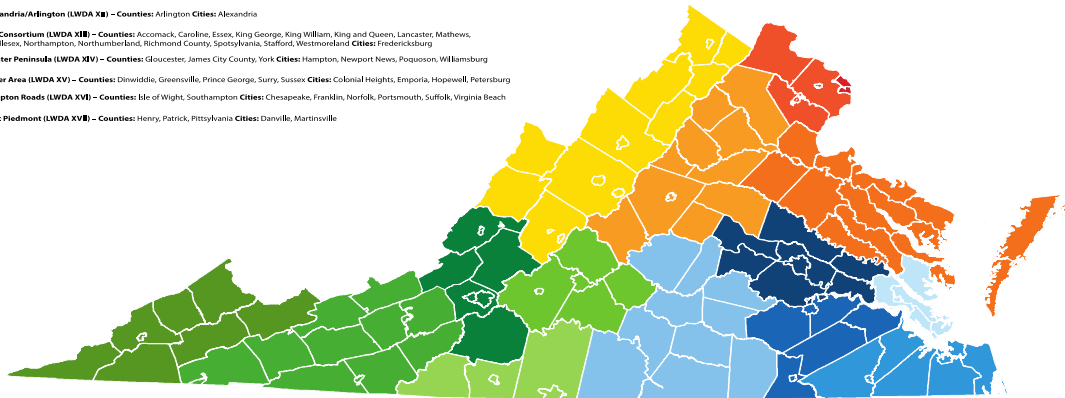
Local Workforce Areas

Virginia's Employment Commission Economic Information and Analytics Division publishes information on the State's labor market and trends. The Commission establishes the State's workforce development areas (LWDA). Virginia has fifteen workforce development areas. Map 2 contains the LWDA area structure. Table 20 contains detailed information comparing the LWDA and the RO service area structure. This information is presented to help inform DBVI as it engages in strategic planning for the future.

Map 2
Local Workforce Development Areas: State of Virginia

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs)

- **Southwestern Virginia (LWDA I)** – Counties: Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, Wise **Cities:** Norton
- **New River/Mt. Rogers (LWDA II)** – Counties: Bland, Carroll, Floyd, Giles, Grayson, Montgomery, Pulaski, Smyth, Washington, Wythe **Cities:** Bristol, Galax, Radford
- **Western Virginia (LWDA III)** – Counties: Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, Roanoke **Cities:** Covington, Roanoke, Salem
- **Shenandoah Valley (LWDA IV)** – Counties: Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Frederick, Highland, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Warren **Cities:** Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro, Winchester
- **Piedmont Workforce Network (LWDA VI)** – Counties: Albemarle, Culpeper, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Rappahannock **Cities:** Charlottesville
- **Region 2000/Central Virginia (LWDA VII)** – Counties: Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell **Cities:** Lynchburg
- **South Central (LWDA VIII)** – Counties: Amelia, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlottesville, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward
- **Capital Region Workforce Partnership (LWDA IX)** – Counties: Charles City County, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan **Cities:** Richmond
- **Northern Virginia (LWDA XI)** – Counties: Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William **Cities:** Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, Manassas Park
- **Alexandria/Arlington (LWDA XII)** – Counties: Arlington **Cities:** Alexandria
- **Bay Consortium (LWDA XIII)** – Counties: Accomack, Caroline, Essex, King George, King William, King and Queen, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northampton, Northumberland, Richmond County, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Westmoreland **Cities:** Fredericksburg
- **Greater Peninsula (LWDA XIV)** – Counties: Gloucester, James City County, York **Cities:** Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, Williamsburg
- **Crater Area (LWDA XV)** – Counties: Dinwiddie, Greenville, Prince George, Surry, Sussex **Cities:** Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, Petersburg
- **Hampton Roads (LWDA XVI)** – Counties: Isle of Wight, Southampton **Cities:** Chesapeake, Franklin, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach
- **West Piedmont (LWDA XVII)** – Counties: Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania **Cities:** Danville, Martinsville



Source: Virginia Employment Commission Economics and Analytics Division: Richmond, Virginia

Table 20
RO and LWDA Area Comparison

RO	LWDA	County/City
RO1	New River/ Mt Rogers LWDA II	Bland, Bristol city, Carroll, Galax city, Grayson, Smyth, Washington, Wythe
	Southwestern Virginia LWDA I	Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Norton city, Russell, Scott, Tazewell, Wise
RO2	Alexandria/Arlington LWDA XII	Alexandria city, Arlington
	Bay Consortium LWDA XIII	Stafford
	Northern Virginia LWDA XI	Fairfax city, Fairfax County, Falls Church city, Loudoun, Manassas city, Manassas Park city, Prince William
	Piedmont Workforce Network LWDA VI	Culpeper, Fauquier, Orange, Rappahannock
	Shenandoah Valley LWDA IV	Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, Winchester city
RO3	Bay Consortium LWDA XIII	Accomack, Mathews, Middlesex, Northampton
	Capital Region Workforce Partnership LWDA IX	New Kent
	Crater Area LWDA XV	Hopewell city, Prince George, Surry, Sussex
	Greater Peninsula LWDA XIV	Gloucester, Hampton city, James City County, Newport News city, Poquoson city, Williamsburg city, York
	Hampton Roads LWDA XVI	Chesapeake city, Franklin city, Isle of Wight, Norfolk city, Portsmouth city, Southampton, Suffolk city, Virginia Beach city

RO	LWDA	County/City
RO4	Bay Consortium LWDA XIII	Caroline, Essex, King George, King William, King and Queen, Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond County, Westmoreland
	Capital Region Workforce Partnership LWDA IX	Charles City County, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan, Richmond city
	Crater Area LWDA XV	Colonial Heights city, Dinwiddie, Emporia city, Greensville, Petersburg city
	South Central LWDA VIII	Amelia, Brunswick, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Prince Edward
RO5	New River/ Mt Rogers LWDA II	Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, Radford city
	Region 2000/Central VA LWDA VII	Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Campbell, Lynchburg city
	South Central LWDA VIII	Charlotte, Halifax
	West Piedmont LWDA XVII	Danville city, Henry, Martinsville city, Patrick, Pittsylvania
	Western Virginia LWDA III	Alleghany, Botetourt, Covington, Craig, Franklin County, Roanoke city, Roanoke County, Salem city
RO6	Bay Consortium LWDA XIII	Fredericksburg city, Spotsylvania
	Piedmont Workforce Network LWDA VI	Albemarle, Charlottesville city, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Madison, Nelson
	Shenandoah Valley LWDA IV	Augusta, Bath, Buena Vista city, Harrisonburg city, Highland, Lexington city, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Staunton city, Waynesboro city
	South Central LWDA VIII	Buckingham

Source: Table developed by Interwork Staff using lists from the Virginia Employment Commission and the Virginia DBV

Internet Accessibility of Individuals in the Labor Force

The U.S. Census Bureau gathers data regarding the availability of the internet using two different populations: 1) working age population 18 to 64; and 2) based on employment status age 16 years and over. The data for working age individuals (ages 18 to 64) in the State's regional office service areas indicates that over 83.5 percent of the working age population has access to broadband internet subscriptions. The averages range between 83.9 to 94.4 percent.

The employment status data includes civilians ages 16 and over, with no cut-off age. The data cites that those who are not in the labor force have significantly lower rates of access to broadband internet subscriptions when compared to the labor force participants, both employed and unemployed. The gap between rates of access to broadband internet for those who are unemployed and those who do not participate in the labor force in each RO ranges from 2.4 to 11.5 percentage points.

Tables 21 and 22 contains internet accessibility data for the Nation, State, and each RO.

Table 21: *Internet Accessibility: Working Age 18 to 64 and by Employment Status for the US and Virginia*

United States												
United States -- Urban					United States -- Rural							
Category	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer
		Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet			Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet			Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet	
AGE												
18 to 64 years	194,817,736	91.3%	5.8%	2.8%	158,571,482	92.0%	5.4%	2.5%	36,246,254	88.4%	7.5%	4.0%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS												
Civilian population 16 years and over	254,639,295	88.6%	6.2%	5.0%	204,449,707	89.5%	5.8%	4.5%	50,189,588	85.0%	7.7%	6.9%
In labor force	164,811,855	92.5%	5.2%	2.2%	134,805,125	93.1%	4.9%	2.0%	30,006,730	89.8%	6.8%	3.2%
Employed	157,491,355	92.7%	5.1%	2.1%	128,656,936	93.3%	4.7%	1.9%	28,834,419	90.0%	6.7%	3.1%
Unemployed	7,320,500	88.7%	7.5%	3.7%	6,148,189	89.3%	7.2%	3.5%	1,172,311	85.4%	9.5%	4.9%
Not in labor force	89,827,440	81.6%	7.9%	10.2%	69,644,582	82.6%	7.6%	9.5%	20,182,858	77.8%	9.1%	12.5%
Virginia												
Virginia					Virginia-- Urban			Virginia -- Rural				
Category	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer	Total	With a computer		Percent no computer
		Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet			Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet			Percent Broadband Internet	Percent without Internet	
AGE												
18 to 64 years	5,107,520	91.8%	5.7%	2.4%	3,936,319	93.4%	4.7%	1.8%	1,171,201	86.5%	9.0%	4.4%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS												
Civilian population 16 years and over	6,543,888	89.0%	6.0%	4.9%	4,894,302	91.2%	5.0%	3.7%	1,649,586	82.4%	9.0%	8.4%
In labor force	4,365,765	92.7%	5.2%	2.0%	3,388,584	94.2%	4.3%	1.5%	977,181	87.9%	8.2%	3.8%
Employed	4,194,673	92.9%	5.0%	2.0%	3,253,762	94.3%	4.1%	1.5%	940,911	87.9%	8.1%	3.8%
Unemployed	171,092	88.9%	8.3%	2.7%	134,822	89.5%	7.7%	2.8%	36,270	86.7%	10.7%	2.4%
Not in labor force	2,178,123	81.4%	7.7%	10.6%	1,505,718	84.6%	6.7%	8.5%	672,405	74.4%	10.1%	15.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 1-year Estimates.

Table 22

Internet Accessibility: Working Age 18 to 64 and by Employment Status for ROs

RO1				
		With a Computer		Percent No Computer
	Total	Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	216,110	77.9%	11.6%	10.0%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	303,977	72.0%	11.0%	16.4%
In labor force	155,312	82.0%	10.6%	6.9%
Employed	145,936	82.6%	10.3%	6.7%
Unemployed	9,376	73.1%	16.0%	10.3%
Not in labor force	148,665	61.6%	11.4%	26.3%
RO2				
		With a Computer		Percent No Computer
	Total	Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	1,911,662	94.4%	3.6%	1.8%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	2,330,984	92.9%	3.8%	3.1%
In labor force	1,688,475	94.6%	3.5%	1.8%
Employed	1,625,165	94.7%	3.4%	1.7%
Unemployed	63,310	90.9%	5.4%	3.5%
Not in labor force	642,509	88.5%	4.5%	6.6%
RO3				
		With a Computer		Percent No Computer
	Total	Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	1,113,302	89.3%	7.4%	3.2%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	1,372,930	86.3%	7.6%	5.9%
In labor force	900,276	90.0%	7.1%	2.7%
Employed	851,244	90.3%	7.0%	2.6%
Unemployed	49,032	85.9%	9.7%	4.2%
Not in labor force	472,654	79.1%	8.5%	12.1%

RO4				
	Total	With a Computer		Percent No Computer
		Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	848,785	87.4%	7.7%	4.7%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	1,103,374	84.3%	7.7%	7.7%
In labor force	731,316	89.0%	7.0%	3.9%
Employed	695,549	89.2%	6.8%	3.8%
Unemployed	35,767	83.8%	10.6%	5.5%
Not in labor force	372,058	75.0%	9.1%	15.3%
RO5				
	Total	With a Computer		Percent No Computer
		Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	584,447	83.9%	9.1%	6.7%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	794,742	79.2%	8.9%	11.3%
In labor force	473,230	85.3%	8.7%	5.7%
Employed	450,630	85.6%	8.5%	5.6%
Unemployed	22,600	79.0%	12.6%	8.1%
Not in labor force	321,512	70.3%	9.2%	19.6%
RO6				
	Total	With a Computer		Percent No Computer
		Percent With BB Internet	Percent No Internet	
18 to 64 years	431,340	86.1%	9.2%	4.4%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Civilian population 16 years and over	568,940	83.1%	8.8%	7.7%
In labor force	367,687	87.5%	8.4%	3.8%
Employed	352,878	87.9%	8.2%	3.7%
Unemployed	14,809	79.5%	13.2%	7.0%
Not in labor force	201,253	74.9%	9.6%	14.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Unemployment Rates

During the time period from August through November 2021, Virginia’s monthly non-adjusted employment rate fell below the National average by roughly 1 percentage point. Petersburg city in RO4 had the highest unemployment rates for the August through November time period. Note that RO4 accounts for 16.9 percent of the State’s population and has eight counties that are comprised of greater than 99.5 percent rural populations. The lowest unemployment rate (1.7 percent) was in Highland County, located in RO6, during October and November 2021. RO6 has an overall rural population average of 51 percent according to the 2012 census report.

Table 23 contains the National, State, and local region non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for the August through November of 2021, published by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Table 23
Local Area Unemployment Rates

	Area	US	VA	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6	
21-Aug	Low	5.3%	Nebraska 1.8%	3.8%	Bland, Grayson 2.9%	Falls Church city, Frederick 2.7%	Poquoson city 2.7%	King George 2.7%	Botetourt, Montgomery, Roanoke County 3%	Madison 2.3%
	High		California 7.5%		Buchanan 6.2%	Page 4%	Hopewell city 7.1%	Petersburg city 9.6%	Martinsville 7.2%	Buckingham 4.8%
21-Sep	Low	4.6%	Nebraska 1.4%	3.2%	Grayson 2.4%	Falls Church city 2%	Poquoson city 2.4%	King George 2.2%	Montgomery 2.5%	Madison 2.2%
	High		CA, HI, NV 6.4%		Buchanan 5.3%	Page 3.7%	Hopewell city 6.2%	Petersburg city 8.4%	Martinsville 6.8%	Buckingham 4.2%
21-Oct	Low	4.3%	Nebraska 1.9%	3.0%	Grayson 2.1%	Falls Church city 1.8%	Poquoson city 2.2%	King George 2.1%	Floyd 2.1%	Highland 1.7%
	High		California 7.3%		Buchanan 4.9%	Page 3.5%	Portsmouth city 5.8%	Petersburg city 8.6%	Martinsville 6.8%	Lexington city 3.9%
21-Nov	Low	3.9%	Nebraska 1.8%	2.7%	Grayson 2%	Falls Church city 1.8%	Poquoson city 2%	King George 2%	Floyd, Montgomery 2%	Highland 1.7%
	High		California 6.9%		Buchanan 5%	Page 3.1%	Hopewell city 5.4%	Petersburg city 7.8%	Martinsville 5.4%	Buckingham 4.1%

Source: <https://data.bls.gov>

Occupations

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides data for the largest occupations within the various States and the Nation. The top ten occupations in Virginia are reflective of the top ten occupations in the Nation. The largest occupation in Virginia is Cashiers, which ranks as the third largest occupation in the United States. A few differences between Virginia and the U.S. occur. Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers, which is the fourth largest occupation in Virginia, is not included in the top ten occupations in the U.S. overall. Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners also does not appear on the U.S. list. Home Health and Personal Care Aides and Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand, which are ranked in the fourth and seventh positions on the U.S. list, do not appear on Virginia's list.

The following charts are the most recent data (May, 2020) results indicating the largest occupations for the United States and Virginia.

Chart 1

Occupational Employment Statistics for the US

Largest Occupations in the United States, May 2020	
Occupation	Employment
Retail Salespersons	3,659,670
Fast Food and Counter Workers	3,450,120
Cashiers	3,333,100
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	3,211,590
Registered Nurses	2,986,500
Customer Service Representatives	2,833,250
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,805,200
Office Clerks, General	2,788,090
General and Operations Managers	2,347,420
Stockers and Order Fillers	2,210,960

<https://www.bls.gov/oes>

Chart 2

Occupational Employment Statistics for VA

Largest occupations in Virginia, May 2020	
Occupation	Employment
Cashiers	100,830
Fast Food and Counter Workers	99,570
Retail Salespersons	91,020
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	77,260
Office Clerks, General	74,690
Customer Service Representatives	69,350
Registered Nurses	66,450
Stockers and Order Fillers	65,540
General and Operations Managers	57,600
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	55,190

https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/area_emp_chart/area_emp_chart.htm#

Industries in Virginia

Industry describes the types of business establishments that are part of local economies that provide employment opportunities for residents in the local area.

The Virginia Employment Commission provided the data on the State's occupations and industries via special request for this CSNA. Table 24 contains data on the 10 largest industries by employment for the second quarter of 2021. Each industry employs over 1,000 employees.

Table 24
Top Industries by Employment: 2nd Quarter 2021

Top Industries by Employment: Virginia (2021 Q2)			
Rank	Employer Name	Industry Name	Ownership Type (Class of Worker)
1	U.S. Department of Defense	National Security and International Affairs	Federal Gov't
2	Wal Mart	General Merchandise Stores	Private
3	Fairfax County Public Schools	Educational Services	Local Gov't
4	Huntington Ingalls Industries, Inc.	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	Private
5	Sentara Healthcare	Hospitals	Private
6	University of Virginia / Blue Ridge Hospital	Educational Services	State Gov't
7	Food Lion	Food and Beverage Stores	Private
8	Inova Health System	Hospitals	Private
9	Capital One Bank	Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	Private
10	Postal Service	Postal Service	Federal Gov't

Source: Virginia Employment Commission Economics and Analytics Division: Richmond, Virginia

Regional Industries

The term industry in this section of the report refers to the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization.

The U.S. Census Bureau publishes data from the American Community Survey detailing information on the top industries by employment for the Nation, State, and each county in the state. Virginia's list of leading industries by employment reflects the National list except for Construction and has ranking order differences. The top five industries in rural Virginia match the top five industries on the rural United States' list. Public administration, and Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services, each ranked in the 6th position on Rural Virginia's list. However, Public administration has 401 more employees than the Arts. Table 25 displays the U.S. and Virginia's top 6 industries with the most employees.

Table 25
Local Area Top Industries by Employment: U.S. and V.A., including Urban and Rural Averages

Region	Industries	Percent
US	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 23.3%
	2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 11.8%
	3) Retail trade	3) 10.8%
	4) Manufacturing	4) 9.9%
		5) 9.7%
		6) 7.0%

Region	Industries	Percent
	5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 6) Construction	
US Urban	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 3) Retail trade 4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 5) Manufacturing 6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1) 23.5% 2) 12.6% 3) 10.9% 4) 10.2% 5) 9.3% 6) 6.8%
US Rural	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Manufacturing 3) Retail trade 4) Construction 5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 6) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1) 22.5% 2) 13.0% 3) 10.6% 4) 9.0% 5) 8.4% 6) 7.3%
VA	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 3) Retail trade 4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 5) Public administration 6) Manufacturing	1) 22.4% 2) 15.6% 3) 10.2% 4) 9.1% 5) 8.4% 6) 7.0%
VA Urban	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 3) Retail trade 4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 5) Public administration 6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	1) 22.3% 2) 17.0% 3) 9.9% 4) 9.7% 5) 8.8% 6) 6.5%
VA Rural	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Retail trade 3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 4) Manufacturing 5) Construction 6) Public administration AND Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1) 23.1% 2) 11.1% 3) 11.0% 4) 10.4% 5) 9.0% 6) 6.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Employment, Occupations, Industries and Labor Force Participation for People with Disabilities

Data on employment, occupations, industries, and labor force participation for people with disabilities is collected and analyzed by various government bureaus and research institutes. This section presents statistics from the various agencies regarding people with disabilities and their participation in the labor force.

Occupations and Employees with Disabilities

The U.S. Census Bureau collects and analyzes data for the largest occupations within the various States and the Nation for people with disabilities who are part of the total civilian noninstitutionalized population (TCNP).

The following tables summarize percentage rates of the occupations that people with disabilities are employed in. One-year 2019 U.S. Census data is used for documenting the U.S., Virginia, and RO2. Five-year 2014-2019 U.S. Census estimates are provided in Table 26 in lieu of an RO average for those counties in which rates are available.

Table 26

Distribution of Employed Individuals by Disability Status and Occupation: U.S. and V.A.

	United States			Virginia		
	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	39.9%	30.8%	40.4%	45.4%	35.5%	46.1%
Service occupations	17.7%	21.8%	17.4%	17.1%	20.8%	16.9%
Sales and office occupations	20.4%	21.6%	20.3%	19.0%	21.3%	18.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	8.8%	9.2%	8.8%	7.8%	9.1%	7.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	13.2%	16.7%	13.0%	10.7%	13.3%	10.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Table 27

Percent Distribution of Employed Individuals by Disability Status and Occupation: ROs

RO	County	TCNP and Disability Category	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations
ROI	Smyth	TCNP	26.9%	20.9%	18.1%	9.8%	24.3%
		With a Disability	22.7%	17.7%	21.9%	8.5%	29.1%
		No Disability	27.4%	21.4%	17.7%	9.9%	23.7%
	Tazewell	TCNP	30.6%	18.0%	22.2%	14.5%	14.7%

RO	County	TCNP and Disability Category	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	
		With a Disability	25.2%	20.8%	17.4%	14.7%	21.9%	
		No Disability	31.2%	17.7%	22.7%	14.5%	14.0%	
		Washington	TCNP	34.4%	18.8%	19.7%	8.4%	18.6%
		Wise	With a Disability	27.6%	27.0%	15.9%	12.9%	16.6%
			No Disability	35.2%	18.0%	20.1%	7.9%	18.8%
			TCNP	35.1%	18.8%	23.8%	9.8%	12.5%
		Wise	With a Disability	32.4%	18.6%	21.8%	14.1%	13.1%
			No Disability	35.4%	18.8%	24.0%	9.3%	12.4%
			TCNP	58.7%	15.9%	14.9%	5.2%	5.3%
RO2	Fairfax	With a Disability	46.7%	18.5%	20.4%	5.2%	9.2%	
		No Disability	59.3%	15.8%	14.6%	5.2%	5.2%	
		TCNP	48.5%	16.3%	21.8%	6.0%	7.4%	
RO3	James City County	With a Disability	39.4%	23.3%	21.2%	6.7%	9.3%	
		No Disability	49.2%	15.7%	21.9%	6.0%	7.3%	
		TCNP	41.8%	15.6%	22.7%	9.6%	10.3%	
	Chesapeake city	With a Disability	33.8%	20.9%	23.2%	9.4%	12.7%	
		No Disability	42.3%	15.3%	22.6%	9.6%	10.2%	
		TCNP	34.9%	18.3%	22.0%	10.4%	14.3%	
	Hampton city	With a Disability	29.0%	19.7%	22.5%	12.5%	16.3%	
		No Disability	35.5%	18.2%	22.0%	10.2%	14.1%	
		TCNP	34.6%	19.1%	21.5%	9.8%	15.0%	
	Newport News city	With a Disability	29.1%	23.3%	22.1%	11.8%	13.7%	
		No Disability	35.2%	18.7%	21.4%	9.5%	15.1%	
		TCNP	34.2%	21.3%	21.8%	10.1%	12.6%	
	Norfolk city	With a Disability	30.9%	23.4%	18.6%	10.4%	16.8%	
		No Disability	34.4%	21.2%	22.0%	10.1%	12.3%	
		TCNP	29.8%	19.1%	23.6%	11.5%	16.0%	
	Portsmouth city	With a Disability	28.5%	20.8%	23.5%	10.8%	16.4%	

RO	County	TCNP and Disability Category	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	
		No Disability	29.9%	19.0%	23.6%	11.5%	15.9%	
		<i>Suffolk city</i>	TCNP	39.0%	16.9%	20.9%	9.1%	14.2%
			With a Disability	33.7%	18.7%	19.3%	13.5%	14.8%
		No Disability	39.3%	16.8%	21.0%	8.8%	14.1%	
		<i>Virginia Beach city</i>	TCNP	41.5%	17.0%	23.2%	9.0%	9.3%
			With a Disability	34.9%	17.7%	25.4%	10.3%	11.7%
	No Disability		42.0%	17.0%	23.0%	8.9%	9.1%	
	<i>RO4</i>	<i>Chesterfield</i>	TCNP	43.3%	14.8%	22.8%	8.0%	11.0%
			With a Disability	38.4%	17.5%	24.8%	7.9%	11.5%
No Disability			43.6%	14.6%	22.7%	8.0%	11.0%	
<i>Hanover</i>		TCNP	46.5%	13.3%	23.0%	8.7%	8.5%	
		With a Disability	38.9%	16.8%	25.7%	5.8%	12.8%	
		No Disability	46.9%	13.1%	22.9%	8.9%	8.3%	
<i>Henrico</i>		TCNP	45.1%	15.3%	24.0%	5.6%	10.0%	
		With a Disability	30.9%	22.5%	24.9%	5.3%	16.4%	
		No Disability	45.9%	14.9%	24.0%	5.7%	9.6%	
<i>Richmond city</i>		TCNP	42.0%	20.9%	20.2%	6.7%	10.3%	
		With a Disability	28.4%	29.8%	20.7%	6.3%	14.7%	
		No Disability	43.1%	20.2%	20.1%	6.7%	9.9%	
<i>RO5</i>		<i>Bedford</i>	TCNP	37.5%	14.8%	23.0%	9.1%	15.6%
			With a Disability	18.1%	19.8%	26.9%	10.9%	24.4%
			No Disability	38.7%	14.6%	22.7%	9.0%	15.1%
	<i>Campbell</i>	TCNP	32.8%	16.9%	23.1%	11.4%	15.8%	
		With a Disability	17.5%	19.2%	27.7%	9.3%	26.3%	
		No Disability	33.8%	16.8%	22.8%	11.5%	15.1%	
	<i>Franklin</i>	TCNP	35.9%	14.2%	20.6%	12.0%	17.3%	
		With a Disability	30.7%	21.4%	15.6%	14.5%	17.8%	
		No Disability	36.2%	13.8%	20.9%	11.9%	17.3%	

RO	County	TCNP and Disability Category	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	
	<i>Henry</i>	TCNP	26.6%	16.9%	23.0%	10.5%	22.9%	
		With a Disability	16.8%	11.3%	20.0%	13.0%	38.9%	
		No Disability	27.2%	17.2%	23.2%	10.4%	21.9%	
	<i>Montgomery</i>	TCNP	48.1%	18.0%	17.7%	6.3%	9.9%	
		With a Disability	31.8%	19.5%	25.7%	7.7%	15.3%	
		No Disability	49.0%	17.9%	17.3%	6.2%	9.6%	
	<i>Pittsylvania</i>	TCNP	26.3%	18.7%	20.3%	11.7%	23.0%	
		With a Disability	23.6%	21.8%	19.4%	13.3%	22.0%	
		No Disability	26.5%	18.4%	20.4%	11.6%	23.1%	
	<i>Roanoke County</i>	TCNP	43.5%	14.0%	23.3%	6.9%	12.4%	
		With a Disability	31.9%	15.8%	23.9%	8.9%	19.5%	
		No Disability	44.0%	13.9%	23.3%	6.8%	12.0%	
	<i>Danville city</i>	TCNP	26.2%	25.7%	20.8%	6.2%	21.1%	
		With a Disability	20.2%	30.6%	21.2%	13.5%	14.5%	
		No Disability	26.7%	25.3%	20.7%	5.6%	21.7%	
	<i>Lynchburg city</i>	TCNP	40.0%	22.2%	20.0%	6.4%	11.4%	
		With a Disability	34.8%	24.2%	15.8%	5.8%	19.3%	
		No Disability	40.4%	22.0%	20.3%	6.4%	10.8%	
	<i>Roanoke city</i>	TCNP	32.1%	20.7%	23.6%	7.4%	16.2%	
		With a Disability	24.9%	24.5%	20.5%	8.9%	21.2%	
		No Disability	32.5%	20.5%	23.7%	7.4%	16.0%	
	<i>RO6</i>	<i>Albemarle</i>	TCNP	54.7%	15.6%	18.4%	6.0%	5.3%
			With a Disability	43.7%	21.9%	23.1%	6.1%	5.2%
			No Disability	55.2%	15.3%	18.2%	6.0%	5.3%
		<i>Augusta</i>	TCNP	33.5%	16.7%	21.5%	10.1%	18.2%
			With a Disability	25.8%	26.1%	19.7%	8.1%	20.3%
			No Disability	34.1%	16.0%	21.7%	10.3%	18.0%
<i>Rockingham</i>		TCNP	33.1%	16.4%	21.2%	11.9%	17.5%	

RO	County	TCNP and Disability Category	Management, business, science, and arts occupations	Service occupations	Sales and office occupations	Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	Production, transportation, and material moving occupations
		With a Disability	27.1%	14.7%	22.7%	9.1%	26.3%
		No Disability	33.5%	16.5%	21.1%	12.1%	16.9%
	Spotsylvania	TCNP	40.7%	18.0%	22.2%	8.7%	10.4%
		With a Disability	36.4%	23.2%	20.8%	9.8%	9.8%
		No Disability	41.0%	17.7%	22.3%	8.6%	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Based on the above statistics regarding occupational groups, workers with disabilities were less likely to work in management, business, science and arts occupations in Virginia. The rate for workers without disabilities exceeds the rate for workers with disabilities in management, business, science and arts occupations by 10.6 percent in the State and the range of difference for the ROs with data available is from 1.4 percent (Portsmouth city) to 20.6 percent (Bedford County).

Regional Industries and Employees with Disabilities

The US Census Bureau publishes data that provides information on the top industries by employment for people with disabilities. The data represents the total civilian employed population ages 16 and over.

Table 28 displays the top 6 industries in the United States, Virginia and the regional office service areas and compares the percentage rates of employees with disabilities and with rates for employees without disabilities. Data includes 31 of the State’s 133 counties and cities. For comparison purposes, county population ranking is documented in the table for reference. Data for the Nation, State and Fairfax County in RO2 is taken from the 2019 one-year estimates and the remaining data is taken from the 2014-2019 five-year US Census Bureau Estimates.

Table 28

Local Area Top Industries by Employment: People with & without Disabilities Ages 16 and Over

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
US		1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 22.3%	1) 23.3%
		2) Retail trade	2) 13.0%	2) 10.7%
		3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3) 10.8%	3) 11.9%
		4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 10.3%	4) 9.6%
		5) Manufacturing	5) 9.7%	5) 10.0%
		6) Construction	6) 6.6%	6) 7.0%
VA		1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 21.5%	1) 22.5%
		2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 13.5%	2) 15.8%
		3) Retail trade	3) 12.3%	3) 10.1%
		4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 9.8%	4) 9.0%
		5) Construction	5) 7.4%	5) 6.8%
		6) Public administration	6) 7.3%	6) 8.5%
RO1	Smyth Pop Rank = 58	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 26.0%	1) 25.2%
		2) Manufacturing	2) 18.8%	2) 20.0%
		3) Retail trade	3) 18.3%	3) 12.7%
		4) Public administration	4) 8.3%	4) 6.0%
		5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 6.6%	5) 7.6%
		6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 6.3%	6) 4.0%
	Tazewell Pop Rank = 41	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 26.1%	1) 28.1%
		2) Retail trade	2) 14.3%	2) 14.2%
		3) Manufacturing	3) 10.2%	3) 7.1%
Washington Pop Rank = 34	4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 8.0%	4) 6.4%	
	5) Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5) 7.4%	5) 4.6%	
	6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6) 6.4%	6) 4.5%	
		1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 20.1%	1) 27.2%
		2) Manufacturing	2) 13.8%	2) 13.3%
		3) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	3) 12.4%	3) 7.3%
		4) Retail trade	4) 11.2%	4) 14.4%
		5) Public administration	5) 10.5%	5) 5.0%
		6) Construction	6) 10.3%	6) 5.3%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities	
Wise	Pop Rank = 46	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Retail Trade 3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 4) Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining 5) Public administration 6) Construction	1) 24.3% 2) 19.0% 3) 14.9% 4) 9.5% 5) 9.1% 6) 7.6%	1) 24.8% 2) 14.2% 3) 9.9% 4) 6.1% 5) 8.5% 6) 2.9%	
Fairfax County	Pop Rank = 1	1) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 2) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 3) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 4) Retail trade 5) Public administration 6) Other services (except public administration)	1) 20.2% 2) 18.5% 3) 10.1% 4) 9.8% 5) 9.4% 6) 8.6%	1) 26.1% 2) 18.5% 3) 9.5% 4) 6.6% 5) 11.1% 6) 6.5%	
RO3	James City County	Pop Rank = 27	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Retail trade 3) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services 4) Public administration 5) Manufacturing 6) Other services (except public administration)	1) 28.0% 2) 17.6% 3) 17.6% 4) 10.7% 5) 5.2% 6) 4.8%	1) 25.8% 2) 11.4% 3) 13.3% 4) 6.9% 5) 6.9% 6) 4.6%
	Chesapeake city	Pop Rank = 7	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 3) Public administration 4) Retail trade 5) Other services (except public administration) 6) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	1) 20.7% 2) 12.1% 3) 10.7% 4) 10.2% 5) 8.5% 6) 8.2%	1) 24.3% 2) 11.8% 3) 9.5% 4) 10.5% 5) 5.2% 6) 7.7%
	Hampton city	Pop Rank = 15	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance 2) Manufacturing 3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services 4) Public administration 5) Retail trade 6) Construction	1) 21.5% 2) 14.7% 3) 10.4% 4) 10.2% 5) 9.7% 6) 9.3%	1) 22.1% 2) 12.4% 3) 12.8% 4) 9.5% 5) 10.4% 6) 6.1%
	Newport News city		1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 25.9%	1) 23.2%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
	Pop Rank = 11	2) Retail trade	2) 14.5%	2) 11.5%
		3) Manufacturing	3) 11.9%	3) 13.9%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 11.7%	4) 10.6%
		5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5) 6.7%	5) 11.0%
		6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 6.7%	6) 4.3%
		Norfolk city Pop Rank = 8	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 22.4%
2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 14.0%		2) 11.5%	
3) Retail trade	3) 11.6%		3) 11.2%	
4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 11.5%		4) 12.8%	
5) Construction	5) 8.0%		5) 6.9%	
6) Manufacturing	6) 7.2%		6) 7.1%	
Portsmouth city Pop Rank = 20	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 28.6%	1) 24.0%	
	2) Manufacturing	2) 10.9%	2) 10.3%	
	3) Retail trade	3) 10.5%	3) 13.6%	
	4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 10.1%	4) 8.3%	
	5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 9.4%	5) 9.5%	
	6) Construction	6) 7.1%	6) 6.9%	
Suffolk city Pop Rank = 22	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 23.7%	1) 25.1%	
	2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 15.7%	2) 10.1%	
	3) Retail trade	3) 11.7%	3) 10.3%	
	4) Manufacturing	4) 10.3%	4) 12.6%	
	5) Public administration	5) 8.3%	5) 9.9%	
	6) Construction	6) 7.6%	6) 5.4%	
Virginia Beach city Pop Rank = 3	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 18.3%	1) 23.2%	
	2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 15.7%	2) 12.6%	
	3) Retail trade	3) 12.4%	3) 11.4%	
	4) Public administration	4) 10.1%	4) 9.1%	
	5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5) 8.7%	5) 11.3%	
	6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6) 7.4%	6) 7.8%	
RO4	Chesterfield	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 23.0%	1) 23.5%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
	Pop Rank = 5	2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 11.7%	2) 11.5%
		3) Retail trade	3) 11.5%	3) 11.3%
		4) Public administration	4) 10.0%	4) 6.8%
		5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5) 8.8%	5) 8.3%
		6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 7.2%	6) 4.9%
	Hanover Pop Rank = 17	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 20.1%	1) 22.9%
		2) Retail trade	2) 17.1%	2) 10.9%
		3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3) 12.9%	3) 11.1%
		4) Public administration	4) 8.5%	4) 6.3%
		5) Construction	5) 7.4%	5) 8.9%
		6) Manufacturing	6) 6.3%	6) 5.6%
	Henrico Pop Rank = 6	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 24.8%	1) 23.4%
		2) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2) 12.2%	2) 9.0%
		3) Retail trade	3) 12.0%	3) 10.6%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 9.1%	4) 13.2%
		5) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5) 8.8%	5) 11.7%
		6) Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	6) 7.6%	6) 5.5%
	Richmond city Pop Rank = 10	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 29.2%	1) 25.4%
		2) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	2) 13.2%	2) 14.3%
		3) Retail trade	3) 11.7%	3) 10.7%
		4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 11.4%	4) 11.4%
		5) Construction	5) 7.3%	5) 5.3%
		6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6) 7.0%	6) 8.4%
RO5	Bedford Pop Rank = 26	1) Retail trade	1) 18.7%	1) 12.0%
		2) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2) 18.5%	2) 25.9%
		3) Manufacturing	3) 13.3%	3) 14.1%
		4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 9.6%	4) 5.8%
		5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 7.7%	5) 9.0%
		6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 7.4%	6) 6.5%
	Campbell	1) Retail trade	1) 25.5%	1) 12.4%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
	Pop Rank = 33	2) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2) 16.8%	2) 27.9%
		3) Manufacturing	3) 12.2%	3) 14.8%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 11.2%	4) 8.2%
		5) Construction	5) 9.8%	5) 7.8%
		6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 7.3%	6) 5.9%
	Franklin County Pop Rank = 32	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 20.7%	1) 22.7%
		2) Retail trade	2) 15.9%	2) 12.1%
	3) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3) 12.7%	3) 8.1%	
	4) Construction	4) 12.0%	4) 7.5%	
	5) Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5) 8.6%	5) 6.2%	
	6) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6) 6.7%	6) 7.4%	
	Henry Pop Rank = 37	1) Manufacturing	1) 22.2%	1) 20.1%
		2) Retail trade	2) 17.2%	2) 13.5%
		3) Other services (except public administration)	3) 13.5%	3) 6.1%
		4) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	4) 12.7%	4) 23.9%
		5) Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	5) 10.7%	5) 3.9%
		6) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	6) 9.9%	6) 7.6%
	Montgomery Pop Rank = 19	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 32.9%	1) 39.4%
		2) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2) 20.0%	2) 11.8%
		3) Retail trade	3) 11.9%	3) 9.3%
		4) Manufacturing	4) 8.4%	4) 9.1%
		5) Construction	5) 7.1%	5) 4.5%
		6) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	6) 7.0%	6) 9.7%
	Pittsylvania Pop Rank = 31	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 21.7%	1) 22.6%
		2) Manufacturing	2) 17.4%	2) 17.6%
		3) Retail trade	3) 12.2%	3) 12.5%
		4) Other services (except public administration)	4) 9.2%	4) 5.1%
		5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5) 8.1%	5) 6.1%
		6) Construction	6) 8.0%	6) 7.2%
	Roanoke County	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 22.6%	1) 28.1%
		2) Retail trade	2) 14.0%	2) 10.5%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
	Pop Rank = 21	3) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	3) 10.3%	3) 8.8%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 9.4%	4) 9.3%
		5) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	5) 9.1%	5) 8.1%
		6) Manufacturing	6) 8.0%	6) 8.3%
Danville city Pop Rank = 43	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 29.8%	1) 28.5%	
	2) Retail trade	2) 17.0%	2) 13.2%	
	3) Manufacturing	3) 11.6%	3) 16.9%	
	4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 9.3%	4) 8.5%	
	5) Construction	5) 8.7%	5) 5.2%	
	6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6) 6.8%	6) 3.6%	
Lynchburg city Pop Rank = 24	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 31.3%	1) 35.9%	
	2) Retail trade	2) 16.2%	2) 11.1%	
	3) Manufacturing	3) 11.3%	3) 8.5%	
	4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 8.8%	4) 12.6%	
	5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 8.0%	5) 9.4%	
	6) Other services (except public administration)	6) 6.3%	6) 4.6%	
Roanoke city Pop Rank = 18	1) Retail trade	1) 19.2%	1) 11.8%	
	2) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2) 17.7%	2) 24.3%	
	3) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	3) 15.6%	3) 12.5%	
	4) Manufacturing	4) 11.8%	4) 9.9%	
	5) Other services (except public administration)	5) 7.8%	5) 4.6%	
	6) Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	6) 7.5%	6) 7.4%	
RO6	Albemarle Pop Rank = 16	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 29.8%	1) 36.2%
		2) Retail trade	2) 12.7%	2) 8.7%
		3) Other services (except public administration)	3) 11.8%	3) 5.2%
		4) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	4) 10.3%	4) 10.0%
		5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 8.8%	5) 13.1%
		6) Public administration	6) 5.6%	6) 4.5%
	Augusta	1) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1) 17.4%	1) 26.4%

Geographic Area		Industries	Employees with Disabilities	Employees without Disabilities
	Pop Rank = 28	2) Manufacturing	2) 17.3%	2) 13.6%
		3) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	3) 14.6%	3) 6.3%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 10.1%	4) 7.4%
		5) Retail trade	5) 8.5%	5) 13.4%
		6) Construction	6) 6.7%	6) 7.9%
Rockingham Pop Rank = 25		1) Retail trade	1) 18.9%	1) 11.9%
		2) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	2) 16.1%	2) 25.9%
		3) Manufacturing	3) 13.5%	3) 13.1%
		4) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4) 10.3%	4) 6.7%
		5) Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	5) 7.8%	5) 5.0%
		6) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	6) 6.7%	6) 8.6%
Spotsylvania Pop Rank = 14		1) Public administration	1) 15.2%	1) 11.5%
		2) Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	2) 14.8%	2) 9.1%
		3) Educational services, and health care and social assistance	3) 14.3%	3) 19.8%
		4) Retail trade	4) 12.1%	4) 14.2%
		5) Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	5) 10.4%	5) 13.5%
		6) Construction	6) 9.4%	6) 7.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Two industries (Retail trade, Educational services, and health care and social assistance) are ranked among the top six industries in each of the 31 counties and cities listed in Table 28. In 24 of Virginia’s counties and cities, higher percentages of employees with disabilities work in the Retail trade industry compared to those without disabilities working in Retail trade industry. In the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry, twenty-three of the 31 counties and cities have lower percentages of employees with disabilities compared to those without disabilities except in Fairfax County. Fairfax County has an equal percentage rate of people with and without disabilities working in the Educational services, and health care and social assistance industry. Of the twenty-six counties and cities that provide a base for the Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services industry, fifteen of the 26 counties and cities have higher percentages of employees with disabilities than those without disabilities. Twenty-four counties and cities rank Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services as one of their top 6 industries. One city, Richmond city, has an equal percentage of employees with disabilities working in Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services when compared to employees without disabilities.

United States Department of Labor Disability Employment Statistics

The U.S. Department of Labor provides monthly Disability Employment Statistics. The labor force participation rate refers to the percentage of non-institutionalized U.S. citizens who are in the labor force. The unemployment rate measures the percentage within the labor force who are currently without a job. The data indicates that labor force participation rates for individuals with disabilities is consistently one-third of the rate for individuals without disabilities. In addition, the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities is consistently at least twice as high as those without disabilities.

Table 29 contains disability employment statistics for the last quarter of 2021 for those who are ages 16 and over. The data includes 2021 annual data.

Table 29

Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates for PWD in the U.S.

Group	Labor Force Participation Rates			
	21-Oct	21-Nov	21-Dec	Annual-21
People with Disabilities	22.4%	23.3%	22.3%	21.3%
People without Disabilities	67.1%	67.2%	67.2%	67.1%
Unemployment Rate				
People with Disabilities	9.1%	7.7%	7.9%	10.1%
People without Disabilities	4.0%	3.7%	3.5%	5.1%

Sources: <https://www.dol.gov/odep/> and <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t06.htm>

Cornell University Disability Employment Statistics

Cornell University provides online disability statistics. The following data is from the online resource regarding employment rates.

Employment rate: In 2018, an estimated 37% of non-institutionalized individuals with a disability, ages 16 to 64, regardless of ethnicity and education level, in the Nation were employed. In Virginia, the rate was estimated at 40.3%.

Not working but actively looking for work: In 2018, an estimated 7.3% of non-institutionalized individuals ages 21 to 64 years with a disability in the Nation who were not working, were actively looking for work. In Virginia, the estimate was 6.2%.

Full-Time / Full-Year Employment: In 2018, an estimated 24.3% of non-institutionalized individuals ages 21 to 64 years with a disability in the Nation were employed full-time / full-year. The estimate is 28.4% for Virginia, which is 4.1 percentage points higher than the Nation. Retrieved from Cornell University Disability Statistics website: www.disabilitystatistics.org

Cornell University also provides online disability statistics regarding employment by disability type. The following data in Table 30 is from the online resource and contains the employment rates from 2018 for the Nation and the State by disability type. The categories are for non-institutionalized civilians ages 18 to 64, male and female, from all ethnic backgrounds and includes all education levels.

Table 30

2018 Employment by Disability Type for Non-institutionalized Civilians Ages 18 to 64

Disability Type	U.S. Percent Employed	Virginia Percent Employed
Any Disability	37.6%	41.0%
Visual Disability	45.1%	46.4%
Hearing Disability	53.3%	59.8%
Ambulatory Disability	25.5%	28.1%
Cognitive Disability	28.6%	33.5%
Self-Care Disability	16.1%	18.2%
Independent Living Disability	18.1%	27.1%

Source: <http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/>

Individuals ages 18 to 64 in Virginia with hearing and visual disabilities have higher employment rates (greater than 45%) than individuals with other disability types. Individuals with cognitive and ambulatory disabilities have employment rates ranging between 28.1 to 33.5%. Individuals with self-care disabilities have the lowest employment rates in Virginia.

U.S. Census Bureau Statistics Labor Force Statistics

The United States Census Bureau publishes a variety of statistics regarding people with disabilities and their participation in the labor force. The following three sets of statistics contain data regarding labor force participation and employment of people with disabilities by disability type.

Labor Force Participation Rates (LFP)

The labor force participation rate represents the proportion of the population that is in the labor force.

Table 31 below provides data based on disability status and employment for ages 16 and over from the U.S. Census Bureau for the year 2019 for the Nation and the State.

Table 31

LFP - Total Civilian Non-institutionalized Population (TCNP) Age 16 and Over: U.S. and State

Labor Force Category	United States			Virginia		
	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability	TCNP	With a Disability	No Disability
TCNP Age 16 and Over	258,478,337	38,438,308	220,040,029	6,650,578	945,943	5,704,635
Employed TCNP Age 16 and Over	158,739,032	9,487,038	149,251,994	4,228,958	259,305	3,969,653
Employed	61.4%	24.7%	67.8%	63.6%	27.4%	69.6%
Not in Labor Force	35.7%	72.7%	29.2%	33.8%	70.3%	27.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Of the total population age 16 years and older residing in the United States who report having a disability, 24.7% are employed and participating in the labor force, while approximately 72.7% are not in the labor force. Virginia's average for those who report a disability and are employed is 27.4% while 70.3% of those who report a disability are not engaged in the labor force.

Employment to Population Ratio – People with Disabilities

The employment-to-population ratio is a measure derived by dividing the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 64 years who are employed by the total civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 64 years and multiplying by 100. The employment-to-population ratio indicates the ratio of civilian labor force currently employed to the total working-age population of the designated geographic area, which is different from the labor force participation rate because the labor force participation rate includes currently employed and those who are unemployed but actively looking for work.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau collect and analyze the employment-population ratio for people with disabilities by state, county and urban and rural geography. Table 32 contains the available 2019 1-year data for Virginia's counties and cities, including the State's urban and rural rates, for the population ages 18 to 64 years. No data is available for RO1.

Table 32

Employment to Population Ratio for People with Disabilities Ages 18-64 Years

EMPLOYMENT TO POPULATION RATIO FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY		
State/ Urban – Rural/ County		
Geographic Area		Percent
United States	Total	37.6
	Urban	38.5
	Rural	34.6
Virginia	Total	40.1
	Urban	43.7
	Rural	31.5
Counties and Cities in Virginia		
RO2	Arlington County	54.1
	Fairfax County	51.6
	Fauquier County	59.3
	Frederick County	54
	Loudoun County	58.2
	Prince William County	53.3
	Stafford County	50.5

EMPLOYMENT TO POPULATION RATIO FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY		
State/ Urban – Rural/ County		
Geographic Area	Percent	
	Alexandria city	57.3
RO3	James City County	50.8
	York County	64.3
	Chesapeake city	37.7
	Hampton city	40
	Newport News city	48.3
	Norfolk city	34.2
	Portsmouth city	36.1
	Suffolk city	36.1
	Virginia Beach city	51.7
RO4	Chesterfield County	41.2
	Hanover County	35.7
	Henrico County	46.5
	Richmond city	36.7
RO5	Bedford County	26.1
	Danville (Micro Area)	21.3
	Lynchburg city	43.2
	Montgomery County	27.3
	Roanoke city	29
	Roanoke County	29.2
RO6	Albemarle County	35.9
	Augusta County	42.2
	Rockingham County	40.8
	Spotsylvania County	53.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

The State's employment to population ratio for people with disabilities is 2.5 percent higher than the Nation's ratio. Virginia has a lower ratio of people with disabilities working in rural areas than urban and the difference is 12.2%. When compared to the Nation, Virginia's ratio of rural workers with disabilities is lower than the Nation's rural ratio by 3.1%. Danville in RO5 is considered a micro area in this data set and has the lowest employment to population ratio for

people with disabilities (21.3%). Note that Danville city ranks 43rd in the State for population and is 95.5 percent urban. Danville city's median household income ranks 123rd out of the 133 State counties and cities. Danville city's median earnings for people with disabilities ranks 119th out of 126 counties and cities (data is not available for all 133 county entities). York County in RO3, has the highest employment to population ratio for people with disabilities in the State and: 1) ranks 30th in population for the State; 2) ranks 13th for median household income; and 3) ranks 13th in the State for median earnings for people with disabilities.

Employment Status by Disability Type

Employment status by disability type is estimated for the population ages 18 years to 64 years by the U.S. Census Bureau. The labor force participation rates among those reporting a visual disability in Virginia (including urban and rural areas), reflect the National averages. Table 33 contains one-year data from 2019 for the Nation and the State.

Table 33

Employment Status by Disability Status and Type: U.S. and V.A.

	US	US	US	VA	VA	VA
		Urban	Rural		Urban	Rural
Total 18 - 64 years:	197,503,214	161,149,453	36,353,761	5,117,865	3,943,265	1,174,600
In labor force:	78.0%	78.6%	75.5%	79.5%	80.5%	75.9%
Employed:	95.5%	95.4%	96.1%	96.0%	96.0%	96.2%
With a disability	5.4%	5.2%	6.2%	5.5%	5.2%	6.6%
With a vision disability	22.0%	22.0%	21.7%	22.2%	22.5%	21.5%
No disability	94.6%	94.8%	93.8%	94.5%	94.8%	93.4%
Unemployed:	4.5%	4.6%	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%	3.8%
With a disability	13.3%	13.0%	15.2%	12.3%	11.9%	13.6%
With a vision disability	17.6%	17.8%	16.9%	18.2%	16.4%	24.3%
No disability	86.7%	87.0%	84.8%	87.7%	88.1%	86.4%
Not in labor force:	22.0%	21.4%	24.5%	20.5%	19.5%	24.1%
With a disability	26.4%	25.3%	30.7%	25.2%	22.2%	33.4%
With a vision disability	16.2%	16.1%	16.6%	16.4%	15.4%	18.3%
No disability	73.6%	74.7%	69.3%	74.8%	77.8%	66.6%
LFP employed & unemployed w/ disability	5.7%	5.5%	6.6%	5.8%	5.4%	6.9%
LFP employed & unemployed w/o disability	94.3%	94.5%	93.4%	94.2%	94.6%	93.1%
Total Pop w/ disability	10.3%	9.8%	12.5%	9.7%	8.7%	13.3%
Total Pop w/o disability	89.7%	90.2%	87.5%	90.3%	91.3%	86.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Employment status by disability type statistics are available for five of the DBVI regional office areas. Table 34 details averages calculated from the available 2019 one-year county data. No data is available for RO1. This information is presented to help inform DBVI as it engages in strategic planning for the future.

Table 34

Employment Status by Disability Status and Type: ROs

	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6
Total 18 - 64 years:	1,707,953	904,673	637,083	285,044	235,750
In labor force:	83.9%	79.1%	81.6%	71.8%	79.7%
Employed:	96.9%	94.7%	95.8%	96.3%	96.5%
With a disability	3.7%	6.6%	6.5%	4.8%	4.8%
With a vision disability	20.7%	26.4%	26.1%	21.4%	16.1%
No disability	96.3%	93.4%	93.5%	95.2%	95.2%
Unemployed:	3.1%	5.3%	4.2%	3.7%	3.5%
With a disability	10.0%	13.1%	15.4%	9.2%	6.2%
With a vision disability	12.5%	18.9%	26.0%	10.1%	0.0%
No disability	90.0%	86.9%	84.6%	90.8%	93.8%
Not in labor force:	16.1%	20.9%	18.4%	28.2%	20.3%
With a disability	15.3%	26.5%	25.4%	19.6%	22.6%
With a vision disability	11.9%	16.0%	21.7%	19.4%	8.9%
No disability	84.7%	73.5%	74.6%	80.4%	77.4%
LFP employed & unemployed w/ disability	3.9%	6.9%	6.9%	4.9%	4.9%
LFP employed & unemployed w/o disability	96.1%	93.1%	93.1%	95.1%	95.1%
Total Pop w/ disability	5.8%	11.0%	10.3%	9.1%	8.5%
Total Pop w/o disability	94.2%	89.0%	89.7%	90.9%	91.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

The information noted above is offered as a glimpse into some general differences across the different Regions of Virginia. The data indicates that there are several areas where Virginia as a whole is outperforming the national average. However, there are Regions in Virginia that are below, and sometimes well below the national average. The project team is hopeful that DBVI will use the data to examine where they are allocating resources and align those with the areas of greatest need in the State.

The next section of the report includes agency-specific data obtained primarily from the case management system at DBVI. The 911 report from RSA and statistics from the Employment

and Training Administration (ETA) at the Department of Labor are also included in the proceeding section.

AGENCY-SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO PERFORMANCE

In all of the areas related to the performance of DBVI that are presented in this report, it is important to recognize that the last quarter of PY 2019 and the entire period of PY 2020 was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. All of the data on program performance must be interpreted through the lens of the impact on staff, consumers, community partners and businesses.

Table 35 below identifies various data elements that illustrate DBVI's overall program performance for the four-year period of this assessment.

Table 35
General Performance Data for DBVI 2015-2017

Item	ALL CONSUMERS			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Applications	372	312	302	232
% of apps found eligible	89.3%	93.5%	95.4%	90.3%
Avg. time for eligibility determination	38.02	38.52	36.78	37.43
Significance of Disability				
Disabled	7	2	2	4
% of total	1.9%	0.6%	0.7%	1.7%
Significant	24	7	3	6
% of total	6.5%	2.2%	1.0%	2.6%
Most significant	341	303	297	222
% of total	91.7%	97.1%	98.3%	95.7%
% closed prior to IPE development	22.5%	7.7%	5.6%	15.5%
Plans developed	267	179	234	283
Avg. time from eligibility to plan (days) INCLUDING DELAYED STATUS IN OOS	192.79	264.51	224.8	97.11
Avg. time from eligibility to plan (days) excluding delayed status in OOS	81.45	42.79	46.74	23.12
Number of consumers in training by type				
Vocational	215	180	180	132

Item	ALL CONSUMERS			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Undergraduate	108	115	100	58
Graduate	37	16	22	28
Credential attainment rate	n/a	N/A	16.7%	61.8%
Measurable skill gain rate	19.5%	53.0%	82.6%	85.8%
Ave. length of open case (days) for cases closed other than rehabilitated	526.8	346.64	225.04	140.1
Ave. length of open case (days) for cases closed rehabilitated	345.65	275.43	319.46	213.3
Number of cases closed rehabilitated	135	140	103	89
Employment rate at exit	45.0%	47.0%	43.0%	44.0%
Employment rate in 2nd quarter after exit	n/a	42.2%	37.6%	39.9%
Employment rate in 4th quarter after exit	n/a	n/a	27.7%	30.2%
Median earnings of those closed as successfully rehabilitated	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$19.00	\$21.00
Total number of cases served	1138	1016	947	986
Avg. cost of cases closed rehabilitated	\$10,851.83	\$11,845.25	\$16,851.98	\$14,124.36
Avg. cost per case closed unsuccessful	\$3,860.90	\$3,874.09	\$5,340.54	\$4,168.89
Avg. cost per case closed prior to plan	\$370.83	\$149.93	\$72.74	\$26.83

The data indicates that the number of applications decreased by 38% from the highest point in PY 2017 to the lowest point in PY 2020. The sharpest decrease occurred from PY 2019-2020. This was unquestionably due to the pandemic which resulted in concern for personal and public safety, office closures, periods of limited access, and the shift to virtual service delivery. The 38% decrease that DBVI experienced was slightly less impactful than the 43% drop in applications experienced by all VR programs nationally during that same period.

Ninety percent of all applicants or more were found eligible for services in three of the four PYs under study and the average time for an eligibility determination was consistently between 36-38 days. Eligible individuals were almost exclusively determined to be individuals with most significant disabilities. The percent of individuals closed prior to IPE development increased by almost ten percent from PY 2019-2020, which is likely due to the impact of the pandemic. Interestingly, the number of plans developed during that same one-year period increased by 21%, reportedly due to an increased ability to serve individuals in delayed status due to the Order of Selection (OOS). The time from eligibility to plan was significant when factoring in the delay due to OOS, but when removing that delay, the time frame was one-third or less than the 90-days allowed by law.

DBVI reported that there were 218 participants in some type of training in PY 2020, which is a decrease of 84 from the prior year. This decrease is also likely due to the effect of the pandemic on participant engagement and school or training program interruption. For those participants in training, DBVI's credential attainment rate and measurable skill gains (MSG) rate were considerably higher than the national average. The credential attainment rate in PY 2020 was 61.8%, which is more than 38% higher than the national rate for all VR programs of 23.2%. The MSG rate was 85.8% in PY 2020, which was the highest of all VR programs in the country and 42.5% higher than the national average for all VR programs.

The employment rate at exit was consistent throughout the period covered by this assessment, ranging from a high of 47% in PY 2018 to a low of 43% in PY 2019. The exit rate of 44% in PY 2020 equaled the national employment rate at exit for all VR programs. An area of potential focus is the employment rate in the 2nd and 4th quarter after exit. The PY 2020 rate in the 2nd quarter after exit was 8.7% lower than the national average for all VR programs of 48.6%, and the 4th quarter after exit employment rate was 13.8% lower than the national average for all VR programs of 44%. It will be important for DBVI to determine if this data is valid as reported, and if so, determine why these employment rates are lagging behind the national averages for all VR programs. The average median earnings were at a high of \$21 per hour in PY 2021. The median earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit for DBVI consumers in PY 2020 was \$5,540, which exceeds the national average for all VR programs by more than \$2,300 for the same time period. This is illustrative of the high-quality employment outcomes that DBVI consumers obtain as reported in the interviews completed for this assessment.

Case Expenditures:

The project team examined the case service expenditures by category for DBVI for the four years under study. Table 36 below contains this information.

Table 36

Case Service Expenditures

Expenditure by Service Category				
Service Category	Amount spent per year			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Assessment	\$68,487	\$61,022	\$59,608	\$28,828
Clothing	\$1,428	\$789	\$744	\$1,110
Disability Related Augmentative Skills Training	\$210,669	\$43,385	\$59,082	\$23,231
Interpreter Services	\$70,069	\$13,497	\$22,199	\$1,777
Job Coach Training Services and Supported Employment	\$145,905	\$132,580	\$168,129	\$191,931
Job Readiness Training	\$8,110	\$5,103	\$5,900	\$5,975
Maintenance	\$615,425	\$558,333	\$359,725	\$265,857
Medical / Mental Health Treatment	\$86,811	\$24,185	\$25,357	\$34,231
On-the-Job Training	\$21,043	\$21,952	\$20,827	\$11,287

Expenditure by Service Category				
Service Category	Amount spent per year			
Other Goods and Services	\$213,061	\$102,012	\$82,840	\$130,872
Physical Restoration	\$30,687	\$20,023	\$10,016	\$20,422
Pre-ETS Cost Services	\$102,529	\$175,827	\$140,414	\$154,055
Reader Services	\$6,816	\$6,474	\$8,718	\$7,112
Rehabilitation Technology	\$233,772	\$156,734	\$219,053	\$276,715
Training - College and University	\$736,093	\$917,324	\$714,909	\$630,755
Training - Miscellaneous	\$59,553	\$57,876	\$30,422	\$17,078
Training - Occupational/Vocational	\$28,958	\$15,799	\$46,091	\$120,085
Transportation - Fuel/Travel	\$36,385	\$36,430	\$33,065	\$9,953
Total	\$2,675,801	\$2,349,347	\$2,007,099	\$1,931,274

The largest expenditure category for DBVI in all four years of the study was college and university training. This expenditure item ranged from 27.5% of all case service expenditures in PY 2017 to 39% in PY 2018. The rate in PY 2020 was 32.7%. Maintenance costs decreased from 23% of all expenditures in PY 2017 to 13.8% in POY 2020. Conversely, rehabilitation technology increased each year of the study, ranging from 8.7% of all expenditures in PY 2017 to 14.3% in PY 2020. This increase is very likely due to the cost of ensuring all DBVI participants had the AT and Internet access needed to participate in services remotely during the pandemic.

Gender and Age:

The project team examined the age and gender of individuals served by DBVI. Table 37 contains the results of this analysis.

Table 37

Gender and Age of Individuals Served by DBVI

Gender and Age of Individuals served	ALL CONSUMERS			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	50.4%	48.2%	47.7%	43.9%
Female	48.9%	49.0%	45.7%	43.8%
24 and younger	40.7%	43.2%	42.4%	42.8%
25 - 64	50.2%	47.7%	47.5%	47.2%
65 and Older	9.1%	9.1%	10.0%	10.0%

The data indicates that the ration of male to females served has been consistent for the four years of this study, with males receiving service at a slightly higher rate than females in every year except PY 2018. The rate of transition-age youth served by agency increased by more than two percent since PY 2017 and has remained steadily near 43% for the last three years. The rate of working-age adults served by DBVI has slightly decreased since PY 2018, while the rate of those

served that are 65 and over has slightly increased. Overall the rate of those served by age and gender have been very consistent for DBVI during the last four program years.

Employment Outcomes:

An important measure of the performance of the organization is the type of employment outcomes obtained by the consumers served. The project team utilized RSA-911 data to examine agency employment outcomes by Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code for DBVI compared to all other blind agency programs. The analyses are based upon cases closed with an employment outcome that also had a six-digit SOC code recorded for occupation at closure. Table 38 identifies these outcomes for 2020 by SOC categories and compares DBVI to all other blind agencies combined for the same year. In all of the areas marked with an asterisk, DBVI participants exited at a higher rate than the national average for Blind VR programs.

Table 38

Employment Outcomes by SOC Code for 2020

SOC Code Category	DBVI Frequency in 2020	All Blind VR Programs in 2020	Difference
* Management Occupations	8.0%	2.4%	5.6%
* Business and financial operations occupations	6.0%	1.4%	4.6%
* Computer and Mathematical Operations	6.0%	1.1%	4.9%
Architecture and engineering occupations	0.0%	0.7%	-0.7%
Life, physical and social science occupations	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Community and social science occupations	1.0%	2.9%	-1.9%
Legal occupations	2.0%	0.4%	1.6%
* Education, training and library occupations	8.0%	3.0%	5.0%
* Art, design, entertainment, sports and media occupations	3.0%	1.1%	1.9%
*Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations	8.0%	2.7%	5.3%
Healthcare support occupations	3.0%	4.1%	-1.1%
Protective service occupations	1.0%	1.6%	-0.6%
Food preparation and serving related occupations	10.0%	11.3%	-1.3%
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	5.0%	9.3%	-4.3%

SOC Code Category	DBVI Frequency in 2020	All Blind VR Programs in 2020	Difference
Personal care and service occupations	3.0%	5.7%	-2.7%
Sales and related occupations	6.0%	8.5%	-2.5%
Office and administrative support occupations	12.0%	15.8%	-3.8%
Farming, fishing and forestry occupations	0.0%	0.6%	-0.6%
Construction and extraction occupations	1.0%	2.5%	-1.5%
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	1.0%	4.9%	-3.9%
Production occupations	4.0%	8.0%	-4.0%
Transportation and material moving occupations	0.0%	8.5%	-8.5%

The data indicates a higher percentage of DBVI participants exited in professional higher-skill jobs than the rate for all Blind VR programs. In the areas of management occupations, business and financial operations occupations, computer and mathematical operations education, training and library occupations and health care practitioners and technical occupations, DBVI exceeded the national average for all VR programs more than 4.5 %. This supports the data on earnings and the interview results that indicate DBVI consumers are getting career-level jobs.

The next section of the CSNA report includes the results of the surveys conducted for all of the different groups that participated in the assessment. The survey results include the findings for the questions that apply to each of the different sections of the report.

SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS

In the overall performance section of the report, we will present general information about the respondents to the individual survey. Results that are consistent with the other portions of the report will be reported in those sections.

Surveys were distributed electronically via Qualtrics, a web-based survey application. There were 96 individual surveys completed. In some cases, individual respondents chose not to answer select questions on the survey but did complete the entire survey and submit it. This accounts for the variance in survey responses in some questions.

Respondent Demographics

Individual survey respondents were asked to identify their age.

The largest percentage of respondents were between the ages of 25 to 64 (80.2 percent) followed by individuals under 25 (11 percent). Table 39 identifies the age of respondents. A total of 91 respondents indicated their age.

Table 39

Age of Respondents

Age Range of Respondents	Number	Percent
25-64	73	80.2%
under 25	10	11.0%
65 and over	8	8.8%
Total	91	100.0%

Respondents were asked to identify the DBVI regional office they use to obtain services.

Slightly more than 26 percent of the respondents indicated that they are served by the Richmond Regional Office, which is ranked third highest in the State for population when compared to the other regional office areas. Results are detailed in Table 40.

Table 40

Regional Office Served By

RO Served By	Number	Percent
Richmond Region	24	26.1%
Fairfax Region	20	21.7%
Norfolk Region	19	20.7%
Roanoke Region	11	12.0%
Staunton Region	10	10.9%
I am not sure	5	5.4%
Bristol Region	3	3.3%
Total	92	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were presented with a checklist and asked to identify other disabilities they have in addition to blindness or visual impairment.

The majority of respondents (42.5 percent) indicated that they do not have any other disabling conditions. Mobility (13.8 percent) was the most frequently selected additional disability type indicated by respondents, followed by Deaf-Blind (12.3 percent). Five of the nine responses received in the category of “other” reported vision impairment or low vision as their additional disability and the four remaining responses cited specific disability and medical conditions. Table 41 summarizes the additional disabling conditions reported by the respondents.

Table 41

Additional Disability of Respondents

Additional Disability	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
No impairment	34	42.5%
Mobility	11	13.8%
Deaf-Blind	10	12.3%
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	9	11.3%
Other (please describe)	9	11.3%
Mental Health	8	10.0%
Intellectual Disability (ID)	6	7.5%
Physical	5	6.3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	4	5.0%
Autism Spectrum Disorder	3	3.8%
Developmental Disability (DD)	2	2.3%
Alcoholism or substance abuse	1	1.3%
Communication	0	0.0%

Association with DBVI

Individuals who responded to the survey were presented with a question that asked them to identify the statement that best described their association with DBVI.

The majority of respondents (58.3 percent) indicated they were previous clients of DBVI, and their case had been closed. Nine individuals (9.4 percent of the 96 respondents) who selected “other” indicated that they were either a sister agency to DBVI, family members of past or current clients, employee of DBVI, previous client restarting the process, previous client unsure if their case has been closed, and one respondent cited unsure of their status with DBVI. The responses to this question appear in Table 42.

Table 42

Respondent Association with DBVI

Association with DVBI	Number	Percent
I am a previous client of DBVI, my case has been closed	56	58.3%
I am a current client of DBVI	29	30.2%
Other (please describe)	9	9.4%
I have never used the services of DBVI	2	2.1%
Total	96	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were presented with a question that asked them to identify the statement that best described their length of association with DBVI.

Although 31 percent of the respondents reported that they had been associated with DBVI for 2 to 5 years, almost 26.5 percent of the 87 respondents indicated that they have been associated with DBVI for 10 years or more. The responses to this question appear in Table 43.

Table 43

Length of Association with DBVI

Length of Association with DBVI	Number	Percent
2-5 years	27	31.0%
10 years or greater	23	26.4%
6-9 years	19	21.8%
Less than 1 year	10	11.5%
1 year	8	9.2%
Total	87	100.0%

Relationship with Counselor

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their relationship with their DBVI counselor.

Respondents were asked to indicate where they usually met with their counselor. According to the survey results, over 47 percent of the respondents do not have a DBVI counselor. This may be due to the fact that the respondents are served by DBVI outside of the VR program since the agency has numerous programs in addition to VR that serves individuals. The majority of meetings with counselors (roughly 30 percent) occur most frequently by phone and remote video conference. Table 44 details the meeting locations reported by respondents.

Table 44

Meeting Location

Meeting Location	Number	Percent
I don't have a DBVI counselor	35	47.3%
We meet remotely by phone	22	29.7%
I go to a DBVI office	11	14.9%
In my community/school	5	6.8%
We meet remotely by video conference	1	1.4%
Total	74	100.0%

A separate question asked respondents to indicate how many counselors they have had. Slightly more than 38 percent of the 76 respondents to the question reported that they have had one counselor. Respondents who either never had a counselor or have had three or more counselors make up 30.3 percent of the respondents (n=23). Table 45 includes the results from the survey.

Table 45

Number of DBVI Counselors

Number of DBVI Counselors	Number	Percent
1	29	38.2%
2	24	31.6%
3	15	19.7%
I have never had a DBVI counselor	4	5.3%
More than 4	3	4.0%
4	1	1.3%
Total	76	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were presented with a five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “usually” to “rarely”) and asked to indicate how often they were able to reach their counselor when they needed to. Roughly 63.5 percent of the respondents indicated that they were either always able to reach their counselor or they usually were able to reach their counselor when they needed to. The responses to this question are found in Table 46.

Table 46

Ability to Reach Counselor

Ability to Reach Counselor	Number	Percent
Usually	24	33.8%
Always	21	29.6%
Sometimes	13	18.3%
Never	7	9.9%
Rarely	6	8.5%
Total	71	100.0%

Respondents were presented with another five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “excellent” to “terrible”) and asked to rate their ability to get along with their counselor. Slightly more than 72 percent of the 68 respondents selected either “excellent” or “good” when asked how well they get along with their counselor. The response results are identified in table 47.

Table 47

Getting along with Counselor

Getting Along with Counselor	Number	Percent
Excellent	28	41.2%
Good	21	30.9%
So-so	13	19.1%
Poor	4	5.9%
Terrible	2	2.9%
Total	68	100.0%

Remote DBVI Services

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, DBVI closed offices and modified service delivery for clients to include remote services. Individual survey respondents were asked two questions regarding the remote services.

Individual respondents were provided a list of services and asked to identify the types of services that were delivered to them remotely during to the Covid-19 pandemic. Almost 63 percent of the 75 respondents who answered the question indicated that they did not receive remote services during the pandemic. Roughly 38.5 percent (n=29) of respondents reported that they received remote services and identified a type of service. Individuals who selected the item “other” were given the opportunity to provide a narrative response. Three of the five narrative responses stated mobility training with two specifically addressing public transportation. One narrative response cited “Look for a job” and the other stated “None.” Table 48 summarizes the results regarding remote services.

Table 48
DBVI Services Delivered Remotely Since COVID

DBVI Services Delivered Remotely Since COVID	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
I have not received any services from DBVI remotely during the pandemic	47	62.7%
Assistive technology	13	17.3%
Career Counseling	11	14.7%
Job development and/or job placement	8	10.7%
Other (please describe)	7	9.3%
Benefits counseling	5	6.7%
Job support to keep a job	4	5.3%
Total	95	

The respondents who utilized remote services were asked to rate the effectiveness of the services that were delivered remotely. Twenty-four respondents answered the subsequent question.

The ratings for effectiveness of remote services is divided and suggests that remote services at DBVI may require additional improvements. Although roughly 29 percent of respondents indicated that remote services were either “extremely effective” or “effective,” about 29 percent of respondents indicated that remote services were not effective (less effective + not effective at all). Table 49 details the effectiveness ratings for remote services as cited by respondents.

Table 49
Effectiveness of Remote Services

Effectiveness of Remote Services	Number	Percent
Extremely effective	7	29.2%
Effective	7	29.2%
Less effective	2	8.3%
Not effective at all	5	20.8%
Somewhat effective	3	12.5%
Total	24	100.0%

General Comments Related to Performance:

The final survey question presented to individual respondents asked if there was anything else that they would like to add to the survey regarding DBVI or its services. A total of 30 narrative responses were received. Five of the comments were positive, citing gratitude for DBVI services. Eight respondents wrote that they did not have anything additional to add by writing phrases such as “N/A” “No” or “None.” The remaining 17 comments provided suggestions for: improvement in communication, helpfulness, and relationships with clients; improving the knowledge of counselors regarding disability types and technology services; expanding services for those with higher degrees and transportation; hiring qualified counselors that skilled in the ability to provide appropriate job placement assistance that is tailored toward blindness and additional disabling conditions; and improving technology within DBVI.

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS:

A total of 59 valid staff surveys were completed. Questions appearing on the staff survey addressed four general areas:

- Services readily available to persons with disabilities
- Barriers to achieving employment goals
- Barriers to accessing DBVI services
- Desired changes in DBVI services

The results of the staff survey related to barriers to employment and access will be detailed in Section Two.

Staff Respondent Characteristics

Staff respondents were asked to identify where they primarily serve consumers from a list of six regional office areas (RO) and headquarters.

Each regional office area is represented in the survey. The majority of staff indicated that they primarily service the Richmond Region. Table 50 details the regional distribution of where staff respondents serve.

Table 50

Regional Office Area Primarily Served

RO Primarily Serve	Number	Percent
Richmond Region	14	24.1%
Norfolk Region	10	17.2%
Roanoke Region	10	17.2%
Fairfax Region	8	13.8%
Staunton Region	6	10.3%
Headquarters	5	8.6%
Bristol Region	5	8.6%
Total	58	100.0%

Another survey question asked staff to indicate their job classification. A variety of staff positions are represented in the survey. Six staff respondents who selected the item “other,” provided narrative comments which specified their particular title. The quotes are:

- *“Business Relations Specialist”*
- *“Coordinator”*
- *“Rehab Teacher”*
- *“Rehab Tech Specialist”*
- *“Rehab Technology”*
- *“Visual Rehabilitation Teacher/Therapist”*

Table 51 clarifies the types of staff positions that are represented in the survey.

Table 51

Job Classification: Staff

Job Classification	Number	Percent
Instructor	19	32.2%
Rehabilitation Counselor	12	20.3%
Supervisor, Manager or Administrator	9	15.3%
Other (please describe)	8	13.6%
Administration or Operations	6	10.2%
Support Staff	5	8.5%
Total	59	100.0%

Staff Survey: Top Three Changes to Enable Staff to Better Serve DBVI Consumers

Staff were presented with a list of 12 options and asked to identify the top three changes that would enable them to better assist their consumers.

The top three changes identified by staff for the 2022 CSNA resembles the same results staff selected in the 2018 survey with one major change in ranking. In 2018 and 2022, staff identified smaller caseload, more streamlined processes, and more administrative support as the top three changes that would help them better serve consumers. “Better data management tools” was selected one time in 2018, making it the least ranking item staff cited that would help them better serve consumers. In 2022, “better data management tools” ranked in the fourth position, signifying a significant change in needs of staff members.

The item “increased outreach to clients in their community” dropped from the ninth position on the 2018 staff survey results list to the tenth position on the 2022 list. In 2018, the four least cited items were: increased outreach to clients in their community; decreased procurement time; more supervisor support; and better data management tools.

Five narrative responses were received in the category “other.” Quotes are:

- *“Better initial training for new staff”*
- *“Communication tool for texting”*
- *“COVID related issues have been the biggest impact with the inability to see clients”*
- *“Less data entry work, our day is consumed with clerical work”*
- *“More instructional staff at VRCBVI”*

Table 52 details the staff responses identifying the top three changes that would enable them to better serve DBVI consumers.

Table 52

Top Three Changes That Would Enable Staff to Better Serve DBVI Consumers

Top Three Changes to Better Assist DBVI Consumers	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Smaller caseload	24	58.5%
More streamlined processes	24	58.5%
More administrative support	15	36.6%
Better data management tools	11	26.8%
Additional training	11	26.8%
Better assessment tools	7	17.1%
More effective community-based service providers	6	14.6%
Improved business partnerships	6	14.6%
Other (please describe)	5	12.2%
Increased outreach to clients in their communities	4	9.8%
Decreased procurement time	3	7.3%

Top Three Changes to Better Assist DBVI Consumers	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
More supervisor support	3	7.3%
Total	119	

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

There were only 21 valid responses to the community partner survey in this iteration of the CSNA. It seems very likely that part of this low response rate is a result of the office closures due to the pandemic and the high turnover rate reported by many community partners at all levels.

Partner Respondent Characteristics

The first survey question asked partner respondents to classify their organization. Fifty percent of respondents identified as an educational agency. One respondent identified as a workforce development system partner. None of the respondents indicated working for a state, federal or local agency that serves individuals with disabilities, nor did any respondents cite being a medical provider. The one respondent who selected “other, (please describe)” cited “employment services organization which is probably the same as community rehab program.”

Table 53 identifies the classifications indicated by the partner respondents.

Table 53

Organization Type of Partner Survey Respondents

Organization Type	Number	Percent
An educational agency	8	50.0%
A Community Rehabilitation Program	3	18.8%
I am an individual service provider	3	18.8%
A Workforce Development System partner	1	6.3%
Other (please describe)	1	6.3%
A health care provider	0	0.0%
Another State, Federal or local agency that serves individuals with disabilities	0	0.0%
Total	16	100.0%

The majority of the partner survey results are reserved for the other areas of this report and are included in the applicable sections.

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following themes emerged on a recurring basis from the individual interviews and focus groups conducted for this assessment as it relates to overall program performance for DBVI:

The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically affected DBVI as well as all VR programs nationally. There were multiple reports of the impacts of the pandemic (both negative and positive) reported from all of the groups interviewed for this assessment. These are reported throughout the report in the applicable areas but are summarized here because they impact the overall performance of the agency. Following are the recurring themes that emerged regarding the negative consequences of the pandemic:

1. The number of applications to DBVI and the number of employment outcomes experienced sharp declines during the pandemic;
2. Many consumers decided to put their rehabilitation plan on hold or asked to have their case closed due to concern for their health and fear of catching COVID-19 and becoming ill;
3. Consumer engagement with DBVI was adversely affected, especially in the first several months of the pandemic as some consumers were not set up for virtual functioning;
4. Several DBVI staff and partners, while successfully adapting to virtual service delivery, indicated that the quality of the counseling relationship in a virtual environment is not the same as in-person. Counselors and providers indicate that they are unable to establish the same “connection” or rapport with consumers remotely and that the assessment process that occurs from interacting with the person face-to-face is lost by distance;
5. Several participants indicated that virtual service delivery is very difficult for some services such as orientation and mobility training and independent living skills such as cooking. The inability to be in-person due to the pandemic significantly affected the quality of these services and all of the individuals interviewed in this area were very happy to be able to be back in-person with consumers for the delivery of these services; and
6. There are broadband and other connectivity issues prevalent in many rural areas, which limits the ability of some consumers to function remotely.

The following positive consequences of the shift to remote service delivery and telework as a result of the pandemic were cited by many participants:

1. One of the unanticipated positive consequences of the pandemic is that DBVI was able to clear all of the individuals off of the waiting list. The agency did not expend case service dollars at pre-pandemic levels because of the decline in the number of individuals served. This freed funding up to serve individuals on the OOS wait list;
2. DBVI was given high marks by all groups for the speed and efficiency with which they shifted to telework and remote service delivery. Considering the paradigm shift in the

way the agency operates, many people were complimentary of administration for effectively managing this change. DBVI did their best to ensure that staff had the technology and equipment to function remotely and implemented programs like electronic signatures to help the agency continue to serve consumers;

3. VRCBVI was especially praised for the speed and efficiency with which it shifted to remote service provision and training;
4. At the time of this assessment, DBVI staff were working a hybrid schedule because of the reduced COVID infection rates. Many staff expressed satisfaction with the ability to work from home and felt that it made them as or more productive than being in the office. Staff and providers expressed that they save time and money as a result of reduced travel costs;
5. Although applications have decreased during COVID, staff and partners indicate that business is starting to pick back up and they are optimistic about the future;
6. The pandemic forced DBVI to increase their online presence and capacity for consumers to virtually move through the rehabilitation process. This has been positive for many consumers, staff and partners; and
7. DBVI and VRCBVI were very creative in the development of virtual training, and the new platforms allowed the agency to reach many more individuals than they had when providing training in-person only. Outreach and training, especially for youth, increased significantly as a result of the shift to virtual training. DBVI has been recognized nationally among VR programs for the programs they have created during the pandemic.

In addition to themes related to the pandemic, the following areas emerged from the interviews and focus groups related to overall agency performance:

8. The community awareness of DBVI is lacking in many areas of the state and needs to increase. As the restrictions brought about by the pandemic wane, DBVI can refocus on effective outreach efforts;
9. Recruitment of qualified staff is a major need of the organization. It is difficult to find qualified individuals to hire, so the agency will need to examine ways to address this issue;
10. The administrative requirements for reporting by counselors were described as very time-consuming and burdensome, to such an extent that they directly affect the ability of staff to engage with consumers;
11. The quality of employment outcomes achieved by DBVI consumers was overwhelmingly noted as being very good. Consumers are prepared for in-demand jobs that are high in pay and career-level. These outcomes reflect the agency-wide belief in the abilities and capabilities of people with blindness. DBVI staff have high expectations for their consumers and work hard to convey those expectations to the individuals they serve; and
12. Although there have been some setbacks during the pandemic, the agency has improved the speed with which they are able to deliver services and technology to consumers since the previous CSNA.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to DBVI based on the results of the research in the Overall Agency Performance area:

1. DBVI is encouraged to increase marketing and outreach efforts as the pandemic restrictions continue to be lifted throughout Virginia, while being cognizant of available fiscal and staff resources so that there is not a need to enter an order of selection again;
2. The agency is encouraged to actively recruit interns to help address the need for qualified counseling and instruction staff. DBVI is encouraged to embark on a “grow your own” program whereby consumers are supported to achieve their graduate degree in Rehabilitation Counseling and can serve as interns for the agency during their practicum requirements. This can result in a steady pipeline of qualified individuals to work for the agency upon graduation;
3. DBVI should continue the innovative work they are doing with virtual training and expand the opportunities in this area as resources allow;
4. DBVI is encouraged to identify and implement strategies and practices that can help reduce the administrative burden of gathering, tracking and reporting on counseling and direct service staff. The agency has considered participating in the SARA artificial intelligence pilot program with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM). The agency should continue to pursue this possibility or look into programs or technology that may help in this area;
5. Where possible, DBVI should identify ways to streamline processes and reduce administrative duties of field staff; and
6. DBVI is encouraged to identify methods to ensure that the agency can gather and analyze data related to performance across multiple levels to support data-driven decision-making.

SECTION 2:

NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

Section 2 includes an assessment of the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment. This section includes the rehabilitation needs of DBVI consumers as expressed by the different groups interviewed and surveyed. All of the general needs of DBVI consumers were included here, with specific needs identified relating to supported employment. Findings related to VRCBVI are included in this section.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities including their need for supported employment:

1. Transportation and assistive technology were the two most commonly cited rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments. This need is consistent with other agency reports and past CSNAs and is common for this population.
2. Assistive technology is especially important for Deaf-Blind individuals.
3. Common recurring rehabilitation needs other than transportation and AT included training, soft-skills (especially for youth), benefits planning, self-advocacy training and work experience.
4. Individuals that receive either SSI or SSDI or both have significant fears about losing benefits due to work, especially medical insurance. This fear limits their return-to-work behavior, resulting in them looking for part-time work that keeps their earnings level below that which would remove them from support by SSA. Consequently, these individuals do not pursue self-sustaining employment and do not achieve desired levels of employment. This is a common issue for SSA beneficiaries served by all VR programs nationally. The importance of reaching these beneficiaries as youth and helping them strive for self-sufficiency was noted as critical.
5. The pandemic exposed the need for individuals to have available broadband Internet access.
6. It has become increasingly common for DBVI consumers to have a secondary mental health impairment in addition to blindness or a vision impairment. Staff and partners need training on how to effectively work with these individuals.
7. Supported and customized employment are not common strategies or practices utilized by DBVI.

8. VRCBVI was praised for providing excellent adjustment to blindness and independent living skills training to consumers. In addition, the center has worked to increase its vocational focus, though there is still room for growth in this area. They shifted to remote services and responded as effectively as possible to the pandemic's effect on a residential training program.

***NATIONAL AND/OR AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT
DISABILITIES, INCLUDING THEIR NEED FOR SUPPORTED
EMPLOYMENT:***

In the course of this assessment there were numerous reports by staff and partners that there was an increasing number of individuals applying for and receiving services that had at least one secondary disability in addition to blindness or a vision impairment, and that many of these individuals have a mental health impairment that may or may not be diagnosed. The project team requested data from DBVI to examine this issue and Table 54 includes the available information related the number of applicants that report some type of secondary disability at the time they apply for services.

Table 54

Secondary Disability of Applicants

Secondary Disability Reported at Application	ALL CONSUMERS			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Physical impairment	183	79	266	205
Percent of all applicants	49.2%	25.3%	88.1%	88.4%
Communicative impairment	16	13	4	3
Percent of all applicants	4.3%	4.2%	1.3%	1.3%
ID/DD or other cognitive impairment	10	8	12	6
Percent of all applicants	2.7%	2.6%	4.0%	2.6%
Mental health impairment	16	13	18	18
Percent of all applicants	4.3%	4.2%	6.0%	7.8%

The data indicates that of the applicants that reported a secondary disability, more than 88% reported a physical disability in PY 2018 and 2019. Mental health impairments only constituted 7.8% of all reported secondary impairments. This seems like a very low rate compared to the frequency with which interview participants reported mental health issues those served. This issue warrants further investigation by DBVI to determine if mental health impairments are being under-reported and/or undiagnosed and untreated.

Supported Employment:

The project team requested information on individuals receiving supported employment (SE) services and those individuals that are Social Security Administration (SSA) disability beneficiaries. There was limited information available on these two populations of consumers, but DBVI was able to identify those individuals identified as receiving SSA benefits at the time of application and those anticipated to need SE services when a plan was developed for the project period. This information is contained in Table 55.

Table 55

SE and SSA Beneficiaries Served by DBVI

Item	2017	2018	2019	2020
Supported Employment	10	5	8	6
Percent of all applicants	2.7%	1.6%	2.6%	2.6%
SSA Beneficiary	185	190	146	102
Percent of all applicants	49.7%	60.9%	48.3%	44.0%

The data indicates that DBVI is serving very few individuals utilizing the SE service model. This data is consistent with the feedback received during the individual and focus group interviews. Almost half of all applicants indicated that they were SSA beneficiaries of some type when they applied for services in PY 2017. This rate increased to more than 60% in PY 2018 and decreased to 44% in PY 2020. The SSA beneficiary status is an important influencing factor on the return-to-work behavior of individuals served by DBVI. This issue will be addressed in the summary of the recurring themes from the individual and focus groups interviews.

SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY – EMPLOYMENT RELATED NEEDS

Receipt of Social Security Disability Benefits

Individual survey respondents were presented with a checklist and asked to indicate whether they received Social Security disability benefits. The total number of respondents who answered this question is 89. The most common response to the question regarding Social Security benefits was “I receive SSDI.” Results indicate that 31.5 percent do not receive Social Security benefits. Table 56 summarizes the responses to this question. It should be noted that 89 individuals responded to the question and respondents were allowed to select more than one response in the series of items (e.g., in the case of an individual who received both SSI and SSDI).

Table 56
Social Security Benefit Status

Social Security Benefits Status	Number of times chosen	Percent of respondents
I receive SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance. SSDI is provided to individuals that have worked in the past and is based on the amount of money the individual paid into the system through payroll deductions)	34	38.20%
I do not receive Social Security disability benefits	28	31.50%
I have received benefits in the past, but no longer receive them	14	15.70%
I receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income. SSI is a means-tested benefit generally provided to individuals with little or no work history)	11	12.40%
I receive a check from the Social Security Administration every month, but I do not know which benefit I get	4	4.50%
I don't know if I receive Social Security disability benefits	1	1.10%
Total	92	100%

Finances and Money Management

Respondents of the individual survey were asked a series of questions regarding finances and money management.

Respondents were given a list of statements and asked to rate how well each of the statements describe their financial situation. For each statement, the item “somewhat” was selected most frequently by respondents. When analyzing the results for each item the following inferences are revealed:

- 1) Roughly one-third of the respondents believe they will never have the things they want in life while one-third believe they will obtain their wants;
- 2) Almost 38 percent of respondents do not believe they are getting by financially; and
- 3) Over 42 percent of respondents express concern that their money will not last

Table 57 details the ratings for each of the statements.

Table 57
Financial Situation

Individual Survey: Financial Situation	Completely		Very Well		Somewhat		Very Little		Not at All		Number of Times Selected
	#	Percent of Total	#	Percent of Total	#	Percent of Total	#	Percent of Total	#	Percent of Total	
Because of my money situation, I feel like I will never have the things I want in life	12	18.50%	10	15.40%	21	32.30%	8	12.30%	14	21.50%	65
I am just getting by financially	12	18.20%	8	12.10%	21	31.80%	10	15.20%	15	22.70%	66
I am concerned the money I have, or will have, won't last	15	22.70%	13	19.70%	17	25.80%	10	15.20%	11	16.70%	66

Individual survey respondents were also presented a checklist of statements regarding money management and asked to indicate whether the item represents how they manage money. Although the majority of respondents indicated they have monthly budgets in addition to savings and checking accounts, the majority of respondents indicated they do not invest money, nor do they want to learn more about managing money. Table 58 details the results.

Table 58
Managing Money

Individual Survey: Managing Money	Yes		No		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
I have a checking account	61	98.4%	1	1.6%	62
I have a monthly budget	49	77.8%	14	22.2%	63
I have a savings account	48	78.7%	13	21.3%	61
I invest my money	22	38.6%	35	61.4%	57

Individual Survey: Managing Money	Yes		No		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
I would like to learn more about managing my money	16	28.1%	41	71.9%	57

Respondents were presented a five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “always” to “never”) and asked the question: “How often do you have money left over at the end of each month?” Of the 70 individuals who answered the question, the rating of “sometimes” was selected by more than 31 percent of respondents and 38.6 percent selected either “rarely” or “never”. Table 59 summarizes the details reported by respondents.

Table 59

Money Left by the End of the Month

Money Left by the End of the Month	Number	Percent
Sometimes	22	31.4%
Rarely	16	22.9%
Often	11	15.7%
Never	11	15.7%
Always	10	14.3%
Total	70	100.0%

The final survey question in the series regarding finances, individual survey respondents were presented a five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “always” to “never”) and asked to indicate how often they feel like finances control their life. About 53 percent of the respondents selected either “always” or “often” while slightly more than 24 percent selected “rarely” or “never.” Table 60 includes this information.

Table 60
Finances Control Life

Finances Control Life	Number	Percent
Often	20	28.6%
Always	17	24.3%
Sometimes	16	22.9%
Rarely	11	15.7%
Never	6	8.6%
Total	70	100.0%

Services from Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)

Individual survey respondents were presented with a series of questions regarding their experience with Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI).

Seventy-one respondents answered the question whether or not they attended and completed the VRCBVI program. The majority of the respondents (84.5%) did not attend the program. Two respondents selected the item “Yes, but did not complete the program.” However, three survey respondents answered the subsequent question “Why did you not complete VRCBVI?” The narrative cited in the category “other” for the subsequent question indicated the respondent found a job within the organization.

Tables 61 and 62 detail the responses to the questions regarding attending and completing the VRCBVI program.

Table 62
Attending and Completing the VRCBVI Program

Attend and Complete VRCBVI Program	Number	Percent
No, I did not attend VRCBVI	60	84.5%
Yes, and I completed the program	9	12.7%
Yes, but I did not complete the program	2	2.8%
Total	71	100.0%

Table 62
Why VRCBVI Program Not Completed

Why VRCBVI Program Not Completed	Number	Percent
The program was too long	2	66.7%
Other (please describe)	1	33.3%
Health issues	0	0.0%
I was dismissed from the program	0	0.0%
Family issues	0	0.0%
I was not pleased with the instruction	0	0.0%
I had difficulty getting along with others	0	0.0%
Mental health concerns prevented me from completing	0	0.0%
Total	3	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were asked to rate a series of questions regarding the quality and helpfulness of services at the Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired using a five-point scale (excellent, good, average, poor, did not receive the training). Tables 63–70 summarize the responses.

Table 63
Quality of Orientation and Mobility Training

Quality of the Orientation and Mobility Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	7	58.3%
Good	4	33.3%
Average	1	8.3%
Poor	0	0.0%
I did not receive Orientation and Mobility training	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 64
Quality of Braille Training

Quality of the Braille Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	5	41.7%
I did not receive Braille training	4	33.3%
Good	3	25.0%
Average	0	0.0%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 65
Quality of the Computer, and Technology Training

Quality of the Keyboarding, Computer, and Access Technology Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	6	50.0%
Good	4	33.3%
I did not receive keyboarding, computers and access technology training	2	16.7%
Average	0	0.0%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 66
Quality of the Personal Home Management/Cooking Training

Quality of the Personal Home Management/Cooking Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	6	50.0%
Good	4	33.3%
Average	1	8.3%

Quality of the Personal Home Management/Cooking Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
I did not receive personal home management/cooking training	1	8.3%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 67

Quality of the Adult Basic Education Training

Quality of the Adult Basic Ed Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	7	58.3%
Good	2	16.7%
I did not receive adult basic education training	2	16.7%
Average	1	8.3%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 68

Quality of the Wellness Instruction and Recreation Training

Quality of the Wellness Instruction and Recreation Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	5	41.7%
Good	4	33.3%
I did not receive wellness instruction and recreation training	3	25.0%
Average	0	0.0%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 69

Quality of the Health Services Training

Quality of the Health Services Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	5	41.7%
Good	3	25.0%
I did not receive health services training	3	25.0%
Average	1	8.3%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

Table 70

Quality of the Vocational Services

Quality of the Vocational Services Training at VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Excellent	5	41.7%
Good	3	25.0%
Average	2	16.7%
I did not receive vocational services training	2	16.7%
Poor	0	0.0%
Total	12	100.0%

The sample size is small (n=12) for rating the VRCBVI training and is consistent for all eight training courses offered. The item choice “poor” was not selected by respondents when answering the questions related to the eight training courses offered at VRCBVI.

Of all the training courses offered at the VRCBVI, two courses (orientation and mobility training, adult basic education training) received the highest “excellent” rating (over 58%). Note that all twelve respondents attended the orientation and mobility training course, and ten of the 12 respondents attended the adult basic education course.

When analyzing the ratings of “excellent” and “good” combined, slightly more than 91.5 percent of 12 respondents that participated in the orientation and mobility training found the quality of

the class to be either “excellent” or “good.” An equal percentage of respondents (83.3%) found the quality of the personal home management/cooking training and the quality of keyboarding, computer, and access technology training to be either “excellent” or “good.” The personal home management/cooking training course was the second highest attended course (n=11) by survey respondents and the technology training was attended by ten of the twelve respondents.

The majority of respondents that answered the question regarding the quality of the Braille training at the VRCBVI indicated the training was “excellent.” The choice “I did not receive Braille training” received the second highest rating (33.3%). The Braille training was attended by eight of the 12 survey respondents, the lowest attended course by survey respondents.

Nine survey respondents attended the wellness instruction and recreation training and the health services training provided by the VRCVBI. The “excellent” rating for each training was slightly less than 42 percent. The vocational services training course was attended by ten of 12 respondents and received the highest “average” quality rating (16.7%).

Individual survey respondents were asked two questions regarding the preparedness they experienced as a result to the training they received at VRCBVI. Tables 71-72 detail the results.

Table 71

Preparedness to Live Independently

Preparedness to Live Independently as a Result of Training Received	Number	Percent
Very prepared	8	72.7%
Moderately prepared	2	18.2%
Not at all prepared	1	9.1%
Minimally prepared	0	0.0%
Total	11	100.0%

Table 72

Preparedness to Go to Work

Preparedness to Go To Work as a Result of Training Received	Number	Percent
Very prepared	7	63.6%
Moderately prepared	3	27.3%
Not at all prepared	1	9.1%
Minimally prepared	0	0.0%
Total	11	100.0%

The sample size is small (n=11) for rating the preparedness to live independently and preparedness to go to work after receiving VRCBVI training. The item choice “minimally prepared” was not selected by respondents when answering the questions related to preparedness.

The majority of respondents selected “very prepared” when rating the level of preparedness they experienced after completing training to live independently (72.7%) and go to work (63.6%). The information reflects the responses received regarding the eight training courses as the orientation and mobility, adult education, and the personal home management/cooking training courses each had quality ratings of “excellent” of 50 percent or more. Technology and vocational trainings had “excellent” ratings between 40 to 50 percent.

Barriers to Employment

Individual survey respondents were asked a series of questions to identify barriers to employment and to accessing DBVI services.

Respondents were presented with a list of 19 potential barriers to getting a job and asked to indicate whether or not the item had been a barrier that impacted their ability to obtain a job. There was no limit to the number of barriers that an individual survey respondent could choose.

“Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability” was the most frequently chosen item as a barrier to employment, selected by roughly 69 percent of the respondents. “Lack of reliable transportation” was selected by 64 percent of the respondents as a barrier to getting a job. The margin between lack of available jobs as a barrier or not a barrier for obtaining employment (16.6 percent) signals that a large number of respondents have experienced difficulty finding work due to the number of jobs available despite. The margin between mental health concerns as a barrier or not a barrier for obtaining employment (63.8 percent) signals that a large number of respondents do not believe they experienced difficulty finding work due to mental health. The five items that received a seven percent response rate or less as being a barrier

to getting a job include: lack of housing, criminal record, limited English skills, substance abuse, and lack of childcare. Table 73 summarizes the barriers and the impact on getting a job.

Table 73

Individual Survey: Identifying Barriers to Getting a Job

Individual Survey: Barriers to Getting a Job	Yes, has been a Barrier		Not a Barrier		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability	51	68.9%	23	31.1%	74
Lack of reliable transportation	48	64.0%	27	36.0%	75
Employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities	46	60.5%	30	39.5%	76
Lack of available jobs	30	41.7%	42	58.3%	72
Lack of training	27	37.5%	45	62.5%	72
Lack of assistive technology	25	33.3%	50	66.7%	75
Lack of job skills	23	32.4%	48	67.6%	71
Lack of job search skills	23	31.9%	49	68.1%	72
Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working	21	28.8%	52	71.2%	73
Lack of reliable Internet access	17	24.3%	53	75.7%	70
Lack of education	15	21.1%	56	78.9%	71
Mental health concerns	13	18.1%	59	81.9%	72
Lack of attendant care	11	15.3%	61	84.7%	72
Age	8	11.1%	64	88.9%	72
Lack of housing	5	7.0%	66	93.0%	71

Individual Survey: Barriers to Getting a Job	Yes, has been a Barrier		Not a Barrier		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Criminal Record	3	4.2%	68	95.8%	71
Limited English skills	3	4.3%	67	95.7%	70
Substance abuse	1	1.4%	71	98.6%	72
Lack of childcare	1	1.4%	72	98.6%	73

Respondents were presented with a list and were asked to identify the top three barriers that they have faced specifically toward getting a job. A total of 66 respondents answered the question. Lack of reliable transportation, employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability, and employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities were the three top items selected by respondents, matching the top three responses in the Table 73. The last three items on this list also resemble the last three items on the list in the previous table. Table 74 contains a summary of the responses to the question.

Table 74

Individual Survey: Top Three Barriers to Getting a Job

Top Three Barriers to Getting a Job	Times identified as a barrier	Percent of number of respondents
Lack of reliable transportation	33	50.0%
Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability	28	42.4%
Employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities	25	37.9%
Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working	15	22.7%
Lack of assistive technology	14	21.2%
Lack of available jobs	13	19.7%

Top Three Barriers to Getting a Job	Times identified as a barrier	Percent of number of respondents
Lack of education	10	15.2%
Lack of training	10	15.2%
Lack of job skills	8	12.1%
Lack of job search skills	6	9.1%
Mental health concerns	5	7.6%
Lack of reliable Internet access	4	6.1%
Criminal Record	2	3.0%
Lack of attendant care	2	3.0%
Lack of housing	2	3.0%
Limited English skills	1	1.5%
Substance abuse	1	1.5%
Lack of childcare	0	0.0%

Respondents were presented with an open-ended question asking them to identify other barriers that they may have experienced that prevented them from getting a job. There were 17 individuals that provided a narrative response to this question and three comments cited no other barriers. Content analysis of the remaining responses indicated a variety of specific circumstances that prevented respondents from obtaining a job including: lack of work from home options; inability to drive; social security suspended and not working because sight has gotten worse; college student without time to work; inability to complete education that is needed for career; and lack of job coaches. The Covid pandemic was noted by one respondent. Two narrative comments detailed that the respondent was employed but had experienced barriers to either getting another job, or, barriers kept the respondent from keeping a job. Disability discrimination was reported in three narrative comments, and assistive technology issues were reported in two comments.

Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services

Individual survey respondents were presented with a list describing potential barriers to accessing DBVI services and asked to indicate whether or not the barriers had made it difficult to access the services. There was no limit to the number of barriers the respondent could choose.

Analysis of the responses indicate a small number of individuals experience barriers to accessing DBVI services. Each item on the list was cited as “not a barrier” by more than half of respondents.

“Lack of information about available jobs” was the most frequently cited barrier to accessing DBVI services by the minority of respondents. The margin between lack of information about available services as a barrier or not a barrier for obtaining employment (27.6 percent) signals that a significant number of respondents have experienced difficulty finding work due to the lack of information regarding job availability.

Two items were cited as barriers to accessing DBVI services with percentage rates between 20 and 21 percent. The least common barriers chosen by respondents, receiving less than a 6.5% rate, were: DBVI's hours of operation; difficulties completing the DBVI application; and language barriers. Table 75 contains a summary of the responses to the question.

Table 75

Individual Survey: Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services

Individual Survey: Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services	Yes, has been a Barrier		Not a Barrier		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Lack of information about available services	25	36.2%	44	63.8%	69
The DBVI office is not on a public bus route	13	20.3%	51	79.7%	64
Other difficulties with DBVI staff	13	21.0%	49	79.0%	62
Lack of disability-related accommodations	12	17.9%	55	82.1%	67
Difficulties scheduling meetings with my counselor	12	18.5%	53	81.5%	65
Difficulty reaching DBVI staff	12	18.5%	53	81.5%	65

Individual Survey: Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services	Yes, has been a Barrier		Not a Barrier		Number of Times Selected
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total	
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)	10	16.1%	52	83.9%	62
Reliable Internet access	10	16.1%	52	83.9%	62
DBVI's hours of operation	4	6.4%	59	93.7%	63
Difficulties completing the DBVI application	3	4.6%	62	95.4%	65
Language barriers	2	3.1%	62	96.9%	64

Individual survey respondents were presented a subsequent question with a list and asked to identify the three top barriers to accessing DBVI services. The most frequently selected item on the list, chosen by roughly 43 percent of the 65 individuals who answered the question, was the phrase “I have not had any barriers to accessing DBVI services.” The barriers that were identified in table 75 below are in a different ranking order from table 74 above with the exception of the top barrier cited. The difference in ranking order may be due to the varying number of respondents who answered each question. Table 76 lists the barriers along with the number of times each barrier was cited.

Table 76

Individual Survey: Top Three Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services

Top Three Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services	Times identified as a barrier	Percent of number of respondents
I have not had any barriers to accessing DBVI services	28	43.1%
Lack of information about available services	25	38.5%
Difficulty reaching DBVI staff	11	16.9%
Lack of disability-related accommodations	8	12.3%
Other difficulties with DBVI staff	7	10.8%

Top Three Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services	Times identified as a barrier	Percent of number of respondents
The DBVI office is not on a public bus route	6	9.2%
Difficulties scheduling meetings with my counselor	6	9.2%
Reliable Internet access	6	9.2%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)	5	7.7%
Difficulties completing the DBVI application	2	3.1%
Language barriers	1	1.5%
DBVI's hours of operation	0	0.0%
Total	105	

Respondents were presented with a “yes-no” question asking them if there was any other challenges or barriers not already mentioned that made it difficult to access DBVI services. Seventy-two respondents answered the question and 14 individuals indicated “yes.” Thirteen narrative responses were received. Content analysis of the narrative responses revealed the following: concern over the lack of communication/responsiveness, lack of assistance from of DBVI counselors; lack of local support; problems related to transportation; DBVI website not section 508 compliant; lack of knowledge on the part of other professionals regarding the existence of DBVI services; lack of education assistance and IEP issues; and limited career options. The Covid pandemic was mentioned in one narrative comment.

Employment Goals

Individual survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their employment goals and their future plans.

Respondents were asked an open-ended question asking them to identify their current employment goal. A total of 53 survey participants responded to the question. Content analysis of the narrative responses cited a wide variety of occupations, from items requiring 4-year college or university level education such as becoming a counselor or licensed therapist, teacher for Deaf-Blind, or working for the federal government. Non-university level careers also appeared in the narrative responses such as becoming an administrative assistant and becoming a cleaning captain. Other responses included items such as finding a job, finding part time employment and work from home jobs, desiring a career, improving the personal financial

situation, finishing education, owning a business, finding a better paying job, moving up the career ladder, and retaining the present job.

Respondents answered a follow-up yes-no question: “Has DBVI helped you to progress towards your employment goal?” The majority of respondents indicated that DBVI helped them make progress towards their employment goal. Table 77 details the number of times a response choice was selected, and the percentage rate based on the number of respondents who answered the question.

Table 77

DBVI Helped Progress to Employment Goal

DBVI Helped Progress to Employment Goal	Number	Percent
Yes	45	60.0%
No	24	32.0%
I have not worked with DBVI	6	8.0%
Total	75	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were asked a yes-no question requesting them to indicate whether or not they had received services from an organization or individual that DBVI referred them to. The majority of respondents indicated that they did not receive services as the result of a DBVI referral. Table 78 details the results.

Table 78

Use of DBVI Referral

Use of DBVI Referral	Number	Percent
No	41	58.6%
Yes	22	31.4%
I am not sure	7	10.0%
Total	70	100.0%

Respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they had thought about what their next job would be once they attained their current employment goal. The difference between the number of “yes” responses compared to the number of “no” responses is one (n=1). Table 79 summarizes the results.

Table 79

Thought Towards Next Job

Thought Towards Next Job	Number	Percent
No	27	39.1%
Yes	26	37.7%
I don't know	16	23.2%
Total	69	100.0%

Individual survey respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they will need more training or help to obtain their next job. Twenty-eight respondents answered the question and five indicated that they would not require additional training nor assistance to obtain their next job. Table 80 contains the results to the question.

Table 80

Need More Training or Help to Get Next Job

Need More Training or Help to Get Next Job	Number	Percent
Yes	13	46.4%
I don't know	10	35.7%
No	5	17.9%
Total	28	100.0%

Individual respondents were asked an open-ended question asking them to provide suggestions on how DBVI could change their services to help get a job, keep the current job or get a better job. A total of 46 survey participants responded to the question. Five comments provided positive affirmations of DBVI services, five comments detailed negative feedback, and six narrative comments expressed no recommendations due to uncertainty or not applicable. Content analysis of the remaining 30 comments include: hiring qualified counselors, treating people with kindness, actively listen and be actively involved, provide more than one way to access services and to message or contact someone, follow-up with clients regularly, improve transportation options, provide job options that are tailored to the client's qualifications, provide job options that are above entry level positions.

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

Partner Survey: Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals – General DBVI Consumers

Partner survey respondents were given a list of 19 reasons why a consumer may find it difficult to achieve employment goals. Respondents were asked to identify if the reason was a barrier that prevents consumers from achieving their employment goals. If the item was identified as a barrier, respondents were also asked to identify whether or not the barrier is being adequately addressed by DBVI. There was no limit to the number of barriers that a respondent could choose.

Partner and individual survey respondents were presented a similar question for identifying barriers to achieving employment goals and had slightly different item lists to choose barriers from. A smaller sample size is noted for partner respondents. For about one-half of the list items (10 out of 19), partner respondents did not know if the item was a barrier for consumers. One item the majority of partners cited “Don’t know” was the item “other transportation issues.” “Other transportation issues” is comparable to the item presented to individual respondents “lack of reliable transportation.” “Lack of reliable transportation” is the second most frequently identified barrier by the individual respondents in the similar individual survey question and cited as the top barrier to achieving employment goals by individuals in a follow-up question. Partners cited items that related to the lack of consumer skills and lack of disability-related accommodations most frequently as barriers to achieving employment goals. Conversely, individual respondents most frequently selected the items related to employers’ perceptions about the employee’s abilities and employers’ hesitation to hire people with disabilities from the list of potential barriers. About one-half of partner respondents (n=6) do not believe DBVI is addressing social skills nor disability-related transportation barriers adequately. Table 81 lists the items presented to partner respondents along with the number of times each of the items was cited as a barrier, and the percentage rates of the number of respondents who selected the item.

Table 81
Partner Survey: Identifying Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

Potential Reason	Times chosen as a Barrier		Barrier, adequately addressed	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed	Not a barrier	Don't know	Total
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Not having job search skills	11	84.6%	69.2%	15.4%	7.7%	7.7%	13
Not having disability-related accommodations	11	84.6%	46.2%	38.5%	7.7%	7.7%	13
Not having education or training	10	76.9%	46.2%	30.8%	7.7%	15.4%	13
Not having job skills	10	76.9%	46.2%	30.8%	15.4%	7.7%	13
Poor social skills	9	69.2%	23.1%	46.2%	15.4%	15.4%	13
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	9	69.2%	46.2%	23.1%	0.0%	30.8%	13
Disability-related transportation issues	9	69.2%	23.1%	46.2%	7.7%	23.1%	13
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	7	53.9%	23.1%	30.8%	7.7%	38.5%	13
Language barriers	6	46.2%	23.1%	23.1%	15.4%	38.5%	13
Other transportation issues	5	41.7%	8.3%	33.3%	8.3%	50.0%	12
Not enough jobs available	4	30.8%	7.7%	23.1%	15.4%	53.9%	13

Potential Reason	Times chosen as a Barrier		Barrier, adequately addressed	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed	Not a barrier	Don't know	Total
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	4	30.8%	23.1%	7.7%	15.4%	53.9%	13
Housing issues	4	30.8%	7.7%	23.1%	7.7%	61.5%	13
Substance abuse issues	3	23.1%	7.7%	15.4%	15.4%	61.5%	13
Other health issues	3	23.1%	15.4%	7.7%	15.4%	61.5%	13
Childcare issues	3	23.1%	0.0%	23.1%	7.7%	69.2%	13
Convictions for criminal offenses	2	15.4%	15.4%	0.0%	15.4%	69.2%	13
Mental health issues	2	16.7%	8.3%	8.3%	16.7%	66.7%	12
Other (please describe)	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0

Partner Survey: Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals – General DBVI Consumers

Partner survey respondents were given a list of 19 barriers, including an option for “other”, and were asked to identify the top three barriers that prevent the general population of DBVI consumers from achieving their employment goals. There was no limit to the number of barriers that a respondent could choose.

The CSNA survey results reveal that although transportation is the number one barrier to employment for DBVI consumers, there is a distinct difference between consumer perceptions and the partner perceptions on what type of transportation is the biggest barrier. Both partners and individual survey respondents selected transportation issues as the top barrier to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers. Partners selected “disability-related transportation” while individuals selected “lack of reliable transportation,” which are different items.

“Disability-related transportation” is the need for accessible transportation resulting or related to the disability. “Other transportation,” for the purposes of this survey, is defined as lack of a car, lack of public transportation or lack of reliable transportation. Individual survey respondents selected “lack of reliable transportation” which is comparable to the eighth ranking item “other transportation issues” on the partner survey.

“Employers’ perceptions/employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities” ranked third on the individual respondent and on the partner respondent result lists. Partners agree with the individual survey respondents on the six lowest ranking barriers to achieving employment goals.

Table 82 lists the barriers along with the number of times a barrier was cited by partner survey respondents.

Table 82

Partner Survey: Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals - General DBVI Consumers

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - General DBVI	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Disability-related transportation issues	8	57.1%
Not having job skills	6	42.9%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	6	42.9%
Not having education or training	5	35.7%
Not having disability-related accommodations	5	35.7%
Not enough jobs available	3	21.4%

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - General DBVI	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Poor social skills	3	21.4%
Other transportation issues	2	14.3%
Not having job search skills	1	7.1%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	1	7.1%
Mental health issues	1	7.1%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	1	7.1%
Language barriers	0	0.0%
Substance abuse issues	0	0.0%
Other health issues	0	0.0%
Childcare issues	0	0.0%
Housing issues	0	0.0%
Other (please describe)	0	0.0%
Convictions for criminal offenses	0	0.0%
Total	42	

Partner Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment

Partners were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that also require supported employment.

Partners were asked whether or not the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that required supported employment were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. The sample size was 13 respondents. Seven of the respondents indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for DBVI consumers that require supported employment. Table 83 details the narrow margin results to the question from the survey.

Table 83

Partner Survey: Different Barriers – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Barriers To Goals Different for Consumers Requiring Supported Employment	Number	Percent
Yes	7	53.9%
No	6	46.2%
Total	13	100.0%

Partner respondents were presented a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who require supported employment. Seven respondents ranked the barriers.

Two of the three top barriers to achieving employment goals that partners selected for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment were also listed in the top three barriers partners selected for the general population. “Not enough jobs available” tied for ranking in the second position on the list for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment and ranked in a tie for the sixth position on the general consumer list.

Note that the sample size for this question is small. Caution is used when analyzing the results and making inferences. The results indicate that general DBVI consumers and DBVI consumers that require supported employment do not experience different barriers to achieving employment goals. Table 84 summarizes the results.

Table 84

Partner Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	4	57.1%
Not enough jobs available	3	42.9%
Disability-related transportation issues	3	42.9%
Not having job skills	2	28.6%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	2	28.6%

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not having education or training	1	14.3%
Not having job search skills	1	14.3%
Not having disability-related accommodations	1	14.3%
Other (please describe)	1	14.3%
Language barriers	0	0.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	0	0.0%
Other transportation issues	0	0.0%
Mental health issues	0	0.0%
Substance abuse issues	0	0.0%
Other health issues	0	0.0%
Childcare issues	0	0.0%
Housing issues	0	0.0%
Poor social skills	0	0.0%
Convictions for criminal offenses	0	0.0%
Total	18	

Difficulties Accessing DBVI Services

Partner survey respondents were asked a series of questions related to accessing DBVI services for the general population of DBVI consumers and for DBVI consumers who require supported employment. Thirteen partner respondents participated in this section of the survey.

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – General Population

Respondents were presented with a question that prompted them to indicate the top three reasons that the general population of DBVI consumers might find it difficult to access DBVI services. Twelve response options were provided.

“Slow service delivery” and “Difficulties accessing training or education programs” were identified by partners as the top two reasons why the general population of DBVI consumers find it difficult to access services. Partners were divided on the third reason why consumers may have difficulty accessing services. Table 85 details the partner results.

Table 85

Partner Survey: Top Three Reasons Difficulty Accessing DBVI Services - General Consumers

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Slow service delivery	8	61.5%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	5	38.5%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	4	30.8%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	4	30.8%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	4	30.8%
Inadequate assessment services	3	23.1%
Difficulties completing the application	2	15.4%
Other (please describe)	1	7.7%
DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients	1	7.7%
Language barriers	0	0.0%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	0	0.0%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	0	0.0%
Total	32	

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Supported Employment

Partner respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for DBVI consumers requiring supported

employment compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. The majority of the partners indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment. Table 86 summarizes the results.

Table 86

Partner Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Supported Employment

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Supported Employment	Number	Percent
No	10	76.9%
Yes	3	23.1%
Total	13	100.0%

Partner respondents were presented with a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three reasons DBVI consumers who require supported employment have difficulty accessing services. Three respondents answered the question, making the sample size too small for making inferences. The top reason partners selected for why DBVI consumers requiring supported employment have difficulty accessing services is different from the item partners selected for general consumers. Table 87 details the reasons partners selected as why accessing DBVI services might be difficult for consumers requiring supported employment.

Table 87

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	2	66.7%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	1	33.3%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	1	33.3%
Slow service delivery	1	33.3%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	1	33.3%
Other (please describe)	1	33.3%
Language barriers	0	0.0%

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties completing the application	0	0.0%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	0	0.0%
Inadequate assessment services	0	0.0%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	0	0.0%
DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients	0	0.0%
Total	7	

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Services from Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)

Staff survey respondents were presented with a series of questions regarding their experience with Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI).

Eighteen staff survey respondents initially participated in this section of the survey as 18 respondents answered the question regarding referrals to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired. Sixteen of the staff respondents referred consumers to the VRCBVI. The majority of the staff respondents (n=14, 87.5%) indicated that the VRCBVI very effectively prepares the consumer to live independently. An equal minority of respondents indicated that the consumer is either “very prepared” or “not prepared at all” for work upon completing the VRCBVI program. Tables 88-90 detail the staff opinion of the VRCBVI services to consumers.

Table 88

Staff Referral to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)

Attend VRCBVI	Number	Percent
Yes	16	88.9%
No	2	11.1%
Total	18	100.0%

Table 89

Effectiveness of VRCBVI to Prepare Consumers to Live Independently

Preparedness to Live Independently as a Result of Training Received	Number	Percent
Very effectively	14	87.5%
Somewhat effectively	2	12.5%
Not effectively	0	0.0%
Total	16	100.0%

Table 90

Consumer Preparedness for Work Upon Completing VRCBVI Program

Preparedness to go to Work as a Result of Training Received	Number	Percent
Somewhat prepared	12	75.0%
Very prepared	2	12.5%
Not at all prepared	2	12.5%
I do not send my consumers to VRCBVI to prepare for employment	0	0.0%
Total	16	100.0%

Staff respondents were presented with a final open-ended question regarding the VRCBVI that asked them to identify at least two ways VRCBVI can improve their services to DBVI consumers. A total of 14 narrative responses were received. Content analysis indicated four themes. The themes with quotes are provided in Table 91.

Table 91

Ways VRCBVI Can Improve Services

Ways VRCBVI Can Improve Services for DBVI Consumers
Service-Related Changes-Vocational Preparation and Skills
<i>“More career information and beginning credentials that are general”</i>
<i>“Voc. assessment, more career exploration, address mental health concerns instead of sending consumers home”</i>
<i>“Provide direct employment related services such as vocational evaluation or job search skills”</i>
<i>“Assist them setting up work experiences”</i>
<i>“More opportunities need to be available for folks to work on interview skills as personal skills. Also, additional job shadowing should be available.”</i>
<i>“Have additional opportunities to work on interviewing and also have more opportunity to shadow successful workers”</i>
<i>“Provide short-term training for areas such as customer service and food services”</i>
<i>“I would like to see more specific, career-related training available at the center, if possible. They do a great job with AT, but if they could have short-term training in careers like WWRC has that would be wonderful.”</i>
<i>“#1 - Allow students to stay longer to get the Keyboarding and AT training even when they have completed all other classes. This leads into #2 focus more on writing resumes and completing applications.”</i>
<i>“More focus on building computer skills, job searches, interviewing, writing resumes, soft skills and personal hygiene”</i>
Agency Mission
<i>“Be more consumer-driven”</i>
<i>“Increase willingness to work with clients with all types of disabilities, not only the ones with “just blindness.”</i>
<i>“Be more flexible with clients who cannot do 6-9 months of training away from home”</i>

“More recreational activities for students outside of the class day. More one on one instruction.”

Increasing Staff

“By having more staff to provide services, particularly in technology”

Staff Survey: Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

Staff survey respondents were given a list of 19 reasons describing why a consumer may find it difficult to achieve employment goals. Respondents were asked to identify if the reason was a barrier that prevents consumers from achieving their employment goals. If the item was identified as a barrier, respondents were also asked to identify whether or not the barrier is being adequately addressed by DBVI. There was no limit to the number of barriers that a respondent could choose.

Staff agreed with partners that “not having job search skills” and agreed with individual survey respondents that “employers’ perceptions/hesitant about employing persons with disabilities” are two barriers that make it difficult for consumers with visual impairments to achieve employment goals. Staff selected “not having job skills” as a barrier more frequently than any of the other reasons.

Over 27 percent of staff and almost 54 percent of partners did not know if the item “not enough jobs available” was a barrier preventing consumers with visual impairments from achieving employment goals. Individual survey respondents selected “lack of available jobs” as not a barrier with a narrow margin of difference (yes = 41.7%, no = 58.3%). This is a significant finding as this may translate that staff, partners, and individuals are not aware of the local job market’s available options.

Substance abuse issues, convictions for criminal offenses, other health issues, and mental health issues, were selected by large percentages of staff and partners as items they were uncertain were barriers that prevent consumers from achieving their goals. However, over 81.5 percent of individual respondents cited three of the items, (mental health, substance abuse, criminal record) as not barriers to achieving employment goals. Table 92 lists the items presented to staff respondents along with the number of times each of the items was cited as a barrier, and the percentage rates of the number of respondents who selected the item.

Table 92

Staff Survey: Identifying Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals

Potential Reason	Times chosen as a Barrier		Barrier, adequately addressed	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed	Not a barrier	Don't know	Total
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Not having job skills	38	84.4%	62.2%	22.2%	4.4%	11.1%	45
Not having job search skills	37	82.2%	68.9%	13.3%	4.4%	13.3%	45
Disability-related transportation issues	37	84.1%	45.5%	38.6%	4.6%	11.4%	44
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	36	81.8%	61.4%	20.5%	0.0%	18.2%	44
Poor social skills	34	81.0%	35.7%	45.2%	0.0%	19.1%	42
Not having disability-related accommodations	34	77.3%	75.0%	2.3%	2.3%	20.5%	44
Not having education or training	33	75.0%	65.9%	9.1%	9.1%	15.9%	44
Language barriers	31	73.8%	54.8%	19.1%	11.9%	14.3%	42
Other transportation issues	31	72.1%	39.5%	32.6%	9.3%	18.6%	43
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	31	72.1%	60.5%	11.6%	0.0%	27.9%	43
Housing issues	30	68.2%	13.6%	54.6%	4.6%	27.3%	44
Other health issues	29	67.4%	25.6%	41.9%	0.0%	32.6%	43
Mental health issues	28	65.1%	18.6%	46.5%	2.3%	32.6%	43
Childcare issues	28	63.6%	22.7%	40.9%	6.8%	29.6%	44
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	26	59.1%	43.2%	15.9%	13.6%	27.3%	44
Substance abuse issues	25	56.8%	15.9%	40.9%	4.6%	38.6%	44
Convictions for criminal offenses	23	54.8%	23.8%	31.0%	7.1%	38.1%	42
Not enough jobs available	18	40.9%	22.7%	18.2%	31.8%	27.3%	44
Other (please describe)	0	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	3

Staff Survey: Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals – General DBVI Consumers

Staff respondents were presented with a list of 19 barriers, including an option for “other”, and were asked to identify the top three barriers that prevent the general population of DBVI consumers from achieving their employment goals. There was no limit to the number of barriers that a respondent could choose.

The top three barriers selected by staff are the same three barriers selected by partners and are slightly different than the 2018 staff survey and the current individual survey results. Individual results indicated that consumers are less concerned over their skills to perform their job and more concerned about other barriers they experience when working toward achieving their employment goals such as transportation and employer attitudes. The item “not having job skills” was ranked as one of the top three barriers on staff and partner result lists and ranked in the ninth position on the individual result list for the top three barriers to achieving employment goals. Staff and individual respondents selected concerns over Social Security benefits more frequently than partners. Staff and partners held different perspectives regarding disability-related accommodations as staff cited the item less frequently than partners. Table 93 lists the barriers along with the number of times a barrier was cited by the staff respondents.

Table 93

Staff Survey: Top Three Barriers to Achieving Employment Goals - General DBVI Consumers

Top 3 Barriers to Employment Goals – General DBVI Consumers	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not having job skills	19	45.2%
Disability-related transportation issues	19	45.2%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	15	35.7%
Not having education or training	10	23.8%
Other transportation issues	8	19.0%
Poor social skills	8	19.0%
Not having job search skills	7	16.7%
Mental health issues	7	16.7%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	7	16.7%

Top 3 Barriers to Employment Goals – General DBVI Consumers	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Convictions for criminal offenses	7	16.7%
Not enough jobs available	4	9.5%
Other health issues	4	9.5%
Housing issues	4	9.5%
Language barriers	2	4.8%
Not having disability-related accommodations	2	4.8%
Other (please describe)	2	4.8%
Childcare issues	1	2.4%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	0	0.0%
Substance abuse issues	0	0.0%
Total	126	

Staff Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment

Staff respondents were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that also require supported employment.

Staff were asked whether or not the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that required supported employment were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. The results were vastly different than partners as a large majority of staff indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for DBVI consumers that require supported employment. Table 94 details the results to the question from the survey.

Table 94

Staff Survey: Different Barriers – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Barriers To Goals Different for Consumers Requiring Supported Employment	Number	Percent
Yes	40	88.9%
No	5	11.1%
Total	45	100.0%

Staff respondents were presented a second question asking them to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who require supported employment.

Staff and partners did not select the same barriers in response to this question. Two of the three top barriers to achieving employment goals that staff selected for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment were not listed in the top three barriers staff selected for the general population. However, the item “Not having jobs skills” was the most frequently selected barrier by staff for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment and for general consumers. The two phrases found in the narrative comments for the item “other” were: “cognitive disabilities” and “parents hesitant to let go of benefits.” Table 95 summarizes the staff survey results.

Table 95

Staff Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not having job skills	26	65.0%
Not having education or training	13	32.5%
Not having job search skills	11	27.5%
Disability-related transportation issues	10	25.0%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	9	22.5%
Mental health issues	9	22.5%
Poor social skills	9	22.5%

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Convictions for criminal offenses	6	15.0%
Language barriers	4	10.0%
Not enough jobs available	4	10.0%
Not having disability-related accommodations	3	7.5%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	3	7.5%
Other health issues	3	7.5%
Other transportation issues	2	5.0%
Housing issues	2	5.0%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	2	5.0%
Other (please describe)	2	5.0%
Substance abuse issues	1	2.5%
Childcare issues	0	0.0%
Total	119	

Staff Survey: Most Important Change DBVI Could Make to Support Consumer Efforts to Achieve Employment Goals

Staff respondents were presented with an open-ended question and asked to identify the most important change that DBVI could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals. Twenty-eight narrative comments were received.

Content analysis of staff suggestions for change included a variety of service delivery components. Suggestions included the following items: DBVI to incorporate internal vocational assessment services and provide comprehensive assessments that address the 9 domains; reduce the AWARE documentation time; increase the number of staff and decrease caseload numbers; trainings that provide practical work related tools rather than being “talked at”; streamline data management; improve speed of application and service delivery model; improve internal teamwork with VR counselors; become more employment focused and not just emphasize

independent living skills; training VR staff and vendors in vision disabilities and what tools consumers need for success in the workplace; make information more accessible; and setting realistic job goals.

Suggestions for change also included consumer specific items: increased flexibility with trainings for younger clients who do not want to participate in lengthy center-based trainings and offer short term programs similar to the WWRC; increase variety of programs to help consumers build skills and confidence; change policies to increase consumer engagement; provide additional technology training to all DBVI clients; increase the number of face to face visits; and bring a satellite training center to Northern Virginia.

Difficulties Accessing DBVI Services

Staff survey respondents were asked a series of questions related to accessing DBVI services for the general population of DBVI consumers and for DBVI consumers who require supported employment.

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – General Population

Staff were presented with a question that prompted them to indicate the top three reasons that the general population of DBVI consumers might find it difficult to access DBVI services. Eleven response options were provided.

The two reasons staff identified most frequently as why the general population of DBVI consumers find it difficult to access services (slow service delivery and difficulties accessing training or education programs) were also the two most frequently selected items found in the partner survey results. Similarly, staff and partners cited the items related to difficulties completing the IPE and not meeting clients in their residential community least frequently. Table 96 lists the staff respondent selection of reasons why accessing DBVI services may be difficult for the general population of DBVI consumers.

Table 96

Staff Survey: Top Three Reasons Difficulty Accessing DBVI Services - General Consumers

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	19	38.8%
Slow service delivery	18	36.7%
Other (please describe)	13	26.5%
Difficulties completing the application	12	24.5%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	11	22.4%
Language barriers	10	20.4%
Inadequate assessment services	10	20.4%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	7	14.3%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	4	8.2%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	4	8.2%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	3	6.1%
Total	111	

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Supported Employment

Staff respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. The results are similar to the partner results as staff also indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for DBVI consumers requiring supported employment. Table 97 contains the results.

Table 97

Staff Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Supported Employment

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Supported Employment	Number	Percent
No	27	62.8%
Yes	16	37.2%
Total	43	100.0%

Staff were presented with a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three reasons DBVI consumers who require supported employment have difficulty accessing services. Contrary to the results in table 96 above, two of the top three reasons staff selected for why DBVI consumers requiring supported employment have difficulty accessing services match the items staff selected for general consumers. Table 98 details the reasons staff identified as why accessing DBVI services might be difficult for consumers requiring supported employment.

Table 98

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – DBVI Consumers Supported Employment

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	8	44.4%
Inadequate assessment services	6	33.3%
Slow service delivery	6	33.3%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	5	27.8%
Language barriers	5	27.8%
Difficulties completing the application	5	27.8%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	4	22.2%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	3	16.7%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	3	16.7%

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Supported Employment	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Other (please describe)	2	11.1%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	1	5.6%
Total	48	

Staff respondents were presented with a final question in this section asking them if there was anything else they felt DBVI should know in regard to why individuals have difficulty accessing DBVI services. Five out of the ten narrative responses received contained feedback. The recurring theme in the narrative feedback was that the lack of information about DBVI and available services was the greatest access issue. Respondents recommended that DBVI increase its marketing efforts to ensure that the community knows who they are and what they do.

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following themes emerged on a recurring basis from the individual interviews and focus groups conducted for this assessment regarding the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment:

1. Transportation was the most frequently cited rehabilitation need for individuals with blindness and vision impairments, especially in the rural areas of the State where there are very limited or no public transportation options. In some of Virginia's more densely populated areas transportation options are available, but there are many places throughout the State where the lack of transportation is a significant barrier to employment.
2. The need for assistive technology (AT) to live and work independently was cited as a common need for individuals with blindness and vision impairments as they prepare for or begin work. The need for training in the use of AT was directly associated with this need.
3. The need for training in the use of AT was especially noted once an individual leaves VRCBVI and returns home. The AT is provided for the individual to use at home, but there is a need for the individual to receive more training in the use of the technology at their home.
4. The need for AT was cited as especially important for deaf-blind individuals.
5. Common recurring rehabilitation needs other than transportation and AT included training, soft-skills (especially for youth), benefits planning, self-advocacy training and work experience.
6. Individuals that receive either SSI or SSDI or both have significant fears about losing benefits due to work, especially medical insurance. This fear limits their return-to-work behavior, resulting in them looking for part-time work that keeps their earnings level below that which would remove them from support by SSA. Consequently, these individuals do not pursue self-sustaining employment. The importance of reaching these beneficiaries as youth and helping them strive for self-sufficiency was noted as critical. Interestingly, while benefits planning is widely available, the impact on increasing the drive towards self-sufficiency was questionable. Tied closely to this need is the need for financial literacy and financial empowerment generally. This emerged as a need in this assessment and is supported by the results of the surveys.
7. The pandemic exposed the need for individuals to have access to broadband Internet access. The connectivity of individuals with blindness and vision impairments has to be a paramount concern for DBVI in today's world. Participants indicated that there are still many individuals that struggle with access to DBVI services because of their inability to get a laptop or to connect with the agency remotely.
8. It has become very common for DBVI consumers to have a secondary mental health impairment in addition to blindness or a vision impairment. Although the data does not indicate that mental health impairments are common as a secondary disability, the

feedback from staff and partners is that this is an increasingly common issue and that staff and partners need training on how to effectively work with these individuals.

9. The lack of affordable housing emerged as a significant barrier to employment during this CSNA. The cost of housing rose sharply during the pandemic in Virginia and this directly affected DBVI consumers in many areas.
10. Interview participants indicated, and the data shows, that supported employment is not a common strategy or practice utilized by DBVI. In addition, customized employment is not used by staff.
11. VRCBVI was praised for providing excellent adjustment to blindness and independent living skills training to consumers. In addition, the center has worked to increase its vocational focus. They shifted to remote services and responded as effectively as possible to the pandemic's effect on a residential training program.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to DBVI based on the results of the research in the Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities, including their need for Supported Employment area:

1. DBVI is encouraged to ensure that follow-up training on the use of AT is provided in the individual's home once they leave VR CBVI and return to their living environment. This training should include an initial set-up and training until the individual demonstrates independence in using the technology;
2. DBVI is encouraged to provide training to all staff on how to effectively work with individuals with mental health impairments. This training should be ongoing and is an area where the continued partnership with the General agency can be beneficial;
3. Since a large percentage of DBVI consumers are SSA beneficiaries whose fear of benefit loss affects their return-to-work behavior, it would be helpful for DBVI to augment benefits planning services with training for staff and providers on strategies that contribute to the pursuit of work above the level of SGA, including self-sufficiency.

These interventions and strategies include:

- h. Establishing and reinforcing high expectations for the individual;
 - i. Identifying role models, or peer mentors that will model positive behavior and provide a positive "push" for the individual to achieve their maximum potential (in many instances, the positive push can come from the rehabilitation counselor if there are no family members, friends or mentors available);
 - j. Maximizing the individual's ability to live and function independently;
 - k. Reinforcing the need for tenacity and persistence by the individual by helping them develop resiliencies, and then providing constant support and positive feedback;
 - l. Benefits planning that is ongoing and plans for overpayments when work occurs. Overpayments are planned for and the individual or the Benefits Planner is aware enough to calculate the effect of wages on benefits by themselves and set aside dollars that will likely occur as a result of overpayments for future payback to SSA;
 - m. Pursuit of higher education at the highest possible level for the individual; and
 - n. Work experience, internships or any exposure to work in the beneficiary's field of choice;
4. Training in supported and customized employment strategies should be a regular and ongoing for DBVI staff;
 5. DBVI is encouraged to continue to develop resources and training that promote financial literacy and empowerment for their consumers. It is recommended that DBVI avail themselves of the resources available through the National Disability Institute at <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/>;

6. DBVI is encouraged to conduct connectivity assessments for all consumers that are engaged in the comprehensive assessment process for plan development. When needed, DBVI should purchase the necessary equipment and service to ensure their participants are able to effectively access and function in the digital world. This includes broadband Internet where available and laptops, cell phones and hotspots in cellular service plans. One possibility for adaption is the BPD Technology Assessment Checklist created by the Technology Committee for the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors. The tool is available in Appendix F. DBVI should adapt the tool for their own needs if they decide to use it.
7. DBVI is encouraged to market the services of VRCBVI in order to increase enrollment. The center has had low enrollment due to COVID, and as Virginia emerges from the pandemic, it will be important to ensure that individuals with blindness and vision impairments, especially youth and students, are aware of VRCBVI.

SECTION 3

NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED BY THE VR PROGRAM

Section 3 includes an identification of the needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by DBVI.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness or vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the DBVI:

1. As was the case in the last CSNA, the interview participants did not generally feel that any specific groups of individuals were underserved or unserved by the agency. They indicated that DBVI works with whomever is interested in services without regard to race.
2. Hispanic and Asian individuals were cited most commonly as the two ethnic groups that do not access DBVI services as frequently as others. Lack of knowledge about the program and available services, fear or mistrust of government agencies, lack of representative staff, language barriers and cultural factors were commonly cited as possible reasons for this lack of access. The data supports that Hispanic individuals appear less in the DBVI consumer population than in Virginia's overall population.
3. Individuals with intellectual disabilities in addition to vision loss were cited as possibly being underserved.
4. The rural areas of Virginia were commonly mentioned as an underserved geographic area primarily due to the lack of transportation and Internet access. The lack of Internet access was especially noted as problematic for rural areas during the pandemic when services were delivered virtually.
5. The barriers to employment experienced by minority populations are similar to those experience by all other populations of DBVI consumers except that they face language barriers when looking for employment and when trying to access DBVI services.

***NATIONAL AND/OR AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION
IMPAIRMENTS FROM DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS, INCLUDING
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS THAT HAVE BEEN UNSERVED OR
UNDERSERVED BY DBVI***

Ethnicity

An understanding of the local population’s ethnic diversity is needed in order to better serve the needs of individuals with disabilities from different ethnic groups residing in the community.

For the purposes of this report, definitions for race and ethnicity are provided. The definitions are taken from the U.S. Census Bureau glossary.

Race: “The U.S. Census Bureau collects race data in accordance with guidelines provided by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The data is collected from respondent self-identification. The racial categories included in the census questionnaire reflect a social definition of race and is not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. The categories of the race question include race and national origin or sociocultural groups. The OMB requires that race data be collected for a minimum of five groups: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. The OMB permits the Census Bureau to use a sixth category - Some Other Race. Respondents may report more than one race.”

Ethnicity: “The U.S. Census Bureau adheres to the OMB’s definition of ethnicity. There are two minimum categories for ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino. OMB considers race and Hispanic origin to be two separate and distinct concepts. Hispanics and Latinos may be of any race.” <https://www.census.gov/glossary/>

Ethnicity for the General Population

Data for ethnicity rates for the general population is obtained from 2019 American Community Survey one-year Estimates and the 2014-2019 American Community Survey five-year Estimates. The ethnic demographic averages for each region are calculated by adding population totals for each ethnic group and dividing by the total population.

The State’s averages for ethnic diversity in the categories of Hispanic/Latino, American Indian and Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander are below the National averages.

Whites comprise the largest ethnic group in the state as the averages for Whites exceed all other ethnic category rates by more than 20 percent in each RO. Black or African Americans comprise the second largest ethnic group in the State (19.0%), with an average that is 6.6% higher than the National average.

RO2 is the most ethnically diverse RO in the State as the percentage rates of Black Americans, Hispanics, and Asians that reside in RO2 exceed 10%. Conversely, RO1 is comprised of primarily of Whites as all other ethnic category averages in RO1 are lower than 3 percent.

American Indian and Alaska Natives comprise less than one percent of Virginia's population and the averages are identical for the State and in each RO. Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders residing Virginia comprise less than one percent of the State's population and the rates are lower than the averages for American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Table 99 contains detailed information on the ethnic make-up of Virginia.

Table 99

Ethnicity

Area	Total population	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian and Alaska Native alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	Two or more races
US	328,239,523	18.4%	60.0%	12.4%	0.7%	5.6%	0.2%	2.5%
VA	8,535,519	9.7%	61.1%	19.0%	0.2%	6.6%	0.1%	3.1%
RO1	382,636	1.9%	93.7%	2.7%	0.2%	0.5%	0.0%	1.1%
RO2	3,035,544	16.2%	55.6%	11.4%	0.2%	12.6%	0.1%	3.7%
RO3	1,868,656	6.8%	54.9%	30.4%	0.2%	3.6%	0.1%	3.7%
RO4	1,417,713	5.9%	57.7%	29.8%	0.2%	3.4%	0.0%	2.7%
RO5	1,008,731	3.3%	76.3%	15.9%	0.2%	1.9%	0.0%	2.2%
RO6	741,183	6.9%	76.8%	10.9%	0.2%	2.4%	0.1%	2.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 5-Year Estimates

Ethnicity and Disability

The U.S. Census Bureau collects data on disability among ethnic categories for the total civilian noninstitutionalized population. Note the ethnic groups with smaller population sizes and higher percentages of disability.

Table 100 identifies the estimated rates of disability among ethnic categories for the Nation and the State. Table 101 contains data for the ROs.

Table 100

Disability and Ethnicity: US and VA, including Urban and Rural Averages

Disability and Ethnicity	Percent with a disability					
Ethnic Categories	United States	United States	United States	Virginia	Virginia	Virginia
		Urban	Rural		Urban	Rural
White alone	13.2%	12.7%	15.0%	12.8%	11.2%	16.3%
Black or African American alone	14.1%	13.8%	17.1%	13.5%	12.7%	18.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	17.2%	17.1%	17.4%	17.0%	14.8%	22.4%
Asian alone	7.2%	7.2%	7.9%	6.5%	6.5%	6.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	10.6%	10.2%	14.8%	N	N	N
Two or more races	11.0%	10.6%	14.1%	8.5%	8.1%	11.0%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	9.1%	9.0%	9.6%	6.7%	6.5%	8.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 1-Year Estimates

Table 101

Disability and Ethnicity: ROs

Disability and Ethnicity	Percent with a disability					
Ethnic Categories	RO1	RO2	RO3	RO4	RO5	RO6
White alone	23.4%	8.7%	13.1%	12.0%	14.8%	12.4%
Black or African American alone	22.1%	8.2%	14.3%	16.1%	15.8%	13.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	30.3%	12.1%	21.5%	15.1%	21.8%	25.4%
Asian alone	8.6%	5.5%	10.1%	5.9%	5.6%	5.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	15.2%	10.9%	12.7%	10.3%	4.5%	15.7%
Two or more races	24.3%	6.5%	8.7%	10.9%	13.7%	9.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10.6%	5.1%	8.6%	8.1%	9.5%	6.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Ethnicity and Disability Type Prevalence Rates

Cornell University online disability statistics provides data on disability prevalence rates by ethnicity and disability type.

Less than one percent of working age Asians residing in Virginia reported a visual disability while visual disabilities were reported by over 5.5 percent of the American Indian and Alaskan

Natives residing in Virginia. Note that Asians comprise roughly 6.5 percent of Virginia's population and American Indian and Alaskan Natives account for less than one percent of the state's population. Table 102 details Virginia's disability prevalence rates categorized by ethnicity, ages 18 to 64, and disability type.

Table 102

Ethnicity and Disability Type: Ages 18 to 64

Virginia 2018 Prevalence Rates	Visual Disability	Hearing Disability	Ambulatory Disability	Cognitive Disability	Self-care Disability	Independent Living Disability
White, non-Hispanic	1.4%	1.9%	4.4%	3.9%	1.4%	3.4%
Black/African American, non-Hispanic	2.7%	1.4%	5.9%	4.8%	2.6%	4.5%
American Indian and Alaskan Native, non-Hispanic	5.7%	2.7%	4.8%	5.8%	1.7%	1.9%
Asian, non-Hispanic	0.9%	0.7%	1.3%	1.3%	0.7%	0.9%
Some Other Race, non-Hispanic	1.9%	2.2%	5.1%	4.7%	3.1%	4.1%
Hispanic/Latino, all races	1.6%	1.0%	2.3%	2.5%	0.8%	1.8%

Source: <https://disabilitystatistics.org/>

Ethnicity, Disability Type and Employment Rates

Cornell University publishes online disability statistics for National and State employment by disability type and ethnicity. The categories include non-institutionalized civilians ages 16 to 64, male and female, from all education levels. No data was available for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders.

Asians comprise the fourth largest ethnic group in Virginia (6.6% of the population) and has the highest rate of employment for those reporting a visual disability, exceeding the rates for Whites (the largest ethnic group in the State) by roughly 18 percent. The ethnic category of Some Other Race, non-Hispanic, has the second highest employment rate for those reporting visual disabilities. Black/African Americans comprise the second largest ethnic population in Virginia and has the lowest employment rate for those reporting a visual disability. The data in table 103 is from the Cornell University online resource, dated 2018.

Table 103

Employment by Ethnicity and Disability Type: Non-institutionalized Population Ages 16 -64

Virginia 2018 Employment by Disability Type and Ethnicity Ages 16 to 64	Percent Employed by Disability Type						
	Any	Visual	Hearing	Ambulatory	Cognitive	Self-care	Independent Living
White, non-Hispanic	39.5%	45.8%	58.8%	25.3%	30.9%	12.3%	20.5%
Black/African American, non-Hispanic	35.8%	36.1%	45.3%	28.9%	30.0%	19.7%	18.9%
American Indian and Alaskan Native, non-Hispanic	41.8%	N	N	N	12.9%	N	N
Asian, non-Hispanic	57.4%	64.1%	70.0%	40.5%	57.1%	53.3%	37.9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, non-Hispanic	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Some Other Race, non-Hispanic	44.9%	57.1%	69.8%	30.6%	39.6%	33.1%	33.8%
Hispanic/Latino	56.5%	55.7%	78.5%	51.2%	47.7%	30.6%	29.4%

Source: <https://disabilitystatistics.org/>

Agency Specific Data on Ethnicity:

There was limited data available from DBVI on services and outcomes for individuals served by the agency based on race or ethnicity. The project team gathered as much information as possible, but the ability to pull data and analyze that data based on race is an area for future development by DBVI. The vast majority of need for the different populations stems from the survey results and the interviews conducted for this assessment.

The project team analyzed the rate of individuals by race served by DBVI for the four years of this study. Table 104 contains this information.

Table 104
Percent of DBVI Consumers by Race for PY 2017-2020

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of all DBVI Consumers Served by Program Year			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
White	59.3%	56.1%	55.3%	54.8%
American Indian	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
Asian	5.0%	5.7%	6.5%	6.4%
Black	36.6%	39.5%	39.3%	38.7%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%
Hispanic	4.8%	5.0%	5.8%	5.7%
Multi-race	1.8%	2.1%	2.3%	2.1%

The data indicates that White individuals constituted the largest portion of individuals served by DBVI for every year of the study, though the percentage for this group declined each year of the study. Blacks or African-Americans were the second largest group served remaining at or near 39% of all consumers from PY 2018-2020. The rate of Asian individuals served constituted more than 6% in PY 2019 and 2020, while Hispanic individual rose from 4.8% in PY 2017 to 5.7% in PY2020.

The project team then examined the rate of individuals served by race to how these rates compared to the rate of each population in Virginia overall. Table 105 contains the results of this analysis.

Table 105
Rate of DBVI Consumers Served by Race Compared to Virginia Overall

Race/Ethnicity	Virginia Overall	All DBVI Consumers	Difference in PY 2020
White	61.1%	54.8%	-6.3%
American Indian	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Asian	6.6%	6.4%	-0.2%
Black	19.0%	38.7%	19.7%
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%
Multi-Race	3.1%	3.3%	0.2%
Hispanic	9.7%	5.7%	-4.0%

The data indicates that White individuals are underrepresented in the overall DBVI population compared to their rate overall in Virginia. In addition, Hispanic individuals appear at a rate 4% lower than their rate in Virginia. African-Americans are overrepresented in the overall DBVI population by almost 20% from their rate in Virginia overall. It should be noted that there are many factors to consider when comparing the population of DBVI consumers to Virginia's population overall. A primary consideration is the socioeconomic status of each group, and one

would expect that individuals that are in greater need would constitute a higher percentage of individuals receiving assistance from the agency. All results should be interpreted through this lens.

SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS

Individuals were asked to report their primary race or ethnic group. There was no limit to the number of items a respondent could choose.

The ranking order of the results in table 105 that represents ethnicity of the respondents is similar to the ranking order of the State's ethnic demographic category ranking based on the U.S. Census Bureau data with one exception. There are more Hispanic/Latinos residing in Virginia than Asians yet more survey respondents identified as Asian as compared to Hispanic/Latinos. Responses to this question are detailed in Table 106.

Table 106
Ethnicity of Respondents

Primary Race or Ethnic Group	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Caucasian/White	52	61.9%
African American/Black	18	21.4%
Asian	7	8.3%
Hispanic/Latino	4	4.8%
Other (please describe)	3	3.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	1.2%
Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	1.2%
Total	86	

Individual survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding cultural identity.

Respondents were asked a yes-no question about whether or not DBVI honors and respects their cultural identity. Less than 5.5 percent of the 92 respondents who answered the question

indicated that DBVI does not honor and respect their cultural identity while almost 23 percent did not know whether or not their cultural identity was honored and respected. The results are found in Table 107.

Table 107
Honor and Respect Cultural Identity

Honor Respect Cultural ID	Number	Percent
Yes	66	71.7%
I don't know	21	22.8%
No	5	5.4%
Total	92	100.0%

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

Partner Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals - Minorities

Partners were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are from ethnic groups that are considered minority groups.

Partners were asked whether or not the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are minorities were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. The sample size was 13 respondents. Eight of the respondents indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were not different for minorities. Table 108 details the results to the question.

Table 108
Partner Survey: Different Barriers – Ethnic Minorities

Barriers To Goals Different for Minorities	Number	Percent
No	8	61.5%
Yes	5	38.5%
Total	13	100.0%

Partner respondents were presented a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who belong to minority groups. Five respondents ranked the barriers.

The top three barriers to achieving employment goals that partners selected for DBVI consumers who are minorities were also listed in the top three barriers selected for the general population. “Not having job search skills” ranked in a tie for the second position on the minority group list and ranked in a tie for the ninth position on the general consumer list. Caution is used to analyze the results and making the inference that general consumers and DBVI consumers who are from minority ethnic groups do not experience different barriers to achieving employment goals because the sample size is small. Table 109 summarizes the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for minority groups.

Table 109

Partner Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – Minorities

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Minorities	Number of times chosen	Percent of respondents
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	3	60.0%
Not having job skills	2	40.0%
Not having job search skills	2	40.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	2	40.0%
Not having education or training	1	20.0%
Language barriers	1	20.0%
Not enough jobs available	1	20.0%
Not having disability-related accommodations	1	20.0%
Poor social skills	0	0.0%
Convictions for criminal offenses	0	0.0%
Total	13	

Difficulties Accessing DBVI Services

Partner survey respondents were asked two questions related to difficulties accessing DBVI services for the population of DBVI consumers that belong to ethnic minority groups. Thirteen partner respondents participated in this section of the survey.

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services - Minorities

Partner respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for minorities compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. The majority of the partners indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for minorities. Table 1110 details the partners’ responses.

Table 110

Partner Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Minorities

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Minorities	Number	Percent
No	11	84.6%
Yes	2	15.4%
Total	13	100.0%

Partner respondents were asked a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three reasons DBVI consumers who belong to minority groups have difficulty accessing DBVI services. Two respondents answered the question. Due to the limited sample size that divides the results equally, inferences cannot be generalized.

Table 111

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Minorities

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services	Number of times chosen	Percent of respondents
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	1	50.0%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	1	50.0%
Language barriers	1	50.0%
Difficulties completing the application	1	50.0%
Inadequate accessing assessment services	1	50.0%
Slow service delivery	1	50.0%

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Staff Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals - Minorities

Similar to partner respondents, staff were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are from ethnic groups that are considered minority groups.

Staff were asked whether or not the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are minorities were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. Staff agreed with partners that the barriers to achieving employment goals were not different for minorities.

The percentage rates noted in staff and partner results in response to this question were very similar (partners = 61.5% yes, 38.5% = no). Table 112 details the staff survey results to the question.

Table 112

Staff Survey: Different Barriers – Ethnic Minorities

Barriers To Goals Different for Minorities	Number	Percent
No	27	62.8%
Yes	16	37.2%
Total	43	100.0%

Staff respondents were presented a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who belong to minority groups.

One of the three top barriers that staff selected for DBVI consumers who are minorities was also listed in the top three barriers staff selected for the general population. “Not having job skills” ranked as the third barrier on the staff result list for minority groups and ranked in the first position on the general consumer list. The partner selection of top three barriers towards employment goals for minorities also contains “not having job skills.” Table 113 summarizes the staff survey results to the question addressing the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for minority groups.

Table 113

Staff Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – Minorities

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Minorities	Number of times chosen	Percent of respondents
Not having education or training	9	45.0%
Language barriers	9	45.0%
Not having job skills	7	35.0%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	4	20.0%
Disability-related transportation issues	4	20.0%
Convictions for criminal offenses	4	20.0%
Not having job search skills	2	10.0%
Not having disability-related accommodations	2	10.0%
Other transportation issues	2	10.0%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	2	10.0%
Other (please describe)	2	10.0%
Poor social skills	2	10.0%
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	1	5.0%
Mental health issues	1	5.0%
Substance abuse issues	1	5.0%
Total	52	

Difficulties Accessing DBVI Services

Staff were asked two questions related to difficulties accessing DBVI services for the population of DBVI consumers that belong to ethnic minority groups.

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services - Minorities

Staff respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for minorities compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. Similar to partner results, the majority of staff indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for minorities. Table 114 details the staff responses.

Table 114

Staff Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Minorities

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Minorities	Number	Percent
No	29	67.4%
Yes	14	32.6%
Total	43	100.0%

Although the majority of staff believe that minorities and the general population of DBVI consumers have similar difficulties when accessing DBVI services, staff identified “difficulties in accessing training or education programs” as one of the top three difficulties for minorities and as the top difficulty for the general population. Table 115 details the staff results to the question regarding identifying the top three difficulties to accessing DBVI services for minorities.

Table 115

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Minorities

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Language barriers	9	56.3%
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	7	43.8%
Inadequate assessment services	5	31.3%
Slow service delivery	4	25.0%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	3	18.8%
Difficulties completing the application	3	18.8%

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	3	18.8%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	2	12.5%
Other (please describe)	2	12.3%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	2	12.3%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	1	6.3%
Total	41	

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following themes emerged on a recurring basis from the individual interviews and focus groups conducted for this assessment in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments from different ethnic groups, including needs of individuals who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program:

1. As was the case in the last CSNA, the interview participants did not generally feel that any specific groups of individuals were underserved or unserved by the agency. They indicated that DBVI works with whomever is interested in services without regard to race. There were however, several groups that were identified as not accessing services as frequently or regularly as others due to a variety of factors and these are discussed below.
2. Hispanic and Asian individuals were cited most commonly as the two ethnic groups that do not access DBVI services as frequently as others. Lack of knowledge about the program and available services, fear or mistrust of government agencies, lack of representative staff, language barriers and cultural factors were commonly cited as possible reasons for this lack of access.
3. Individuals with intellectual disabilities in addition to vision loss were cited as possibly being underserved.
4. The rural areas of Virginia were commonly mentioned as an underserved geographic area primarily due to the lack of transportation and Internet access. The lack of Internet access was especially noted as problematic for rural areas during the pandemic when services were delivered virtually.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to DBVI based on the results of the research in the Needs of Individuals with Blindness and Vision Impairments from Different Ethnic Groups, including needs of Individuals who have been Unserved or Underserved by the VR Program area:

1. DBVI is encouraged to recruit bilingual Hispanic counselors when they have vacant positions. In addition to being able to speak to consumers in their native language, these counselors can help build trust and relationships with the Hispanic community and increase DBVI's ability to reach this population;
2. DBVI is encouraged to establish liaison and referral relationships with community programs serving minority populations in the State. Targeted outreach to these community service organizations can help increase the awareness of DBVI and build trust among traditionally underserved populations. The agency is encouraged to collaborate with Virginia Department of Health's Division of Multicultural Health and Community Engagement. Information is available at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/health-equity/division-of-multicultural-health-and-community-engagement/>;
3. DBVI is encouraged to provide training for staff and partners on diversity, equity and inclusion. These efforts can impact the perspectives and beliefs of agency staff and partners and improve outreach efforts;
4. DBVI is encouraged to continue to partner with the General program (DARS) and the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Service to increase awareness of their services to individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities that have vision impairments. This partnership may have the secondary effect of increasing the number of individuals who can benefit from the supported employment model; and
5. DBVI needs to increase its ability to gather and analyze its own data related to case movement and outcomes for individuals from minority populations so that it can make evidence-based decisions on how to improve services.

SECTION 4

NEEDS OF YOUTH WITH BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENTS IN TRANSITION

The comprehensive statewide needs assessment must include an assessment of the needs of youth and students with disabilities in the State, including their need for Pre-ETS. This section contains information about the needs of transition-age youth with blindness or vision impairments (14-24) and the needs of students with blindness or vision impairments (14-21) for pre-employment transition services.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

1. Transportation to and from school and work was the most common rehabilitation and employment need mentioned for students and youth with blindness and vision impairments. The lack of reliable or available transportation, especially in the rural areas, affects every area of the lives of youth and can significantly limit their work options.
2. Low vision technology and other assistive technology is needed for youth and students with blindness and vision impairments to prepare for their career and perform the essential functions of their jobs.
3. All of the five required pre-employment transition services required activities were consistently cited as needed by students with disabilities. Work--based learning experiences were the most frequently cited need, but self-advocacy and soft-skills training were also noted frequently.
4. Although the pandemic adversely affected enrollment at VRCBVI and in-person attendance at school, the agency found that the shift to virtual training and programming opened the doors for more students and youth to participate, which was a positive outcome.
5. DBVI's counselors work closely with the Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVIs) in most of the school districts. When the relationship between the TVIs and DBVI are close, services for students with blindness and vision impairments are coordinated and comprehensive. In many rural areas where schools have limited resources and there may not be a TVI, services to youth are adversely impacted.
6. The agency added resiliency and financial literacy training to their pre-employment transition services programs. These new offerings were considered as positive, needed and helpful for students.
7. The transition from secondary school to college can be a major challenge for youth with blindness or vision impairments as they have had someone in secondary school actively work to meet their accommodation needs, but when they get to college, this must be a

self-directed process. It generally takes at least one, and often two semesters before consumers get their technology and reasonable accommodation needs met in college. This creates a slow start to their higher education pursuits which can be frustrating and result in a delay in achieving their goals.

***NATIONAL AND AGENCY SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO THE
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS IN TRANSITION***

Educational Attainment: Ages 18 to 24 Years

The data indicates that the rate of individuals whose highest level of educational attainment is a high school graduate or the equivalent in Virginia's rural areas is 5.5 percentage points higher than the National average. RO2 has the lowest rate of high school graduation attainment (28.3%) which is lower than the National and State averages by 4.4 to 5.7 percent. Conversely, the rate of youth who have attained a bachelor's degree or higher in RO2 is significantly higher than the U.S. average and the State average by 7.1 to 8.3 percentage points. Note that RO2 is a DBVI region serving roughly one-third of Virginia's population.

Table 116 contains educational attainment rates for ages 18 to 24 years, which includes high school graduation rates and bachelor's degree achievement.

Table 116

Educational Attainment for all Individuals Ages 18 to 24 Years

Region	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college or associate's degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
US	12.1%	32.7%	43.4%	11.9%
US -- Urban	11.3%	31.5%	44.5%	12.6%
US -- Rural	16.1%	39.0%	36.9%	8.0%
VA	9.7%	34.0%	43.1%	13.1%
VA -- Urban	9.4%	31.8%	44.7%	14.2%
VA -- Rural	11.1%	44.5%	36.0%	8.4%
RO1	11.5%	39.5%	43.3%	5.6%
RO2	12.4%	28.3%	39.1%	20.2%
RO3	8.3%	34.2%	49.0%	8.5%

Region	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	Some college or associate's degree	Bachelor's degree or higher
RO4	11.5%	32.7%	44.5%	11.3%
RO5	7.8%	29.2%	51.7%	11.3%
RO6	7.6%	32.3%	49.2%	10.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates and 2014-2019 5-Year Estimates

School Enrollment, Educational Attainment and Employment Status: Ages 16 to 19 Years

Data found in Tables 115 and 116 represents school enrollment and educational attainment by employment status for individuals ages 16 to 19 years. Over 43 percent of youth ages 16 to 19 in Virginia participate in the labor force. Rates for youth that participate in the labor force in Virginia exceed the US averages by roughly between 1 and 5 percent as noted in each geographic designation.

Table 117 contains data for the United States and Virginia, including urban and rural statistics.

Table 117

Education and Employment for Ages 16 to 19 Years: United States and Virginia

	United States		Virginia	
	Total Population	Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled	Total Population	Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled
<i>Total:</i>	17,166,913	-----	448,646	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	14,586,802	85.0%	380,726	84.9%
<i>Employed</i>	4,376,969	30.0%	123,872	32.5%
<i>Unemployed</i>	716,681	4.9%	20,787	5.5%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	9,493,152	65.1%	236,067	62.0%
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	2,580,111	15.0%	67,920	15.1%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	1,942,619	75.3%	57,938	85.3%

	<i>United States</i>		<i>Virginia</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Employed</i>	1,218,482	62.7%	40,931	70.6%
<i>Unemployed</i>	218,035	11.2%	6,602	11.4%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	506,102	26.1%	10,405	18.0%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	637,492	24.7%	9,982	14.7%
<i>Employed</i>	246,172	38.6%	3,947	39.5%
<i>Unemployed</i>	69,663	10.9%	1,314	13.2%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	321,657	50.5%	4,721	47.3%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	6,846,002	39.9%	197,453	44.0%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	10,320,911	60.1%	251,193	56.0%
	<i>United States - Urban</i>		<i>Virginia - Urban</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Total:</i>	14,088,731	-----	359,654	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	12,079,858	85.7%	308,173	85.7%
<i>Employed</i>	3,579,733	29.6%	101,348	32.9%
<i>Unemployed</i>	610,653	5.1%	17,240	5.6%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	7,889,472	65.3%	189,585	61.5%

	<i>United States</i>		<i>Virginia</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	2,008,873	14.3%	51,481	14.3%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	1,531,536	76.2%	43,613	84.7%
<i>Employed</i>	958,683	62.6%	30,622	70.2%
<i>Unemployed</i>	173,068	11.3%	5,145	11.8%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	399,785	26.1%	7,846	18.0%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	477,337	23.8%	7,868	15.3%
<i>Employed</i>	177,203	37.1%	3,140	39.9%
<i>Unemployed</i>	54,911	11.5%	1,224	15.6%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	245,223	51.4%	3,504	44.5%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	5,554,251	39.4%	158,719	44.1%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	8,534,480	60.6%	200,935	55.9%
	<i>United States - Rural</i>		<i>Virginia - Rural</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Total:</i>	3,078,182	-----	88,992	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	2,506,944	81.4%	72,553	81.5%
<i>Employed</i>	797,236	31.8%	22,524	31.0%

	<i>United States</i>		<i>Virginia</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/ Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Unemployed</i>	106,028	4.2%	3,547	4.9%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	1,603,680	64.0%	46,482	64.1%
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	571,238	18.6%	16,439	18.5%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	411,083	72.0%	14,325	87.1%
<i>Employed</i>	259,799	63.2%	10,309	72.0%
<i>Unemployed</i>	44,967	10.9%	1,457	10.2%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	106,317	25.9%	2,559	17.9%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	160,155	28.0%	2,114	12.9%
<i>Employed</i>	68,969	43.1%	807	38.2%
<i>Unemployed</i>	14,752	9.2%	90	4.3%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	76,434	47.7%	1,217	57.6%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	3,078,182	42.0%	38,734	43.5%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	1,786,431	58.0%	50,258	56.5%

Source: ACS 1-Year Estimates Detailed Tables

RO5 has the lowest percentage of youth that are not enrolled in school, yet have attained high school graduation, and are employed and participating in the labor force (57%). Rates for youth ages 16 to 19 that are not enrolled in school, have not attained high school graduation, and are not in the labor force exceed 49 percent in all ROs with the exception of RO4 where the rate is slightly less than 40 percentage points

Table 118 represents school enrollment and educational attainment by employment status for individuals ages 16 to 19 years in Virginia's regional office service areas.

Table 118
Education and Employment for Ages 16 to 19 Years: Workforce Development Areas

	<i>RO1</i>		<i>RO2</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>
		<i>Not Enrolled</i>		<i>Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Total:</i>	16,588	-----	149,270	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	13,645	82.3%	132,537	88.8%
<i>Employed</i>	3,706	27.2%	39,343	29.7%
<i>Unemployed</i>	905	6.6%	6,668	5.0%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	9,034	66.2%	86,526	65.3%
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	2,943	17.7%	16,733	11.2%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	2,397	81.4%	13,050	78.0%
<i>Employed</i>	1,561	65.1%	8,534	65.4%
<i>Unemployed</i>	250	10.4%	1,420	10.9%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	586	24.4%	3,096	23.7%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	546	18.6%	3,683	22.0%
<i>Employed</i>	167	30.6%	1,330	36.1%
<i>Unemployed</i>	81	14.8%	393	10.7%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	298	54.6%	1,960	53.2%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	6,670	40.2%	57,688	38.6%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	9,918	59.8%	91,582	61.4%
	<i>RO3</i>		<i>RO4</i>	

	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>
		<i>Not Enrolled</i>		<i>Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Total:</i>	96,208	-----	74,748	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	78,697	81.8%	64,755	86.6%
<i>Employed</i>	22,454	28.5%	19,532	30.2%
<i>Unemployed</i>	5,188	6.6%	4,236	6.5%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	51,055	64.9%	40,987	63.3%
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	17,511	18.2%	9,993	13.4%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	15,721	89.8%	7,871	78.8%
<i>Employed</i>	11,709	74.5%	4,719	60.0%
<i>Unemployed</i>	1,452	9.2%	1,413	18.0%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	2,560	16.3%	1,739	22.1%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	1,790	10.2%	2,122	21.2%
<i>Employed</i>	616	34.4%	959	45.2%
<i>Unemployed</i>	290	16.2%	316	14.9%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	884	49.4%	847	39.9%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	41,709	43.4%	31,175	41.7%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	54,499	56.6%	43,573	58.3%
	<i>RO5</i>		<i>RO6</i>	
	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Percent of Enrolled/</i>

		<i>Not Enrolled</i>		<i>Not Enrolled</i>
<i>Total:</i>	61,328	-----	47,705	-----
<i>Enrolled in school:</i>	54,467	88.8%	41,910	87.9%
<i>Employed</i>	15,869	29.1%	11,108	26.5%
<i>Unemployed</i>	2,148	3.9%	1,986	4.7%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	36,450	66.9%	28,816	68.8%
<i>Not enrolled in school:</i>	6,861	11.2%	5,795	12.1%
<i>High school graduate (includes equivalency):</i>	5,525	80.5%	4,884	84.3%
<i>Employed</i>	3,152	57.0%	3,490	71.5%
<i>Unemployed</i>	731	13.2%	454	9.3%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	1,642	29.7%	940	19.2%
<i>Not high school graduate:</i>	1,336	19.5%	911	15.7%
<i>Employed</i>	337	25.2%	254	27.9%
<i>Unemployed</i>	179	13.4%	92	10.1%
<i>Not in labor force</i>	820	61.4%	565	62.0%
<i>Total Labor Force Participation</i>	22,416	36.6%	17,384	36.4%
<i>Total Not in labor force</i>	38,912	63.4%	30,321	63.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 2014-2019 5-Year Estimates

Bureau of Labor Statistics Youth Labor Force Participation and Unemployment Rates Including Youth with Disabilities

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics collects information on the Nation's youth labor force participation and unemployment by age. The data indicates that the labor force participation rates for youth with disabilities are lower by 7% or more compared to individuals without disabilities when youth are ages 16-19. However, once the group ages to 20 to 24 years, the disparity grows dramatically to more than 20 percentage points.

The Annual 2021 unemployment rate for ages 20 to 24 with disabilities is 7.8 percentage points higher than those without disabilities. In November of 2021, the unemployment rate difference between those with disabilities and those without disabilities ages 20 to 24 rises to over 10 percent.

Table 119 details National data for youth ages 16 to 19 and 20 to 24 with and without disabilities.

Table 119

Youth LFP and Unemployment Rates: Oct.-Dec. 2021 and Annual 2121

Group	Youth Labor Force Participation Rate							
	Oct-21		Nov-21		Dec-21		Annual 2021	
	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability
Age 16 to 19	24.8%	35.7%	25.2%	35.2%	27.4%	34.4%	24.3%	36.8%
Age 20 to 24	52.1%	72.2%	51.9%	72.4%	49.2%	72.2%	46.7%	72.0%
	Youth Unemployment Rate							
	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability	Disability	No Disability
Age 16 to 19	23.2%	10.7%	25.5%	10.0%	15.7%	9.3%	21.1%	11.4%
Age 20 to 24	11.3%	6.7%	16.7%	6.3%	15.1%	6.1%	16.5%	8.7%

Source: Borbely, James @bls.gov

Cornell University Youth Employment by Disability Type

Cornell University provides online disability statistics for National and State youth employment. The employment data for youth with disabilities ages 16 to 20 differs slightly from the same data for individuals ages 18 to 64 who are employed and report disabilities. Youth ages 16 to 20 reporting visual disabilities have the second highest employment rate in the Nation compared to other disabilities that are reported. Virginia's rate for employed youth ages 16 to 20 reporting a visual disability is 30.8 percent, exceeding the National average by 1.3 percentage points.

The following data in Table 120 contains 2018 youth employment rates for the Nation and the State by disability type. The designated category is comprised of non-institutionalized youth ages 16 to 20, male and female, from all ethnic backgrounds and includes all education levels.

Table 120
 2018 Employment by Disability Type for Non-institutionalized Youth Ages 16 -20

Disability Type	Percent Employed in US	Percent Employed in VA
Any Disability	25.5%	28.7%
Visual Disability	29.5%	30.8%
Hearing Disability	32.7%	37.6%
Ambulatory Disability	16.6%	14.6%
Cognitive Disability	22.6%	24.4%
Self-Care Disability	8.6%	8.6%
Independent Living Disability	13.6%	21.5%

Source: <http://www.disabilitystatistics.org/>

Table 121 identifies the case movement and outcomes for youth coded as transition students, and those aged 14-24, who may or may not be transition students.

Table 121
 General Case Information – Transition and Youth

Item	Transition 14-24			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Applications	82	73	88	61
% of apps found eligible	97.5%	100.0%	97.7%	96.7%
Avg. time for eligibility determination	54	54	47	38
Significance of Disability				
Disabled	0	0	0	0
% of total	0%	0%	0%	0%
Significant	4	1	0	2
% of total	5%	1%	0%	3%
Most significant	76	72	86	57
% of total	95.0%	98.6%	100.0%	96.6%
% closed prior to IPE development	25.0%	23.3%	20.9%	18.6%
Plans developed	60	56	68	48
Avg. time from eligibility to plan (days) INCLUDING DELAYED STATUS IN OOS	281	329	289	112
Number of consumers in training by type				

Item	Transition 14-24			
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Vocational	59	26	73	50
Undergraduate	20	8	15	9
Graduate	2	0	0	0
Credential attainment rate	n/a	40	16.7	65.4
Measurable skill gain rate	19.4	56	82.6	86.4
Ave. length of open case (days) for cases closed other than rehabilitated	666	325	275	806
Ave. length of open case (days) for cases closed rehabilitated	510.57	439	279	N/A
Number of cases closed rehabilitated	9	23	19	11
Employment rate at exit	19.6	33.8	44.2	21.6
Employment rate in 2nd quarter after exit	n/a	39.1	42.1	49.2
Employment rate in 4th quarter after exit	n/a	38.9	33.3	39.1
Median earnings of those closed as successfully rehabilitated	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$20.00	\$20.00
Total number of cases served	463	439	402	422
Rate of all served	40.7%	43.2%	42.4%	42.8%

The number of transition-age youth applying for services ranged from 73-88 in PYs 2017-2019 before dropping to 61 in PY 2020. This decrease was a result of the pandemic and the impact of school closures and the shift to remote service delivery. The average time frame for eligibility determinations for transition-age youth decreased during the four-year period, ending at 38 days. This is well below the established time frame of 60 days maximum in the Rehabilitation Act. All of the youth found eligible were determined to have at least a significant disability, with more than 96% having a most significant disability in PY 2020.

The credential attainment rate and MSG rate for youth was consistent with all other DBVI consumers. The employment rate at exit in PY 2020 was significantly lower than the general population of DBVI consumers, though the employment rate in the second and fourth quarters after exit were consistent with all other participants. The median earnings for youth were also equal to all consumers.

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION SERVICES

The Rehabilitation Act as amended in WIOA requires VR programs to expend at least 15% of their Federal allotment annually on pre-employment transition services. These services must be made available to all eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities in the State that have need of such services. These services include:

1. Job exploration counseling;
2. Work-based learning experiences;
3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;
4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living (often referred to as soft skills); and
5. Instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring

Although the pandemic significantly impacted the school system in Virginia and the country, DBVI was able to shift to remote service delivery of pre-employment transition services and create a number of exceptional programs for students with blindness and vision impairments. The agency received unanimous praise from all of the individuals interviewed for this study related to their ability to respond to the needs of students during the pandemic. A list of pre-employment transition services programs developed by the agency includes the following:

STEM programs:

- June 2017-18-19 Robotics and Cyber Academy for hands-on Career Exploration- in person
- December 2019 In Person IT Credential Fair- separate session for students- 98 registered
- December 2020 Virtual IT Credential Fair- separate session for students- 116 registered
- 2020 Fall and 2021- Spring and Fall cohort- virtual Tiered IT Training beginning with fundamental Comp TIA, followed by foundational training in ITIL or other
- July 2020, Raspberry Pi and the Security Camera Academy-virtual
- June 2021, Raspberry Pi and the Security Camera Academy-virtual
- June 2021, Leap into Linux Academy-virtual
- July 2021, Ethical Hacker Academy-virtual
- August 2021, HTML Hero Academy-virtual

Other programs not specifically STEM:

- ACE Academy for College Success- in person- January 2020
- ACE Advocacy for College- Jan -February 2021
- ACE Promoting Student Success (PASS) Jan-February 2021
- Ace Academy Resiliency- April 2021
- Ace Academy Career Exploration- May and June 2021
- Ace leadership for College success- May and June 2021
- Financial Literacy- June and July 2021
- Advocating for Science- September and October, 2021

The project team examined the delivery of pre-employment transition services to students with blindness and vision impairments using the RSA 911 data and the pre-employment transition services tool published by RSA. Table 122 contains this information.

Table 122
Pre-Employment Transition Services Provided PY 2017-2020

Item	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Number of SWD Participants in VR Program	212	187	230	237
Total number of potentially eligible SWD in DBVI	17	93	98	38
Number of potentially eligible SWD who received a pre-ETS service	10	69	27	10
Percent of potentially eligible SWD that received a pre-ETS service	58.8%	74.2%	27.6%	26.3%

Despite the pandemic, the number of students with disabilities increased from 2018-2020. In addition, the number of potentially eligible students decreased significantly during that time. This indicates that DBVI is maximizing the number of potentially eligible students that apply to the VR program and become participants. Consequently, the agency is able to charge a number of supportive services that help students participate in the five required services to the 15% pre-employment transition services reserve.

All of the five required services were cited by staff, partners and parents of consumers as needed and beneficial. Consistent with the last CSNA in 2018/19, work experience was identified as the most beneficial activity in terms of preparing students for future work. An analysis of the RSA data dashboards for DBVI indicates that the agency is providing the five required services evenly in terms of percentage of all services offered. Work-based learning experiences have become the most frequently provided pre-employment transition service by DBVI, indicating that the agency responded quickly and efficiently to the input from the previous CSNA.

The Rehabilitation Act as reauthorized in WIOA also indicates that the following authorized services can be provided if funds remain after the provision of the five required services noted above:

1. Implementing effective strategies to increase the likelihood of independent living and inclusion in communities and competitive integrated workplaces;
2. Developing and improving strategies for individuals with intellectual disabilities and individuals with significant disabilities to live independently, participate in postsecondary education experiences, and obtain and retain competitive integrated employment;
3. Providing instruction to vocational rehabilitation counselors, school transition personnel, and other persons supporting students with disabilities;
4. Disseminating information about innovative, effective, and efficient approaches to achieve the goals of this section;
5. Coordinating activities with transition services provided by local educational agencies under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);
6. Applying evidence-based findings to improve policy, procedure, practice, and the preparation of personnel, in order to better achieve the goals of this section;

7. Developing model transition demonstration projects;
8. Establishing or supporting multistate or regional partnerships involving States, local educational agencies, designated State units, developmental disability agencies, private businesses, or other participants to achieve the goals of this section; and
9. Disseminating information and strategies to improve the transition to postsecondary activities of individuals who are members of traditionally unserved populations.

To determine if a VR agency can move from the five required services to the nine authorized services, a fiscal forecasting model must be utilized which identifies the expenditures on the required services and on coordination services and then forecasts how much of the remaining funds, if any, can be utilized to pay for authorized services. DBVI conducts this forecast annually and the results of the most recent forecast are included below.

Movement from Required to Authorized Activities

DBVI Fiscal Forecasting 2021

Describe the agency's methods for identifying students and youth with disabilities in the State

DBVI utilized the Virginia Department of Education data as of December, 2020 for students identified as having a Visual Impairment (VI) or were identified as Deaf-Blind (DB) and who would potentially be in the age group to receive Pre-ETS (14 to 21). The data provided included a range of students who would have graduated from 12th grade in 2018 (but have remained in school until age 22) to students who would not reach graduation until 2022 and therefore would typically be 14 years old. From this data, it was determined that there are a total of 259 Visually Impaired students and 20 Deaf-Blind students, for a total of 279 students that are potentially eligible for pre-employment transition services.

DBVI also collected data on those individuals who are currently receiving Educational Services through DBVI for the age range of 14 through 21. The number of individuals being served through Educational Services with DBVI was determined to be 897 open cases, with 327 of those also open with Vocational Rehabilitation. Therefore, there are a total of 570 open Educational Services cases that have not been referred for Vocational Rehabilitation services that could potentially be provided pre-employment transition services.

Given that the number of individuals currently being served by DBVI through Educational Services (including those who are already open with Vocational Rehabilitation) is much larger than the Department of Education number of Visually Impaired and Deafblind students, DBVI has established the larger Educational Services number as individuals who could potentially be provided pre-employment transition services and thus elected to use that number for purposes of determining the amount of the required reserved funds.

DBVI established the need for pre-employment transition services based on the previous CSNA, feedback from Education partners, collaboration with IL instructors, and first-hand exposure through the education and rehabilitation system.

The agency should have sufficient documentation to demonstrate:

1. The number of students with disabilities in the state and potentially eligible to receive pre-employment transition services (pre-ETS):

Department of Education (DOE) data from June, 2020 regarding the number of Visually Impaired and Deafblind students in the age group of 14 to 21 was collected as well as data regarding those individuals who are currently receiving Educational Services through DBVI in order to establish the number of students with disabilities in Virginia who are potentially eligible to receive pre-ETS.

2. Develop a target amount of reserve funds that will be necessary to provide the required pre-ETS to students with disabilities

For Fiscal Year 2021, DBVI had a total Vocational Rehabilitation Allotment of \$8,830,760. DBVI will establish a reserve fund for pre-employment transition services of \$1,558,369.

DBVI has vendor agreements with eight vendors to provide statewide Pre-ETS services to students with disabilities. The average cost per student for these services over the course of one year is \$1200. Accordingly, DBVI will ensure a total of \$1,076,400 be reserved for those required pre-ETS services.

3. Have made the required services available to these students with disabilities

All students who are currently being served through DBVI's Educational Services who are within the age range of 14 to 22 are being contacted to inform them of the availability of Pre-ETS services, whether or not they are currently open with VR. If there is interest, the contact information for that student and family will be provided to the appropriate VR counselor who will contact the individual to discuss their specific needs and interests regarding pre-ETS services.

4. Have done the fiscal forecasting to determine the amount of reserve funds remaining

There is a total of \$481,969 remaining to expend on authorized activities.

SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

Partner Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals for Youth in Transition

Partners were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth with blindness and vision impairments and in transition.

Partners were asked whether or not the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth with blindness and vision impairments and in transition were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. The sample size was 13 respondents. The majority of the respondents indicated that the barriers to achieving employment goals were different for youth in transition. Table 123 details the results to the question.

Table 123

Partner Survey: Different Barriers – Youth in Transition

Barriers To Goals Different for Youth in Transition	Number	Percent
Yes	8	61.5%
No	5	38.5%
Total	13	100.0%

Partner respondents were asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth with vision impairments and in transition. Nine respondents ranked the barriers.

The results indicate that the barriers to achieving employment goals are not different for the general population of DBVI consumers and for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition. Caution is used to analyze the results and making the inference that the barriers are not different because the sample size is small. Two of three top barriers that partners selected for DBVI consumers who are youth with vision impairments and in transition were also listed in the top three barriers selected for the general population. “Not having education or training” ranked in a tie for the second position on the youth list and ranked in a tie for the fourth position on the general consumer list. Table 124 details the results.

Table 124

Partner Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – Youth in Transition

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not having job skills	5	55.6%
Not having education or training	4	44.4%
Disability-related transportation issues	4	44.4%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	3	33.3%
Poor social skills	3	33.3%
Not having job search skills	2	22.2%
Not enough jobs available	2	22.2%

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	1	11.1%

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Youth in Transition

Partner respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. Partner respondents indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition by roughly 69 percent. Table 125 summarizes the results.

Table 125

Partner Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Youth in Transition

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Youth in Transition	Number	Percent
No	9	69.2%
Yes	4	30.8%
Total	13	100.0%

Partners were presented with a subsequent question asking them to identify the top three reasons DBVI consumers who are youth in transition have difficulty accessing services. Four respondents answered the question, making the sample size too small for making inferences. Important to note that the top-ranking reason partners selected for why youth in transition have difficulty accessing DBVI services is the same item partners selected for the general population of consumers (slow service delivery).

Table 126

Partner Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Youth in Transition

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Slow service delivery	3	75.0%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	2	50.0%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	1	25.0%
Difficulties completing the application	1	25.0%
Inadequate assessment services	1	0.0%

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	1	25.0%
Other (please describe)	1	25.0%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	1	25.0%
DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients	1	25.0%
Total	12	

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Staff Survey: Barriers to Employment Goals for Youth in Transition

Staff were asked two questions related to barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth with blindness and vision impairments in transition to college, career, and adulthood.

When asked about the differences in barriers to achieving employment goals, the majority of staff believe the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth with blindness and vision impairments were different from the general population of DBVI consumers. Table 127 details the results to the question.

Table 127

Staff Survey: Different Barriers – Youth in Transition

Barriers To Goals Different for Youth in Transition	Number	Percent
Yes	35	79.6%
No	9	20.5%
Total	44	100.0%

Staff respondents were presented with a subsequent question and asked to identify the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition. Staff result lists for both the youth and the general population of DBVI consumers cited “not having job skills” as the top barrier and the remaining barriers were in a different ranking order. When comparing staff result list to the partner result list for the same question, the top two barriers match. Table 128 details the results.

Table 128

Staff Survey: Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals – Youth in Transition

Top Three Barriers to Employment Goals - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not having job skills	28	70.0%
Not having education or training	13	32.5%
Not having job search skills	13	32.5%
Poor social skills	13	32.5%
Disability-related transportation issues	11	27.5%
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	7	17.5%
Other (please describe)	6	15.0%
Not enough jobs available	4	10.0%
Other transportation issues	4	10.0%
Mental health issues	4	10.0%
Not having disability-related accommodations	1	2.5%
Substance abuse issues	1	2.5%
Other health issues	1	2.5%
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	1	2.5%
Convictions for criminal offenses	1	2.5%
Total	108	

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Youth in Transition

Staff respondents were presented a “yes-no” question asking them to identify whether or not the difficulties to accessing DBVI services is different for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition compared to the general population of DBVI consumers. Staff indicated that the difficulties accessing DBVI services is not different for DBVI consumers who are youth in transition by roughly 56 percent. Table 129 summarizes the results.

Table 129

Staff Survey: Difficulty To Access DBVI Services Different for Youth in Transition

Difficulty To Access DBVI Different for Youth in Transition	Number	Percent
No	24	55.8%
Yes	19	44.2%
Total	43	100.0%

When asked a subsequent question that required staff to identify the top three reasons DBVI consumers who are youth in transition have difficulty accessing services, staff selected the same top three reasons that they selected for consumers who require supported employment and two of the same reasons that they selected for the general population of consumers. Table 130 details the staff responses to the question.

Table 130

Staff Survey: Accessing DBVI Services – Youth in Transition

Top Three Reasons Difficult to Access DBVI Services - Youth in Transition	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Difficulties accessing training or education programs	10	50.0%
Slow service delivery	8	40.0%
Inadequate assessment services	7	35.0%
Inadequate disability-related accommodations	5	25.0%
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment	5	25.0%
Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office	4	20.0%
Language barriers	4	20.0%
Other (please describe)	4	20.0%
DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live	3	15.0%
Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation	2	10.0%
Difficulties completing the application	1	5.0%
Total	53	

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following recurring themes emerged related to the needs of youth with blindness and vision impairments in transition:

1. Transportation to and from school and work was the most common rehabilitation and employment need mentioned for students and youth with blindness and vision impairments. The lack of reliable or available transportation, especially in the rural areas, affects every area of the lives of youth and can significantly limit their work options.
2. Low vision technology and other assistive technology is needed for youth and students with blindness and vision impairments to prepare for their career and perform the essential functions of their jobs.
3. All of the five required pre-employment transition services required activities were consistently cited as needed by students with disabilities. As indicated earlier, work-based learning experiences were the most frequently cited need, but self-advocacy and soft-skills training were also mentioned frequently. DBVI staff do most of the counseling on postsecondary training opportunities in-house, and most of the youth and students they serve have educational goals beyond secondary school.
4. The LIFE summer program at VRCBVI and the STEPS to Success program received high praise from many interview participants, as did much of the virtual and in-person training programs offered at VRCBVI by DBVI.
5. Although the pandemic adversely affected enrollment at VRCBVI and in-person attendance at school, the agency found that the shift to virtual training and programming opened the doors for more students and youth to participate, which was a positive outcome.
6. DBVI's counselors work closely with the Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVIs) in most of the school districts. When the relationship between the TVIs and DBVI are close, services for students with blindness and vision impairments are coordinated and comprehensive. In many rural areas where schools have limited resources and there may not be a TVI, services to youth are adversely impacted.
7. The agency added resiliency and financial literacy training to their pre-employment transition services programs. These new offerings were considered as positive, needed and helpful for students.
8. The transition from secondary school to college can be a major challenge for youth with blindness or vision impairments as they have had someone in secondary school actively work to meet their accommodation needs, but when they get to college, this must be a self-directed process. Interview participants indicated it generally takes at least one, and often two semesters before they get their technology and reasonable accommodation needs met in college. This creates a slow start to their higher education pursuits which can be frustrating and result in a delay in achieving their goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are provided to DBVI related to the needs of youth with blindness and vision impairments in transition:

1. DBVI should continue to develop virtual and in-person options for training and pre-employment transition services. The agency has received national recognition for the training for students and youth with blindness and vision impairments, especially the training that is offered in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) occupations. DBVI should continue to develop these options that contribute to training students and youth to work in high-demand, high-paying career-level occupations;
2. The use of advanced technology such as AI programs to interact with students with blindness and vision impairments can contribute the ability of DBVI to recruit students and youth and help keep them engaged in the VR process. DBVI is encouraged to explore these possibilities as resources allow and to expand their use of social media platforms to attract and engage youth;
3. DBVI is encouraged to connect youth that are transitioning to college from secondary education with the college student ability centers prior to beginning their first semester of college work to ensure that all of their reasonable accommodation needs are met. This will help ensure these individuals get a good start to their education pursuits; and
4. DBVI is encouraged to consider developing a peer mentoring program for youth with disabilities in Virginia. One possibility is an online peer mentoring program available through PolicyWorks at <https://disabilitypolicyworks.org/peer-mentoringworks-2/>. A key component of this mentoring program is the development of self-advocacy skills in youth and students with disabilities.

SECTION 5

NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH BLINDNESS AND VISION IMPAIRMENTS SERVED THROUGH OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

The following information was gathered during this assessment in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce development system. The core partners in the Workforce Development System include the following:

Title I: The Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs

Title II: The Adult Education and Family Literacy program

Title III: The Wagner-Peyser program (Employment Services)

Title IV: The Vocational Rehabilitation Program (General and Blind in Virginia)

The pandemic was especially impactful on the American Job Center (AJCs) system in Virginia and the nation. All of the AJCs closed for many months and were only available for remote services. This significantly impacted the partnerships at the local level between DBVI and the AJCs. Much of the ground that was gained in their partnership prior to COVID-19 was lost during the pandemic according to the staff and partners. The State-level partnership between the core partners is very strong and there is every expectation that the progress that was stalled during the pandemic will begin again. However, during this study, it had been several months since most of the DBVI staff had even spoken to their AJC partners due to the pandemic. The reader is cautioned to interpret these findings in this context.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the statewide workforce development system:

1. There has been considerable progress in the relationship between DBVI and the core partners at the State level since the previous CSNA. Joint planning and frequent communication are common among partners.
2. Virginia DARS (the General agency) is an important Workforce partner for DBVI. The relationship between DARS and DBVI was characterized as helpful and beneficial. DBVI staff and partners indicated that the relationship with DARS is especially helpful when a DBVI consumer has a mental health impairment, and they can take advantage of the expertise and resources of the General agency.

3. Although the State-level relationship between DBVI and the core partners was described as good and improved, relationships at the local levels were primarily based on referral alone. AJC staff were generally described as struggling to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments, uncertain what to do, and untrained on how to use the AT in the AJCs when it is functioning. AJC staff need frequent and regular training in order to effectively work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

SURVEY RESULT BY TYPE:

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY:

Virginia Workforce Centers

Individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia were asked a series of questions about their use and opinion of the Virginia Workforce Centers.

Seventy respondents answered the survey question regarding utilizing the Virginia workforce centers beyond an online account and twenty percent (n=14) indicated “yes” they used services. Of the respondents that utilized Virginia Workforce Centers beyond creating an online account, physical accessibility of the building was difficult for seven percent of the respondents (n=1) and access to programs was challenging for 21.4 percent (n=3). Table 131 summarizes the responses to questions of use and accessibility.

Table 131

Virginia Workforce Centers' Use and Accessibility

Accessibility Questions	Yes	Percent of Total	No	Percent of Total	Total Number of Responses
Have you ever tried to use the services of the Virginia Workforce Centers beyond creating an online account? (this may include testing, preparing for or finding employment, job coaching, training assistive technology or other services)	14	20.0%	56	80.0%	70
Did you experience any difficulties with the physical accessibility of the building?	1	7.1%	13	92.9%	14
Did you have any difficulty accessing the programs at the Virginia Workforce Centers (i.e.	3	21.4%	11	78.6%	14

Accessibility Questions	Yes	Percent of Total	No	Percent of Total	Total Number of Responses
no available assistive technology, no interpreters, etc.)?)					

A low sample of respondents used the Virginia Workforce Centers to obtain training or a job. Of those who used the Centers' services for finding a job, 20 percent (n=2) found employment.

Table 132 details the results to the questions regarding training and employment.

Table 132

Virginia Workforce Centers' Training and Employment

Training and Employment Questions	Yes	Percent of Total	No	Percent of Total	Total Number of Responses
Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to get training?	3	21.4%	11	78.6%	14
Did you get the training that you were seeking?	1	33.3%	2	66.7%	3
Did the Virginia Workforce Centers training result in employment?	0	0.0%	4	100.0%	4
Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to find a job?	10	71.4%	4	28.6%	14
Did the Virginia Workforce Centers staff help you find employment?	2	20.0%	8	80.0%	10

The concept of helpfulness and effectiveness is evaluated in this study with respect to Virginia Workforce Center services. Fourteen respondents answered the question regarding helpfulness and 13 respondents answered the questions regarding the effectiveness of the Workforce Centers. An equal percentage of respondents found the Workforce Center staff to be "somewhat helpful" or "not helpful." Similarly, in regard to the effectiveness of the Virginia Workforce Centers, an equal percentage of respondents found the Workforce Center services to be "somewhat effective" or "not effective" in serving individuals with disabilities. In terms of overall effectiveness rating, roughly 31 percent of the respondents did not have an opinion while 46.2 percent selected either "very ineffective" or "somewhat ineffective." Table 133 identifies the rating for helpfulness of the Workforce Centers' staff by the individuals that responded to the survey. Table 134 details the effectiveness of the Centers.

Table 133
Helpfulness of the Virginia Workforce Centers' Staff

Virginia Workforce Center Staff	Number	Percent
They were somewhat helpful	6	42.9%
No, they were not helpful	6	42.9%
Yes, they were very helpful	2	14.3%
Total	14	100.0%

Table 134
Effectiveness of the Virginia Workforce Center Services

Effectiveness of Center Services	Number	Percent
The services were somewhat effective	6	46.2%
No, the services were not effective	6	46.2%
Yes, the services were very effective	1	7.7%
Total	13	100.0%
Effectiveness Rating	Number	Percent
No opinion	4	30.8%
Somewhat ineffective	3	23.1%
Very ineffective	3	23.1%
Somewhat effective	2	15.4%
Very effective	1	7.7%
Total	13	100.0%

When asked, “What recommendations do you have for the Virginia Workforce Centers to improve service to individuals with disabilities in Virginia?,” individual survey respondents were given an opportunity to provide a narrative response. Five comments were received and three provided specific feedback. Two narrative responses cited was “no idea/too long ago.” The three narrative responses are quoted:

- *“Help people instead of pushing people to do things they don't want to get into”*

- *“Not to rely on their personal knowledge of a person’s ability and knowledge. Respect privacy. Cannot see does not equal cannot read. Keyboards on computer should have a visually adapted unit.”*
- *“They have to know what kind job is needed for a disabled person”*

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Virginia Workforce Centers

Staff survey respondents in Virginia were asked a series of questions about their use and opinion of the Virginia Workforce Centers (American Job Centers).

Roughly 41 percent of staff respondents (n=18) indicated that they have referred DBVI consumers to the Virginia Workforce Centers. Although a minority of staff indicated that the Virginia Workforce Center assisted their consumers with training and finding employment, the majority of staff (n=12) indicated that the Job Center services are not effective. Staff were united in recommending that the Centers train their staff on how to work with people with blindness or other vision impairments.

Tables 135-138 details the survey responses from DBVI staff.

Table 135

Staff Referral to Virginia Workforce Job Centers

Referral Question	Number	Percent
No	26	59.1%
Yes	18	40.9%
Total	44	100.0%

Table 136
Staff Interaction with Virginia Workforce Job Centers' Training and Employment Services

Training and Employment Questions	Yes		No		Never Referred		Total Number of Responses
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Have the Virginia Workforce Centers helped any of your consumers to get training for a job?	5	29.4%	10	58.8%	2	11.8%	17
Have the Virginia Workforce Centers helped any of your consumers to get a job?	5	27.8%	10	55.6%	3	16.7%	18

Table 137
Staff Opinion on Effectiveness of American Job Centers' Service to DBVI Consumers

Effectiveness of American Job Centers to Serve Individuals with VI	Number	Percent
Not effectively	12	70.6%
Somewhat effectively	4	23.5%
They do not serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments	1	5.9%
Very effectively	0	0.0%
Unsure	0	0.0%
Total	17	100.0%

Table 138

Staff Opinion for Improving Service of American Job Centers for DBVI Consumers

Improving Service of the American Job Centers to Effectively Serve Individuals with Blindness and Vision Impairments	Number	Percent of number of respondents
Train their staff on how to work with people with blindness or other vision impairments	17	100.0%
Partner more effectively with DBVI	13	76.5%
Improve programmatic accessibility	11	64.7%
Include individuals with blindness or other vision impairments when they fund for training for consumers	10	58.8%
Other (please specify)	3	17.6%
Improve physical accessibility	1	5.9%
Total	55	

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following information was gathered from the individuals interviewed for this assessment in the area of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the Statewide Workforce Development System:

1. There has been considerable progress in the relationship between DBVI and the core partners at the State level since the previous CSNA. The Commissioner sits on the Statewide Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and The Director for VR and Workforce Services at DBVI has a primary role in bringing the core partners together and acts as staff to the SWDB. The result has been the development of stronger partnerships between DBVI and the other core partners. Joint planning and frequent communication are common among partners. DBVI plays a critical role on the SWDB in that they advocate for the accessibility of the AJCs and all partner programs and facilities.
2. Virginia DARS (the General agency) is an important Workforce partner for DBVI. The relationship between DARS and DBVI was generally characterized as helpful and beneficial. The agencies do share cases, but the level of service and the productivity of the relationship varies greatly from person to person. DBVI staff and partners indicated that the relationship with DARS is especially helpful when a DBVI consumer has a mental health impairment, and they can take advantage of the expertise and resources of the General agency. The Career Pathways grant was noted as a powerful linkage between the agencies and demonstrated how effective the relationship could be when working towards a common goal.
3. Although the State-level relationship between DBVI and the core partners was described as good and improved, relationships at the local levels were primarily based on referral alone. DBVI staff and partners indicate that if an individual with blindness or a vision impairment goes into an AJC, they are immediately referred to DBVI. AJC staff were generally described as unable to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments, uncertain what to do, and untrained on how to use the AT in the AJCs when it is functioning. Although the data indicates that 11% of DBVI consumers were co-enrolled with at least one core partner in PY 2020, data was not available on which partners and what services were received, if any, beyond an online registration in the AJC system.
4. AJC staff need frequent and regular training in order to effectively work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments.
5. The core partners have developed a common referral portal which should aide in tracking co-enrollment, but the system is not full accessible and was being modified as of this assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to DBVI based on the results of the research in the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments served through other components of the Statewide Workforce Development System area:

1. DBVI is encouraged to continue to work with the core partners to ensure that the common intake form is accessible. This will help develop the ability to track and analyze data on co-enrollment with core partners;
2. DBVI should identify successful partnerships with the AJCs and other core partners and tell the story of these successes to the field throughout the State so that they can try and be replicated. This may help the partnership to go beyond one of referral in many areas of the State;
3. DBVI is encouraged to continue to collaborate with the core partners to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility of their programs for individuals with blindness and vision impairments;
4. DBVI is encouraged to create customized training programs with their core partners in order to increase opportunities for braided funding and productive outcomes; and
5. DBVI should consider allowing a representative from the other core partners to come to VRCBVI and make presentations to participants on core program services and how they can be of assistance when the participants complete their adjustment to blindness training and return to their communities to look for work. DBVI should consider allowing core partners to outstation staff at VRCBVI on a regular basis to facilitate the exchange of information and an increase in co-enrollment.

SECTION 6

NEED TO ESTABLISH, DEVELOP OR IMPROVE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN VIRGINIA

Section 6 identifies the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs in Virginia that serve individuals with blindness and vision impairments. DBVI provides the vast majority of services to their consumers with in-house staff, but they do purchase some services from community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) such as supported employment. The results of the surveys and interviews should be interpreted with the knowledge that DBVI is the primary service provider for their consumers.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following themes emerged from all of the research methods in the area of the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs serving individuals with disabilities in Virginia:

1. DBVI continues to provide most of their consumer services through their own staff. They do use CRPs and other individual service providers for some services, but in-house service provision is the most common method of service delivery.
2. The focus on in-house service provision was beneficial for the agency during the pandemic as they were not as adversely affected by the loss of external service providers due to layoffs or high turnover as some other VR programs nationally.
3. There is a need to develop the ability of Employment Services Organizations (ESOs) to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments.
4. There is a need to develop either internal or external vocational evaluation services for DBVI consumers. There is a lack of professional vocational evaluation services that are tailored to the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.
5. There is a need to develop peer mentors for individuals with blindness and vision impairments, especially youth.

SURVEY RESULTS BY TYPE

INDIVIDUAL SURVEY RESULTS

Service Providers

Individual survey respondents were asked a series of questions identifying the quality, effectiveness, and responsiveness of their service provider and whether or not they would recommend their service provider to others.

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of the service from the service provider. A low number (n=22) of responses were received and over 77 percent (n=17) indicated that the quality of service from the service provider was either “excellent” or “good”. Table 139 details the results.

Table 139

Quality of Service: Service Provider

Quality of Service: Service Provider	Number	Percent
Excellent	10	45.5%
Good	7	31.8%
Poor	3	13.6%
Fair	2	9.1%
Total	22	100.0%

Individuals were asked to rate the effectiveness of the service from the service provider. The majority rated the services from the service provider as “very effective.” The results are detailed in Table 140.

Table 140
Effectiveness of Service: Service Provider

Effectiveness of Services: Service Provider	Number	Percent
Very effective	12	54.6%
Effective	4	18.2%
Somewhat ineffective	4	18.2%
Ineffective	2	9.1%
Total	22	100.0%

Respondents were also asked to rate the responsiveness of the service provider. Roughly 82 percent of the respondents rated the responsiveness of the service provider as either “excellent” or “good.” Table 141 summarizes the results.

Table 141
Responsiveness of Service: Service Provider

Responsiveness of Service Provider	Number	Percent
Excellent	10	45.5%
Good	8	36.4%
Fair	3	13.6%
Poor	1	4.6%
Total	22	100.0%

The final question asked of individuals regarding service providers was “Would you recommend your service provider to others served by DBVI?” Almost 82 percent of the respondents indicated that they would recommend their service provider to others. The response ratings are contained in table 142.

Table 142
Recommend Service Provider

Recommend Service Provider	Number	Percent
Yes	18	81.8%

Recommend Service Provider	Number	Percent
No	3	13.6%
Not sure	1	4.6%
Total	22	100.0%

PARTNER SURVEY RESULTS

Partner Survey: Services Readily Available to DBVI Consumers

Partners were provided with a list of 18 items and asked to select the services that are readily available to DBVI consumers.

“Transition services” and “Pre-employment transition services” were identified by 70.6 percent of the 17 partner survey respondents who answered the question regarding the services most readily available. “Job development and placement services” and “assistive technology” were cited by an equal percentage of partners (58.8%) as the third most readily available service to consumers. Personal care attendants, affordable housing services, and financial literacy training were cited the least number of times as services readily available. One narrative response was received in the category of “other” and the comment did not cite another service as an option for consumers. Table 143 summarizes the services readily available as reported by partner survey respondents.

Table 143

Partner Survey: Services Readily Available

Services Readily Available	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Transition services	12	70.6%
Pre-employment transition services	12	70.6%
Job development and placement services	10	58.8%
Assistive technology	10	58.8%
Vocational evaluation	8	47.1%
Independent living skills training	8	47.1%
Vocational training	8	47.1%

Services Readily Available	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Job training services	7	41.2%
Mental health treatment	7	41.2%
Substance abuse treatment	6	35.3%
Public transportation	5	29.4%
Other transportation assistance	4	23.5%
Adjustment to blindness training	4	23.5%
Benefits planning assistance	4	23.5%
Personal care attendants	3	17.6%
Affordable housing services	3	17.6%
Financial literacy training	2	11.8%
Other (please describe)	1	5.9%
Total	114	

Partner Survey: Service Providers Meeting Consumer Needs

Partner respondents were asked to identify whether or not rehabilitation service providers in the State of Virginia were able to meet DBVI consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs.

Roughly 62.5 percent of the partner respondents indicated that service providers are able to meet the needs of DBVI consumers. Table 144 details the results to this question.

Table 144

Ability of Rehabilitation Service Providers to Meet DBVI Consumer Vocational Needs

Rehab Service Providers Meet DBVI Consumer Vocational Needs	Number	Percent
Yes	10	62.5%
No	6	37.5%
Total	16	100.0%

Partner Survey: Service Needs that Rehabilitation Service Providers Are Unable to Meet

Partners were provided a list of 18 items and asked to identify the service needs that rehabilitation service providers were unable to meet in the state of Virginia. There was no limit to the number of services that could be chosen.

Six partner respondents participated in answering this survey question. Table 145 contains the partners' choices of service needs that rehabilitation service providers are unable to meet. Assistive technology ranked in a tie for the third position as a service that is readily available in Table 143 yet tied with "job training services" and "other transportation assistance" for the first position in the results list of service needs that rehabilitation providers are unable to meet.

Table 145
Service Needs that Rehab Providers Are Unable to Meet

Service Needs Rehab Providers Unable to Meet	Number of times chosen	Percent of total number of respondents
Job training services	4	66.7%
Assistive technology	4	66.7%
Other transportation assistance	4	66.7%
Independent living skills training	3	50.0%
Adjustment to blindness training	3	50.0%
Affordable housing services	3	50.0%
Benefits planning assistance	3	50.0%
Vocational training	3	50.0%
Job development and placement services	2	33.3%
Vocational evaluation	2	33.3%
Mental health treatment	2	33.3%
Public transportation	2	33.3%
Substance abuse treatment	1	16.7%
Personal care attendants	1	16.7%
Financial literacy training	1	16.7%
Other (please describe)	1	16.7%
Transition services	1	16.7%
Pre-employment transition services	0	0.0%
Total	40	

Partner Survey: Primary Reasons Service Providers are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs

Partners were provided with a list of five reasons and asked to identify the primary reasons why vocational rehabilitation service providers were unable to meet consumers' service needs. Respondents were able to select more than one item if desired. Six respondents answered the question. Partners do not believe the payment rates for services is too low. The majority of partners agreed that there are "not enough services providers available in areas" which infers that the item is the primary reason service needs are not met. The phrase "do not get referrals" was cited in the narrative comments for the item choice "other, please describe." Table 146 contains the number of times the reason was chosen and the percentage of the number of respondents who answered the question.

Table 146

Primary Reasons Service Providers are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs

Primary Reasons Service Providers are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not enough providers available in area	5	83.3%
Low quality of provider services	2	33.3%
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with providers	2	33.3%
Other (please describe)	1	16.7%
The rates of payment for services are too low	0	0.0%
Total	10	

Partner Survey: Most Important Change Service Providers Could Make to Support Consumer Efforts to Achieve Employment Goals

Partner respondents were asked to identify the most important change that network or rehabilitation service providers in the state of Virginia could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals. Two responses were similar to the responses cited regarding the changes DBVI could make to support consumers to achieve their employment goals. The quotes are:

- *"Communication with the consumer and lists of options"*
- *"More staff, more training for staff, more in-person participation in meetings and training"*
- *"More training on AT and accommodations"*
- *"Provide training closer to southwest Virginia"*

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Staff Survey: Services Readily Available to DBVI Consumers

Staff were provided with a list of 18 items and asked to select the services that are readily available to DBVI consumers.

Staff and partners have slightly different views on the types of services that are readily available to consumers. Staff identified “independent living skills training,” “assistive technology,” and “adjustment to blindness training” as services that are readily available to consumers more frequently than partners did. The narrative comment received in the category of “other” contained the phrase “orientation and mobility training.” Table 147 details the services readily available as reported by staff.

Table 147

Staff Survey: Services Readily Available

Services Readily Available	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Independent living skills training	51	96.2%
Assistive technology	49	92.5%
Adjustment to blindness training	44	83.0%
Job development and placement services	42	79.2%
Transition services	42	79.2%
Pre-employment transition services	42	79.2%
Vocational training	40	75.5%
Job training services	39	73.6%
Vocational evaluation	37	69.8%
Public transportation	26	49.1%
Other transportation services	25	47.2%
Benefit planning assistance	17	32.1%
Mental health treatment	16	30.2%

Services Readily Available	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Financial literacy training	12	22.6%
Substance abuse treatment	10	18.9%
Personal care attendants	7	13.2%
Affordable housing services	6	11.3%
Other (please describe)	1	1.9%
Total	506	

Staff Survey: Service Providers Meeting Consumer Needs

Staff respondents were asked to identify whether or not vendors in the State of Virginia were able to meet DBVI consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs.

The majority of staff respondents agreed with the majority of partner respondents that service providers are able to meet the needs of DBVI consumers. Table 148 details the results to this question.

Table 148

Staff Survey: Ability of Vendors to Meet DBVI Consumer Vocational Needs

Vendors Meet DBVI Consumer Vocational Needs	Number	Percent
Yes	42	82.4%
No	9	17.7%
Total	51	100.0%

Staff Survey: Service Needs that Vendors are Unable to Meet

Staff were presented with an open-ended question asking them to identify service needs the vendors are unable to meet. Seven narrative responses were received and six of the responses identified specific service needs. The quotes are:

- *"Quality employment ... Neuropsychology evals"*
- *"Some vendors do a better job than others. We have a variety of vendors that we may work with from time to time. Accessibility is often an issue for our consumers. Some of the ESO's have minimal experience working with the vision impaired."*
- *"Transportation issues, housing issues, financial planning"*

- *“Voc. evals., working with deafblind individuals, mental health counseling”*
- *“We need more job development and placement for totally blind individuals. We also need more access to MH/SA services for clients. We need more advocacy in the school system so that blind kids do not graduate from high school without being able to touch type, use computers, and other technology. In the field, counselors need staff who can assist them with paperwork they are doing so they can spend more time providing guidance and counseling to individuals instead of spending a lot of time completing paperwork and other administrative duties. We need more AT instructors at VRCBVI.”*

Staff Survey: Primary Reasons Vendors are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs

Staff respondents were provided with a list of six reasons and asked to identify the primary reasons why vendors were unable to meet consumers’ service needs. There was no limit to the number of options a respondent could choose.

Seven staff respondents answered the question and unanimously agreed that there are not enough vendors available in the area. The table containing staff results reflects the partner respondent choices to a similar question. The phrase “lack of training with specific populations like mentally ill and deafblind” was cited in the narrative comments for the item choice “other, please describe.” Table 149 contains the number of times the reason was chosen by staff respondents and the percentage of the number of respondents who answered the question.

Table 149

Staff Survey: Primary Reasons Vendors are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs

Primary Reasons Service Providers are Unable to Meet Consumer Needs	Number of times chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Not enough vendors available in area	7	100.0%
Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors	3	42.9%
Low quality of vendor services	2	28.6%
Low rates paid for services	1	14.3%
Other (please describe)	1	14.3%
Low levels of accountability for poor performance by vendors	1	14.3%
Total	15	

Staff Survey: Most Important Change Vendors Could Make to Support Consumer Efforts to Achieve Employment Goals

Staff survey respondents were asked to identify the most important change that vendors could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals. One response cited, “Most vendors are very good at what they do and typically follow counselor's requests and suggestions for situational assessments and job development.” Content analysis revealed four themes. The suggestions for change are provided in table 150 and categorized by theme.

Table 150

Staff Survey: Most Important Change Vendors Could Make to Support Consumers

Most Important Change Vendors Can Make to Support Consumers to Achieve Employment Goals
Mission and Outreach
<i>“Expand quality services to ALL of the Southwest region....Not just the big cities”</i>
<i>“Make training accessible”</i>
<i>“Have additional workshops across the state for folks to better understand what is out there and what could be used to better achieve the job they are hired to do”</i>
<i>“Have additional workshops across the state to make consumers aware of the equipment available for them to use in their jobs and daily life”</i>
Increasing Staff
<i>“Right now they do not have enough staff to work with our clients, so clients are having to wait. This is a national issue though and is pandemic related.”</i>
<i>“Reduce staff turnover”</i>
<i>“There need to be more vendors for services. We have limited vendors who provide job development and job coaching.”</i>
Communication
<i>“Communicate better with DBVI staff (O&M)”</i>
<i>“Provide the equipment or services more efficiently”</i>
Vendor Education
<i>“Better understanding of vision specific needs”</i>

<p style="text-align: center;">Most Important Change Vendors Can Make to Support Consumers to Achieve Employment Goals</p>
<p><i>“Gain more experience working with the blind and low vision population”</i></p>
<p><i>“More public understanding of vision impairments”</i></p>
<p><i>“Increase their understanding of blindness”</i></p>
<p><i>“Provide more training to staff in the area of vision impairments and mental health”</i></p>
<p><i>“Know how to work with blind people and have belief in and know how to promote their abilities to potential employers”</i></p>
<p><i>“Sometimes the vendors have little to no knowledge of blindness”</i></p>
<p><i>“Vendors also should have someone trained in ASL as we have virtually no one to work with our Deaf Blind individuals.”</i></p>
<p><i>“Increase staff training on sensory disabilities”</i></p>
<p><i>“Increase knowledge of assistive technology and low vision aids”</i></p>
<p><i>“Job development/coaching vendors could have a better understanding of assistive technology”</i></p>

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following themes were recurring from the individuals interviewed for this assessment in the area of the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs serving individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia:

1. DBVI continues to provide most of their consumer services through their own staff. They do use CRPs and other individual service providers for some services, but in-house service provision is the most common method of service delivery. They use external service providers (ESOs) for some employment services including supported employment, though this is infrequent.
2. The focus on in-house service provision was beneficial for the agency during the pandemic as they were not as adversely affected by the loss of external service providers due to layoffs or high turnover as some other VR programs nationally.
3. There was a need expressed to develop the ability of ESOs to work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments. Staff indicated they would be more likely to use ESOs for employment services if they had more knowledge and experience working with their consumers.
4. A need was expressed by several participants to develop either internal or external vocational evaluation services for DBVI consumers. There is a lack of professional vocational evaluation services that are tailored to the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments.
5. The need for peer mentors, especially for youth with blindness or vision impairments was cited earlier in this report. Although mentors are not typically considered a purchased service, peer mentor training programs and networks can be contractually provided or arranged for on a fee-for-service basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered to DBVI based on the results of the research in the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs in Virginia:

1. DBVI is encouraged to provide training for CRP staff that work primarily with the general agency on how to effectively work with individuals with blindness and vision impairments. This training may help with ensuring that DBVI consumers have qualified CRP staff to work with them when receiving employment services;
2. DBVI should consider recruiting for vocational evaluation services from a certified vocational evaluator. One possibility would be to identify experts in Virginia through the American Board of Vocational Experts at <https://abve.net/search/>;

3. DBVI is encouraged to establish a peer mentoring network for their consumers. One possibility would be to identify their successful consumers to act as mentors.

SECTION 7

NEEDS OF BUSINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Businesses are a customer of the VR program. The effectiveness in serving employers is one of the WIOA performance measures and as such is included in this CSNA. If a VR program effectively meets this recruiting, hiring, accommodating and retention needs of business in the State, this contributes to the ability of the VR program to meet the employment needs of the individuals they serve.

There was a total of 10 businesses that participated in some way in the CSNA, with six completing a survey and four participating in an interview. The reader is cautioned to interpret any findings with the low participation rates in mind. DBVI should consider strategies for encouraging a more active role for businesses in future CSNAs.

Recurring Themes Across all Data Collection Methods

The following themes emerged in the area of the needs of business and effectiveness in serving employers:

1. The Business Relations Team at DBVI was given high marks by multiple individuals interviewed during this assessment for their ability to shift to virtual services and meet the needs of employers during the pandemic.
2. Although there has been significant progress in serving the needs of business and in educating them through the efforts of DBVI since the last CSNA, there are still many employers that are fearful of the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments to perform the essential functions of jobs. Businesses continue to need to be educated about the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

AGENCY-SPECIFIC DATA RELATED TO EFFECTIVELY SERVING THE NEEDS OF EMPLOYERS

The project team examined data from DBVI related to the effectiveness in serving employers measure as part of the WIOA common performance measures. This data is included in Table 151.

Table 151
Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measures for PYs 2017-2020

Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020
Effectiveness in Serving Employers - Employer Penetration, number of business services provided	187	256	266	190
Effectiveness in Serving Employers - Employer Penetration, number of businesses served	109	129	132	84
Effectiveness in Serving Employers - Employer Retention	n/a	n/a	55.0%	70.0%

The data indicates that DBVI increased the number of business services and number of businesses served from 2017-2019, before being impacted by the pandemic in PY 2020. It is notable that the employer retention percentage increased by 15% from PY 2019-2020. Although there was an impact to services to business as a result of the pandemic, the impact does not appear to be as significant as one would expect, and the services that were provided were of such value to employers that they remain engaged with the agency.

SURVEY RESULTS

BUSINESS SURVEY RESPONSES

Disability in the Workplace

With respect to the “Disability in the Workplace” section of the survey, business survey respondents were presented with eight questions regarding whether or not their business needed help with a variety of concerns related to disability and employment. The questions were specifically written to address the needs of employees with blindness and vision impairments and structured in a yes-no response format. Table 152 summarizes the results to the eight questions according to the percentage of respondents who indicated a need for help as cited in the question.

Table 152
Disability in the Workplace: Employer Needs

Does your business need help...	Number of Times Yes was Chosen	Percent of Time Yes was Chosen	Number of Times No was Chosen	Percent of Time No was Chosen	Total
Recruiting job applicants with blindness and vision impairments?	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5
Identifying job accommodations for workers with blindness and vision impairments?	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	5
Obtaining information on training programs available for workers with blindness and vision impairments?	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	4
Understanding disability-related legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Rehabilitation Act as amended?	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4
Helping workers with blindness and vision impairments to retain employment?	2	40.0%	3	60.0%	5
Obtaining training on the different types of blindness and vision impairments?	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4
Obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with blindness and vision impairments?	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4
Obtaining incentives for employing workers with blindness and vision impairments?	1	25.0%	3	75.0%	4

The majority of business respondents indicated that they need some assistance in regard to addressing blindness and vision impairments in the workplace. Six survey items received a 50

percent or higher “Yes” response rate. This is similar to the results from the 2018 CSNA Business Survey. Eighty percent of business respondents (n=4) would like assistance on how to recruit job applicants with blindness and vision impairments.

Business respondents were asked, in a supplemental open-ended question, if they would like to further comment on needs regarding disability in the workplace. One respondent wrote a narrative comment in response to the supplemental question:

- *“Additional info on benefits of employing workers with vision impairment”*

Business Survey: Applicants with Visual Disabilities

Business respondents were asked six questions regarding the need for recruitment assistance for applicants with blindness and vision impairments. Respondents were asked to provide their answers to the questions in a yes-no response format.

Respondents indicated a need for assistance with recruiting applicants with blindness and vision impairments. Each of the items were selected with a 50 percent rate or higher.

Four out of five business respondents (80%) cited needing assistance in recruiting applicants with visual disabilities that meet job qualifications, have good work habits, and have good social and interpersonal skills. This is a change from the 2018 Business Survey in which the items “meet job qualifications,” “have good work habits,” and “have good social and interpersonal skills” were cited by 55.6 percent of nine business respondents who participated in the 2018 survey.

Three businesses would like assistance with accessing applicant skills and addressing needs related to identifying reasonable accommodations. Table 153 summarizes the results of the responses to the six questions according to the percentage of respondents who indicated a need for help as cited in the question.

Table 153

Recruitment: Applicants with Blindness and Vision Impairments: Does Your Business Need Help with...

Does your business need help...	Number of Times Yes was Chosen	Percent of Time Yes was Chosen	Number of Times No was Chosen	Percent of Time No was Chosen	Total
Recruiting applicants who meet the job qualifications?	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5
Recruiting applicants with good work habits?	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5
Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills?	4	80.0%	1	20.0%	5

Does your business need help...	Number of Times Yes was Chosen	Percent of Time Yes was Chosen	Number of Times No was Chosen	Percent of Time No was Chosen	Total
Assessing applicants' skills?	3	75.0%	1	25.0%	4
Identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants?	3	60.0%	2	40.0%	5
Discussing reasonable job accommodations with applicants?	2	50.0%	2	50.0%	4

Business respondents were given the opportunity to further comment on their answers in the previous question or if they had additional comments or needs regarding applicants with blindness and vision impairments. No individualized responses were received in regard to this subsequent question.

Business Survey: Employees with Visual Disabilities: Positive Employee Traits Related to Job Retention

Business survey respondents were presented with a list of 12 positive employee traits and asked the question, “With respect to employees with blindness and visual impairments that you have now or have had in the past, what are the positive employee traits you have experienced with them regarding job retention?”

Four respondents participated in answering this question. “Reliability,” “initiative/ambition” and “positive attitude” were each cited twice. The narrative comments in response to selecting the item “other, please describe” did not contain a trait. Table 154 summarizes the percentage of business survey respondents who identified each trait as a part of job retention.

Table 154

Positive Employee Traits Related to Job Retention: Employees with Visual Disabilities

Employees with Visual Disabilities: Positive Employee Traits Related to Job Retention	Number of Times Chosen	Percent of Number of Respondents
Reliability	2	50.0%
Initiative/Ambition	2	50.0%
Positive attitude	2	50.0%
Other (please describe)	2	50.0%
Flexibility	1	25.0%
Honesty/Integrity	1	25.0%
Works well with their team	1	25.0%
Determined/dedicated	1	25.0%
Independent	1	25.0%
Punctual	1	25.0%
Organized	1	25.0%
Attention to detail	1	25.0%
Total	16	

Business Survey: Employees with Visual Disabilities – Challenges to Job Retention

Business survey respondents were presented with a list of 13 job-related challenges and asked to identify the challenges they have now or have experienced in the past with respect to employees with blindness and vision impairments and job retention.

Two of the business survey respondents indicated that they had no knowledge of any challenges their business has incurred retaining employees with blindness and vision impairments. The narrative comments received in the category “other, please describe” cited the phrases “cannot comment” and “have not employed any.”

Table 155 contains the list of challenges to job retention and the number of times chosen by business survey respondents.

Table 155
Challenges Related to Job Retention: Employees with Visual Disabilities

Challenges to Job Retention	Number of Times Chosen	Percent of number of respondents
Other (please describe)	2	50.0%
I have no knowledge of any challenges we have had retaining employees with blindness and vision impairments	2	50.0%
Total	4	

Business respondents were provided the option to comment further on any of their answers in the previous question above, or if they had additional comments or needs regarding employees with blindness and vision impairments. No responses were received.

Business Survey: Services Provided by DBVI

Business survey respondents were asked three questions regarding their knowledge of DBVI, and their utilization of services provided by the agency. The sample size is small for this section of the survey.

Business survey respondents were first asked to rate their knowledge of DBVI and the services they provide to businesses. Half of business survey respondents (50 percent) indicated that they were somewhat knowledgeable regarding DBVI and the services that they provide.

The second question asked respondents to cite whether or not their business had utilized DBVI services to assist with their employment needs. Fifty percent of business respondents (n=2) cited that they have not used DBVI services. This is a change from the 2018 CSNA where five of the eight respondents (62.5%) had utilized DBVI services.

Two business respondents answered the question identifying what services DBVI provided to their business. The most frequently cited item was “helping workers with disabilities to retain employment.”

Tables 156-158 include the results to the above series of questions.

Table 156
Businesses' Knowledge of DBVI and Services

Businesses' Knowledge of DBVI and Services	Number	Percent
Somewhat knowledgeable	2	50.0%
Little or no knowledge	2	50.0%
Very knowledgeable	0	0.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Table 157
Utilization of DBVI Services by Employers (Businesses)

Employer Usage of DBVI Services	Number	Percent
Yes	2	50.0%
I don't know	2	50.0%
No	0	0.0%
Total	4	100.0%

Table 158
Services Provided to Employers (Businesses) by DBVI

Services Provided to Employers by DBVI	Number of Times Chosen	Percent of respondents
Helping workers with blindness and vision impairments to retain employment?	2	100.0%
Training in understanding disability-related legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Rehabilitation Act as amended?	1	50.0%
Assistance identifying job accommodations for workers with blindness and vision impairments?	1	50.0%

Services Provided to Employers by DBVI	Number of Times Chosen	Percent of respondents
Obtaining training on the different types of blindness and vision impairments?	1	50.0%
Obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with blindness and vision impairments?	1	50.0%
Total	6	

Business Survey: Satisfaction Rating and Recommending DBVI Services

Business survey respondents who utilized DBVI services were asked a series of questions regarding their satisfaction with the DBVI services their business utilized and whether or not they would recommend DBVI services to other businesses. Two survey respondents participated in this section of the survey.

Business Survey: Satisfaction with Services Provided by DBVI

Business survey respondents who utilized DBVI services were presented with a five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied”) and asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the services they received from DBVI. Two respondents provided an answer to the question. Both respondents indicated they were very satisfied with DBVI services. Table 159 contains the results.

Table 159
Employer (Business) Satisfaction with DBVI Services

Satisfaction Rating	Number	Percent
Very satisfied	2	100.0%
Satisfied	0	0.0%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Very dissatisfied	0	0.0%
Total	2	100.0%

Business Survey: Seek Again or Recommend DBVI

Business survey respondents who utilized DBVI services were presented with a five-point response scale (with responses ranging from “very likely” to “very unlikely”) and asked to indicate whether or not they would seek to use DBVI services in the future or recommend DBVI services to other businesses. The two respondents cited “very likely” they would seek DBVI again or recommend DBVI to others. Table 160 summarizes the results.

Table 160
Seek Again or Recommend DBVI

Seek Again or Recommend DBVI	Number	Percent
Very likely	2	100.0%
Likely	0	0.0%
Neither likely nor unlikely	0	0.0%
Unlikely	0	0.0%
Very unlikely	0	0.0%
Total	2	100.0%

Business Survey: Business Demographics

Business survey respondents described their respective business types and the number of employees the business currently employs. Tables 160-161 indicate the various business types and size of the organization based on the number of employees.

Table 160
Type of Business

Organization Type	Number	Percent
Government	3	60.0%
Service	2	40.0%
Total	5	100.0%

Table 161
Size of Organization by Employee

Number of Employees	Number	Percent
1 to 15	1	20.0%
16 - 50	1	20.0%
51 - 250	1	20.0%
251 - 999	1	20.0%
1,000 or more	1	20.0%
Total	5	100.0%

INDIVIDUAL AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

The following information was gathered from the individuals interviewed for this assessment in the area of needs of business and effectiveness in serving employers:

1. The Business Relations Team at DBVI was given high marks by multiple individuals interviewed during this assessment for their ability to shift to virtual services and meet the needs of employers during the pandemic. The team provides a number of services that include, but are not limited to:
 - a. A “Federal” job club that focuses on assisting consumers to obtain Federal jobs;
 - b. A leader in Virginia Ability, a business-to-business association focused on building inclusive communities and cultures through disability diversity in the workplace;
 - c. Disability awareness and inclusivity workshops for businesses;
 - d. A focus on developing work-based learning experiences for youth, which includes partnering with a third party staffing agency to ensure WBLEs can be paid. This is a very positive response to the recommendations in the previous CSNA;
 - e. “Steer your career” curriculum that provides career exploration and preparation services; and
 - f. A variety of support services to employers that educate them about the abilities of individuals with blindness and vision impairments, including retention services to help keep consumers on the job.
2. The business relations team is represented on the statewide business solutions team that includes multiple workforce partners.
3. Although there has been significant progress in serving the needs of business and in educating them through the efforts of DBVI since the last CSNA, there are still many employers that are fearful of the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments to perform the essential functions of jobs. Businesses continue to need to be educated about the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered based on the information gathered in the needs of business and effectiveness in serving employers section:

1. At the time of this CSNA, there were two vacancies in the Business Relations Team. DBVI is encouraged to fill these positions in order to sustain the momentum that the team has made since the previous assessment.
2. DBVI is encouraged to continue to offer disability awareness training and other educational opportunities that promote awareness of the ability of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.

CONCLUSION

The comprehensive statewide needs assessment for Virginia’s Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired utilized qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the vocational rehabilitation needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia. The combination of surveys and interviews resulted in 247 people participating in the assessment in some form. The project team at San Diego State University’s Interwork Institute is confident that the data gathered accurately reflects the employment needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments and is hopeful that the findings and recommendations will be utilized by DBVI to inform the VR portion of the Unified State Plan and the development of goals and objectives for the future.

The project team wants to commend the staff of DBVI and their community partners for responding so effectively to the pandemic and ensuring that vocational rehabilitation services continued to be provided. The agency’s response is evidence of commitment to, and passion for, serving individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.

Appendices

Appendix A: Individual and Focus Group Protocols

Key Informant Individual Interview Protocol

1. Please identify your name, title, time with DBVI or time in your current role.
2. Briefly describe your duties and service areas?

Overall DBVI Performance

3. Regarding DBVI's overall performance as an agency, how effectively is the organization fulfilling its mission of helping people with blindness or other vision impairments obtain employment?
 - A. How would you describe the changes, if any, that have occurred in DBVI in the last three years?
 - B. What are the major challenges that DBVI consumer's face in obtaining and retaining employment?
 - C. What are the major challenges that you face that impact your ability to help consumers obtain and retain employment?

MSD and SE

4. What are the needs of people with people with the most significant disabilities in Virginia and how effectively is DBVI meeting those needs?
5. Do you provide SE services? If so, please describe the model of SE services you use.
 - A. How long does job coaching typically last?
 - B. Who provides extended services
 - C. How many providers do you have and how effective are they?
 - D. What populations generally receive SE services?
6. Do you provide customized employment services to individuals with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia? Please describe this service.
7. What would you recommend to improve your SE or CE program?

Unserved/Underserved Populations

8. What geographic areas are underserved and why?
9. What racial/ethnic minority groups are underserved and why?
10. What are the rehabilitation needs of the minority populations that you serve?
11. What disability types are underserved and why?
12. How effective is DBVI's outreach to these groups/areas and what can be done to improve outreach to them?
13. What do you recommend to improve service to these areas or populations?
14. Are there any other groups that are underserved, and if so, why do you think that is and what can be done to improve services to this group?

Transition

15. Please describe how transition services works for people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia. Comment on:
 - A. Partnerships with schools
 - B. Outreach and intake/referral/plan processes
 - C. Services provided
16. What are the greatest needs of transition-aged youth and how well are DBVI and the schools meeting these needs?
17. Are you involved in pre-employment transition services? If yes, please describe how this works in Virginia.
18. Do you serve foster care youth or youth involved with the juvenile justice system?
19. What can be done to improve youth and/or transition services in Virginia?

CRPs

20. How effective are the CRPs in Virginia in serving people with blindness or other vision impairments?
21. What are the greatest challenges you face as a CRP, or in working with CRPs?
22. What needs to happen to improve or increase CRPs in Virginia?
23. Is there a need to develop CRPs to serve any specific population or geographic areas?
24. What services do CRPs in the Virginia need to provide? Where are the current gaps in service?

Workforce Development System

25. How well is the Workforce Development System in Virginia meeting the needs of people with blindness or other vision impairments? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the system?
26. What is the relationship like between DBVI and American Job Centers?
27. Are there shared-funding of cases between DBVI and the AJCs?
28. What has to happen to improve the relationship between the two organizations? Has there been a noticeable improvement in the relationship over the last three years?
29. Do you work closely with Adult Education and Family Literacy? Please describe.
30. Are there other workforce agencies that serve people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia? If so, please identify them and the service they provide to your consumers as well as DBVI's relationship with them.

VRCBVI

31. Have your clients received services from VRCBVI?
32. How would you rate the effectiveness of the IL and vocational services provided by VRCBVI?
33. What would you recommend VRCBVI do to improve services?

Business Partnerships

34. Please describe the ways that DBVI partners with businesses in Virginia to promote the employment of people with blindness or other vision impairments.
35. What can DBVI do to improve business partnerships and to engage employers in recruiting and hiring people with blindness or other vision impairments?

36. What would you recommend that DBVI do as an organization to maximize its effectiveness in fulfilling its mission and providing excellent customer service during the next three years?

Virginia DBVI, CSNA 2022 Focus Group Protocols

[Introductions/confidentiality/purpose statements]

Focus Group Protocol - Individuals with Blindness or other vision impairments:

Employment goals

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia face in getting or keeping a job?
Follow up: Transportation, education, not enough jobs, discrimination, attitudes, lack of communications, fear of loss of benefits, lack of knowledge of options, etc.

DBVI Overall Performance

- What has your experience with DBVI been like? What have been the positives and negatives?
- What services were helpful to you in preparing for, obtaining and retaining employment?
- What services did you need that were not available or provided and why weren't you able to get these services?
- What can DBVI do differently to help consumers get and keep good jobs?

Barriers to accessing services

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments encounter when trying to access rehabilitation services from DBVI? (prompts if necessary -- mobility, communication, structural)

American Job Centers Partners

- Has anyone had used or tried to use the services of The American Job Centers? Follow-up: What was that experience like for you? What can they do differently to better serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

Transition

- What needs do young people with blindness or other vision impairments in transition from high school have as far as preparing for, obtaining or retaining employment?
- How well are the high schools in Virginia preparing young people for the world of postsecondary education or employment? What can the schools do differently to prepare young people to be successful in postsecondary education or employment?
- What can DBVI do to improve services to youth in transition?

Needs of underserved groups with blindness or other vision impairments

- What groups of individuals would you consider un-served or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation system?
(Prompt if needed for different disability groups, minority status, geographic area and any other characteristics)
(For each identified group): What unmet needs do they have?

Need for establishment of CRPs

- Have you received services from a CRP? If so, how was your service? How effective was it? What can be done to improve the future service delivery by CRPs?
- What programs or services should be created that focus on enhancing the quality of life for people with blindness or other vision impairments and their families, meeting basic needs and ensuring inclusion and participation? Of these services now in existence, which need to be improved?
- What services need to be offered in new locations in order to meet people's needs?

VRCBVI

- Did you attend VRCBVI?
- What is your assessment of the value of the program?
- How prepared were you to live independently and to work as a result of your participation in the Center?
- What recommendations do you have to improve the Center?

Need for improvement of services or outcomes

- What needs to be done to improve the vocational rehabilitation services that people receive in Virginia?

Focus Group Protocol - Partner Agencies:

Employment Goals

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia face in getting or keeping a job?
Follow up: Education, not enough jobs, discrimination, attitudes, lack of communications, fear of loss of benefits, lack of knowledge of options, etc.

Barriers to accessing services

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments encounter when trying to access rehabilitation services from DBVI?

Impressions of needs of individuals with significant and most significant blindness or other vision impairments

- What are the unmet rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant or most significant blindness or other vision impairments?
- What needs of individuals with significant and most significant blindness or other vision impairments are being met the best/most extensively?

Needs of underserved groups with blindness or other vision impairments

- What groups of individuals would you consider un-served or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation system?
(Prompt for different disability groups, minority status, geographic area or other characteristics)
(For each identified group): What unmet needs do they have?

Need for supported employment

- Please describe how effective the SE program is in Virginia. What populations are receiving SE services?
- What SE needs are not being met?
- What do you recommend to meet the needs for SE?

Transition

- What needs do young people with blindness or other vision impairments in transition from high school have as far as preparing for, obtaining or retaining employment?
- How well are the high schools in Virginia preparing young people for the world of postsecondary education or employment? What can the schools do differently to prepare young people to be successful in postsecondary education or employment?
- How would you characterize DBVI's relationship/partnership with the secondary school system in Virginia?
- How well is DBVI serving youth in transition in terms of preparing them for postsecondary education or employment?
- What can DBVI do to improve services to youth in transition?

Needs of individuals served through the American Job Centers

- How effectively does the American Job Center system serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?
- Are there any barriers to individuals with blindness or other vision impairments accessing services through the American Job Centers? If so, what are they and what can be done to change this?
- How effectively is DBVI working in partnership with the Workforce Centers? Do you have any recommendations about how to improve this partnership if needed?
- What would you recommend to improve the American Job Centers' ability to serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia?

Need for establishment, development or improvement of CRPs

- What community-based rehabilitation programs or services need to be created, expanded or improved?
- What services need to be offered in new locations in order to meet people's needs?
- What community-based rehabilitation services are most successful? How are they most successful or what makes them so?

Need for improvement of services or outcomes

- What needs to be done to improve the vocational rehabilitation services that people receive?

Focus Group Protocol – Virginia DBVI staff:

Employment Goals

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia face in getting or keeping a job?
Follow up: Education, not enough jobs, discrimination, attitudes, lack of communications, fear of loss of benefits, lack of knowledge of options, etc.

Barriers to accessing services

- What barriers do people with blindness or other vision impairments encounter when trying to access rehabilitation services from DBVI?

Impressions of needs of individuals with significant and most significant blindness or other vision impairments

- What are the unmet rehabilitation needs of individuals with significant or most significant blindness or other vision impairments?
- What needs of individuals with significant and most significant blindness or other vision impairments are being met the best/most extensively?

Needs of underserved groups with blindness or other vision impairments

- What groups of individuals would you consider un-served or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation system?
(Prompt for different disability groups, minority status, geographic area or any other characteristics).
(For each identified group): What unmet needs do they have?

Need for supported employment

- Please describe how effective the SE program is in Virginia. What populations are receiving SE services?
- What SE needs are not being met?
- What do you recommend to meet the needs for SE?

Transition

- What needs do young people with blindness or other vision impairments in transition from high school have as far as preparing for, obtaining or retaining employment?
- How well are the high schools in Virginia preparing young people for the world of postsecondary education or employment? What can the schools do differently to prepare young people to be successful in postsecondary education or employment?
- How would you characterize DBVI's relationship/partnership with the secondary school system in Virginia?
- How well is DBVI serving youth in transition in terms of preparing them for postsecondary education or employment?
- What can DBVI do to improve services to youth in transition?

Needs of individuals served through the American Job Centers or WIOA system

-
- How effectively does the American Job Center system serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?
- Are there any barriers to individuals with blindness or other vision impairments accessing services through the American Job Centers? If so, what are they and what can be done to change this?
- How effectively is DBVI working in partnership with the American Job Centers? Do you have any recommendations about how to improve this partnership if needed?
- What would you recommend to improve the American Job Centers' ability to serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia?

Need for establishment, development or improvement of CRPs

- What community-based rehabilitation programs or services need to be created, expanded or improved?
- What services need to be offered in new locations in order to meet people's needs?
- What community-based rehabilitation services are most successful? How are they most successful or what makes them so?

VRCBVI

- Have you referred clients to attend VRCBVI?
- What is your assessment of the value of the program?
- How prepared were your clients to live independently and to work as a result of their participation in the Center?
- What recommendations do you have to improve the Center?

Need for improvement of services or outcomes

- What needs to be done to improve the vocational rehabilitation services that people receive?

Focus Group Protocol – Businesses

Please discuss your familiarity with DBVI and the services they provide to people with blindness or other vision impairments and to businesses

What needs do you have regarding recruiting people with blindness or other vision impairments for employment?

- Do you do anything specific to attract candidates with blindness or other vision impairments? Please describe

Please discuss how qualified and prepared individuals with blindness or other vision impairments are when they apply for employment with your business

What needs do you have regarding applicants with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Are you aware of the incentives for hiring people with blindness or other vision impairments? Would these incentives influence your decision to hire?

What are the qualities you are looking for in an applicant for a given job and an employee?

What needs do you have regarding employees with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Sensitivity training?
- Understanding and compliance with applicable laws?
- Reasonable accommodations?

What challenges do employees with blindness or other vision impairments face with job retention?

What services can DBVI provide to you and to other businesses to increase employment opportunities for people with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia?

Appendix B: Individual Survey

Virginia DBVI 2021-22 CSNA - Individual Survey

Q1

Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Individual Survey

The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is contracting with the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University to conduct an assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of Virginia residents with blindness and vision impairments. The results of this survey will be used to help improve programs and services for individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia.

The following survey includes questions that ask you about the unmet, employment-related needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments. We anticipate that it will take about 20 minutes of your time to complete the survey. If you prefer, you may ask a family member, a personal attendant, or a caregiver to help complete the survey for you. If you are a family member, personal attendant or caregiver for a person with blindness or a vision impairment and are responding on their behalf, please answer the survey questions based upon your knowledge of the needs of the individual.

This survey is completely anonymous and your participation in this needs assessment is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous, that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. You will not be asked for your name anywhere in this survey.

If you have any questions regarding this survey or if you would prefer to complete this survey in an alternate format, please contact Dr. Chaz Compton at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address:

ccompton@interwork.sdsu.edu

Thank you very much for your time and input!

Page Break

Q2 Which statement best describes your association with the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)? (select one response)

- I have never used the services of DBVI
- I am a current client of DBVI
- I am a previous client of DBVI, my case has been closed
- I am not familiar with DBVI
- Other (please describe) _____

Skip To: Q4 If Which statement best describes your association with the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vi... = I have never used the services of DBVI

Skip To: Q4 If Which statement best describes your association with the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vi... = I am not familiar with DBVI

Q3 How long have you been working with DBVI?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 year
- 2-5 years
- 6-9 years
- 10 years or greater

Q4

Demographic Information

Q5 What is your age?

- under 25
- 25-64
- 65 and over
-

Q6 What is your primary race or ethnic group (check all that apply)?

- African American/Black
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Caucasian/White
- Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic/Latino
- Other (please describe) _____
- I prefer not to say
-

Q7 What is your language of preference for communication?

- English
 - Spanish
 - Hmong
 - Chinese
 - Japanese
 - American Sign Language
 - Other (Please identify) _____
-

Q8 Do you feel that DBVI honors and respects your cultural identity?

- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
-

Q9

Have you ever been in a situation when you felt that DBVI did not honor your cultural identity?

- Yes (please describe) _____
- No

Skip To: Q11 If Have you ever been in a situation when you felt that DBVI did not honor your cultural identity? = No

Q10 What can DBVI do to help its staff understand your culture?

Q11

Please identify which DBVI Region serves you.

- Bristol Region
- Fairfax Region
- Norfolk Region
- Richmond Region
- Roanoke Region
- Staunton Region
- I am not sure

Page Break

Q12 If you have one or more disabilities in addition to blindness or a vision impairment, please identify them below (select as many that apply):

Intellectual Disability (ID)

Developmental Disability (DD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Traumatic Brain Injury

Communication

Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Deaf-Blind

Mental Health

Mobility

Physical

Alcoholism or substance abuse

Other (please describe) _____

No impairment

Q13 Please indicate whether you receive the following Social Security disability benefits (please check all that apply).

- I receive SSI (Supplemental Security Income. SSI is a means-tested benefit generally provided to individuals with little or no work history)
- I receive SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance. SSDI is provided to individuals that have worked in the past and is based on the amount of money the individual paid into the system through payroll deductions)
- I receive a check from the Social Security Administration every month, but I do not know which benefit I get
- I don't know if I receive Social Security disability benefits
- I do not receive Social Security disability benefits
- I have received benefits in the past, but no longer receive them

Page Break

Q14

Employment-Related Needs

The next several questions ask you about employment-related needs that you may have.

Q15 Please identify which of the following have been barriers to you getting a job

	Yes, it has been a barrier	No, it has not been a barrier
Lack of education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of job skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of job search skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of reliable Internet access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Criminal Record	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited English skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of available jobs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Age	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of assistive technology	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of attendant care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of reliable transportation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health concerns	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance abuse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of child care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Lack of housing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q16 Please identify what the top three barriers have been to you getting a job. Please choose only three.

- Lack of education
 - Lack of training
 - Lack of job skills
 - Lack of job search skills
 - Lack of reliable Internet access
 - Criminal Record
 - Limited English skills
 - Lack of available jobs
 - Employer concerns about my ability to do the job due to my disability
 - Lack of assistive technology
 - Lack of attendant care
 - Lack of reliable transportation
 - Mental health concerns
 - Substance abuse
 - Lack of child care
 - Lack of housing
 - Employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities
 - Concern over loss of Social Security benefits due to working
-

Q17 If you have experienced other barriers to getting a job not mentioned above, please list them here.

Page Break

Q18

Barriers to Accessing DBVI Services

The next several questions ask you about barriers to accessing DBVI services.

Q19 Please indicate which of the following have been a barrier to you accessing DBVI services.

	Yes, it has been a barrier	No, it has not been a barrier
The DBVI office is not on a public bus route	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DBVI's hours of operation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of information about available services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of disability-related accommodations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties scheduling meetings with my counselor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty reaching DBVI staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other difficulties with DBVI staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties completing the DBVI application	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable Internet access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 What have been the top three barriers to you accessing DBVI services? Please choose no more than three.

- The DBVI office is not on a public bus route
- DBVI's hours of operation
- Lack of information about available services
- Lack of disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties scheduling meetings with my counselor
- Difficulty reaching DBVI staff
- Other difficulties with DBVI staff
- Difficulties completing the DBVI application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)
- Reliable Internet access
- I have not had any barriers to accessing DBVI services
-

Q21 Have you had any other challenges or barriers not already mentioned that have made it difficult for you to access DBVI services?

- Yes (please describe) _____
- No
-

Page Break

Q22 Where do you usually meet with your DBVI counselor?

- In my community/school
 - I go to a DBVI office
 - We meet remotely by phone
 - We meet remotely by video conference
 - I don't have a DBVI counselor
-

Q23 How many DBVI counselors have you had?

- 1
 - 2
 - 3
 - 4
 - More than 4
 - I have never had a DBVI counselor
-

Q24 How often are you able to reach your counselor when you need to?

- Always
 - Usually
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
-

Q25 How do you get along with your DBVI counselor?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - So-so
 - Poor
 - Terrible
-

Q26 Has DBVI helped you to make progress towards your employment goal?

- Yes
 - No
 - I have not worked with DBVI
-

Page Break

Q27 Which of the following DBVI services have you received remotely (by phone, email or video conference) since the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic? (select all that apply)

- Career Counseling
- Job development and/or job placement
- Job support to keep a job
- Benefits counseling
- Assistive technology
- Other (please describe) _____
- I have not received any services from DBVI remotely during the pandemic

Skip To: Q29 If Which of the following DBVI services have you received remotely (by phone, email or video confere... = I have not received any services from DBVI remotely during the pandemic

Q28 How would you rate the effectiveness of the services delivered remotely during the pandemic?

- Extremely effective
- Effective
- Somewhat effective
- Less effective
- Not effective at all

Q29 How can DBVI change their services to help you get a job, keep your job, or get a better job?

Q30 Please tell us about how you manage money

	Yes	No
I have a monthly budget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a savings account	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a checking account	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I invest my money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like to learn more about managing my money	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q31 Please identify how well the following statements describe your financial situation.

	Completely	Very well	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all
Because of my money situation, I feel like I will never have the things I want in life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am just getting by financially	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am concerned the money I have, or will have, won't last	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q32 How often do you have money left over at the end of each month?

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

33 How often do you feel your finances control your life?

- Always
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Rarely
 - Never
-

Q34 What is your current employment goal?

Q35 Have you thought about what your next job might be after reaching your current employment goal?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Skip To: Q37 If Have you thought about what your next job might be after reaching your current employment goal? = No

Skip To: Q37 If Have you thought about what your next job might be after reaching your current employment goal? = I don't know

Q36 Will you need more training or help to get your next job?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Q37 Have you received services from an organization or an individual that DBVI referred you to? (This may include an assessment, preparing for or finding employment, job coaching, training, assistive technology, or other services)

- Yes
- No
- I am not sure

Skip To: Q42 If Have you received services from an organization or an individual that DBVI referred you to? (This... = No
Skip To: Q42 If Have you received services from an organization or an individual that DBVI referred you to? (This... = I am not sure

Q38 How effective were the services you received from the service provider?

- Very effective
 - Effective
 - Somewhat ineffective
 - Ineffective
-

Q39

How would you rate the quality of services you received from your service provider?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
-

Q40 How would you rate the responsiveness of your service provider?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
-

Q41 Would you recommend your service provider to others served by DBVI?

- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure
-

Q42

The next set of questions asks you about the

Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Q43 Did you attend the Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)?

- Yes, and I completed the program
- Yes, but I did not complete the program
- No, I did not attend VRCBVI

Skip To: Q56 If Did you attend the Virginia Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)? = No, I did not attend VRCBVI

Q44 Why did you not complete VRCBVI?

- The program was too long
 - Health issues
 - I was dismissed from the program
 - Family issues
 - I was not pleased with the instruction
 - I had difficulty getting along with others
 - Mental health concerns prevented me from completing
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q45 How would you rate the quality of the Orientation and Mobility training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive Orientation and Mobility training
-

Q46 How would you rate the quality of the Braille training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive Braille training
-

Q47 How would you rate the quality of the keyboarding, computers and access technology training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive keyboarding, computers and access technology training
-

Q48 How would you rate the quality of the personal home management/cooking training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive personal home management/cooking training
-

Q49 How would you rate the quality of the adult basic education training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive adult basic education training
-

Q50 How would you rate the quality of the wellness instruction and recreation training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive wellness instruction and recreation training
-

Q51 How would you rate the quality of the health services training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive health services training
-

Q52 How would you rate the quality of the vocational services training provided at VRCBVI?

- Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor
 - I did not receive vocational services training
-

Q53 How prepared are you to live independently as a result of the training that you received at VRCBVI?

- Very prepared
 - Moderately prepared
 - Minimally prepared
 - Not at all prepared
-

Q54 How prepared are you to go to work as a result of the training that you received at VRCBVI?

- Very prepared
 - Moderately prepared
 - Minimally prepared
 - Not at all prepared
-

Q55 How can VRCBVI improve their services?

Q56

Virginia Workforce Centers

The next several questions ask you about experiences you may have had with the Virginia Workforce Centers previously referred to as One-Stops or Career Centers. These questions refer only to your experience with the staff or services at the Virginia Workforce Centers and not with DBVI staff who may be working at the Centers.

Q57 Have you ever tried to use the services of the Virginia Workforce Centers beyond creating an online account? (This may include testing, preparing for or finding employment, job coaching, training assistive technology or other services)

Yes

No

Skip To: Q69 If Have you ever tried to use the services of the Virginia Workforce Centers beyond creating an onli... = No

Q58 Did you experience any difficulties with the physical accessibility of the building?

Yes (If yes, please describe the difficulties you experienced)

No

Q59 Did you have any difficulty accessing the programs at the Virginia Workforce Centers (i.e. no available assistive technology, no interpreters, etc.)?

Yes

No

Q60 Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to get training?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q63 If Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to get training? = No

Q61 Did you get the training that you were seeking?

Yes

No

Q62 Did the Virginia Workforce Centers training result in employment?

Yes

No

Q63 Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to find a job?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q65 If Did you go to the Virginia Workforce Centers to find a job? = No

Q64 Did the Virginia Workforce Centers staff help you find employment?

- Yes
 - No
-

Q65 Was the Virginia Workforce Centers staff helpful?

- Yes, they were very helpful
 - They were somewhat helpful
 - No, they were not helpful
-

Q66 Were the services at the Virginia Workforce Centers effective?

- Yes, the services were very effective
 - The services were somewhat effective
 - No, the services were not effective
-

Q67 Overall, how would you rate the effectiveness of the Virginia Workforce Centers in serving individuals with disabilities?

- Very effective
 - Somewhat effective
 - No opinion
 - Somewhat ineffective
 - Very ineffective
-

Q68 What recommendations do you have for the Virginia Workforce Centers to improve their services to individuals with disabilities in Wisconsin?

Q69 Is there anything else you would like to add about DBVI or its services?

Q70 This is the end of the survey! Your information and feedback is valuable to DBVI, thank you for completing the survey.

Please select the "NEXT" button below to submit your responses.

End of Block: Default Question Block

Appendix C: Partner Survey

Virginia DBVI 2021-22 CSNA - Partner Survey

Q1 Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Community Partner Survey The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is working collaboratively with the State Rehabilitation Council and the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University in order to conduct an assessment of the needs of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments who live in Virginia. The results of this needs assessment will inform the development of the Virginia Combined State Plan and will help planners make decisions about programs and services for persons with blindness and vision impairments. The following survey includes questions that ask you about the unmet, employment-related needs of persons with blindness or other vision impairments. We anticipate that it will take about 10-15 minutes of your time to complete the survey. Your participation in this needs assessment is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous; that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. You will not be asked for your name anywhere in this survey. If you have any questions regarding this survey or would like to request the survey in an alternate format, please contact Dr. Chaz Compton at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address: ccompton@interwork.sdsu.edu

Q2 Please identify the type of organization you work for.

- A Community Rehabilitation Program
 - An educational agency
 - A health care provider
 - A Workforce Development System partner
 - Another State, Federal or local agency that serves individuals with disabilities
 - I am an individual service provider
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q3 Please indicate which of the following services are readily available to individuals with blindness or other vision impairments who are served by DBVI. By "readily available" we mean that services are available in the area to individuals with a range of vision impairments (check all that apply).

- Job development and placement services
- Job training services
- Assistive technology
- Vocational evaluation
- Vocational training
- Transition services
- Pre-employment transition services
- Public transportation
- Other transportation assistance
- Independent living skills training
- Adjustment to blindness training
- Mental health treatment
- Substance abuse treatment
- Personal care attendants
- Financial literacy training
- Affordable housing services
- Benefits planning assistance
- Other (please describe) _____

Q4 In your experience, is the network of rehabilitation service providers in Virginia able to meet DBVI consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q7 If In your experience, is the network of rehabilitation service providers in Virginia able to meet D... = Yes

Q5 What service needs is the network of rehabilitation service providers in Virginia unable to meet?

- Job development and placement services
 - Job training services
 - Assistive technology
 - Vocational evaluation
 - Vocational training
 - Transition services
 - Pre-employment transition services
 - Public transportation
 - Other transportation assistance
 - Independent living skills training
 - Adjustment to blindness training
 - Mental health treatment
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Personal care attendants
 - Financial literacy training
 - Affordable housing services
 - Benefits planning assistance
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q6 What are the primary reasons that vocational rehabilitation service providers are generally unable to meet consumers' service needs?

- Not enough providers available in area
 - Low quality of provider services
 - The rates of payment for services are too low
 - Client barriers prevent successful interactions with providers
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q7 Below is a list of potential reasons that DBVI consumers might find it difficult to achieve their employment goals. For each potential barrier, please indicate whether you believe that:

It is a barrier, and DBVI services adequately address the barrier

It is a barrier, and DBVI services do not adequately address the barrier

It is not a barrier
You do not know if it is a barrier

	Barrier, adequately addressed by DBVI services	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed by DBVI services	Not a barrier	Don't know
Not having education or training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having job skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having job search skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convictions for criminal offenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor social skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough jobs available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having disability-related accommodations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Disability-related transportation issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other transportation issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance abuse issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Childcare issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q8 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q9 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employment services different from the overall population of consumers served by DBVI?

Yes

No

*Skip To: Q11 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employe... =
No*

Q10 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employment services (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q11 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall population of individuals served by DBVI?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q13 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall... = No

Q12 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q13 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the overall population of consumers served by DBVI?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q15 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minori... = No

Q14 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q15 Is there anything else we should know about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers?

Q16 What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals with blindness or other vision impairments find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients
- Other (please describe) _____

Q17 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by individuals that require supported employment services disabilities different from the general population of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q19 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by individuals that require supp... = No

Q18 What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals that require supported employment services find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients
- Other (please describe) _____

Q19 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by youth in transition different from the general population of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q21 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by youth in transition different... = No

Q20 What would you say are the top three reasons that youth in transition find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients
- Other (please describe) _____

Q21 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the general population of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q23 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by consumers who are racial or e... = No

Q22 What would you say are the top three reasons that consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate accessing assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- DBVI staff are not responsive to communication from clients or potential clients
- Other (please describe) _____

Q23 Is there anything else we should know about why individuals with blindness or other vision impairments find it difficult to access DBVI services?

Q24 What is the most important change that DBVI could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

Q25 What is the most important change that the network or rehabilitation service providers in the state of Virginia could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

Q26 Your feedback is valuable to us, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey! Please select the "NEXT" button below to submit your responses.

Appendix D: Staff Survey

Virginia DBVI 2021-22 CSNA - Staff Survey

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Staff Survey The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is working collaboratively with the State Rehabilitation Council and the Interwork Institute at San Diego State University in order to conduct an assessment of the needs of individuals with blindness and vision impairments in Virginia. The results of this needs assessment will inform the development of Virginia's Combined State Plan and will help planners make decisions about programs and services for persons with blindness and vision impairments. The following survey includes questions that ask you about the unmet, employment-related needs of persons with blindness and vision impairments. We anticipate that it will take about 10-15 minutes of your time to complete the survey. Your participation in this needs assessment is voluntary. If you decide to participate, your responses will be anonymous; that is, recorded without any identifying information that is linked to you. You will not be asked for your name anywhere in this survey. If you have any questions regarding this survey or would like to request the survey in an alternate format, please contact Dr. Chaz Compton at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address: ccompton@interwork.sdsu.edu Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Q2 Which job classification best fits your current position at DBVI?

- Rehabilitation Counselor
 - Instructor
 - Supervisor, Manager or Administrator
 - Support Staff
 - Administration or Operations
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q3

In what Region do you primarily work?

- Headquarters
- Bristol Region
- Fairfax Region
- Norfolk Region
- Richmond Region
- Roanoke Region
- Staunton Region

Q4

The next set of questions asks you about the service providers used by DBVI to deliver services to consumers

Q5 Please indicate which of the following services are readily available to DBVI consumers. By "readily available" we mean that services are available in the area to individuals with a range of vision impairments (check all that apply).

- Job development and placement services
- Job training services
- Assistive technology
- Vocational evaluation
- Vocational training
- Transition services
- Pre-employment transition services
- Public transportation
- Other transportation services
- Independent living skills training
- Adjustment to blindness training
- Mental health treatment
- Substance abuse treatment
- Personal care attendants
- Financial literacy training
- Affordable housing services
- Benefit planning assistance
- Other (please describe) _____

Q6 In your experience, are vendors able to meet DBVI consumers' vocational rehabilitation service needs?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q9 If In your experience, are vendors able to meet DBVI consumers' vocational rehabilitation service ne... = Yes

Q7 What service needs are vendors unable to meet?

Q8 What are the primary reasons that vendors are generally unable to meet consumers' service needs?

Not enough vendors available in area

Low quality of vendor services

Low rates paid for services

Low levels of accountability for poor performance by vendors

Client barriers prevent successful interactions with vendors

Other (please describe) _____

Q9 Below is a list of potential reasons that DBVI consumers might find it difficult to achieve their employment goals. For each potential barrier, please indicate whether you believe that:

It is a barrier, and DBVI services adequately address the barrier

It is a barrier, and DBVI services do not adequately address the barrierIt is not a barrier

You do not know if it is a barrier

	Barrier, adequately addressed by DBVI services	Barrier, NOT adequately addressed by DBVI services	Not a barrier	Don't know
Not having education or training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having job skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having job search skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convictions for criminal offenses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Language barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Poor social skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not enough jobs available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Not having disability-related accommodations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of help with disability-related personal care	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Disability-related transportation issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other transportation issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mental health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Substance abuse issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other health issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Childcare issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Housing issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please describe)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q11 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employment services different from the overall population?

Yes

No

*Skip To: Q13 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employe... =
No*

Q12 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers that require supported employment services (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q13 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall population of consumers served by DBVI?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q15 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition different from the overall... = No

Q14 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for youth in transition (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q15 Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the overall population consumers served by DBVI?

Yes

No

Skip To: Q17 If Are the barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minori... = No

Q16 What would you say are the top three barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities (please select a maximum of three barriers to achieving employment goals)?

- Not having education or training
- Not having job skills
- Not having job search skills
- Convictions for criminal offenses
- Language barriers
- Poor social skills
- Not enough jobs available
- Employers' perceptions about employing persons with disabilities
- Not having disability-related accommodations
- Lack of help with disability-related personal care
- Disability-related transportation issues
- Other transportation issues
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse issues
- Other health issues
- Childcare issues
- Housing issues
- Perceptions regarding the impact of income on Social Security benefits
- Other (please describe) _____

Q17 Is there anything else we should know about the primary barriers to achieving employment goals for DBVI consumers?

Q18 What would you say are the top three reasons that people with blindness or other vision impairments find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- Other (please describe) _____

Q19 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by individuals that require supported employment services different from the general population of people with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q21 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by individuals that require supp... = No

Q20 What would you say are the top three reasons that individuals that require supported employment services find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- Other (please describe) _____

Q21 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by youth in transition different from the general population of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q23 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by youth in transition different... = No

Q22 What would you say are the top three reasons that youth in transition find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- Other (please describe) _____

Q23 Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities different from the general population of individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q25 If Are the reasons for finding it difficult to access DBVI services by consumers who are racial or e... = No

Q24 What would you say are the top three reasons that consumers who are racial or ethnic minorities find it difficult to access DBVI services (please select a maximum of three reasons)?

- Limited accessibility of DBVI via public transportation
- Other challenges related to the physical location of the DBVI office
- Inadequate disability-related accommodations
- Language barriers
- Difficulties completing the application
- Difficulties completing the Individualized Plan for Employment
- Inadequate assessment services
- Slow service delivery
- Difficulties accessing training or education programs
- DBVI staff do not meet clients in the communities where the clients live
- Other (please describe) _____

Q25 Is there anything else we should know about why individuals with blindness or other vision impairments find it difficult to access DBVI services?

Q26

Virginia Workforce Centers

The next set of questions ask you about the effectiveness of the Virginia Workforce Centers (previously referred to as One-Stops or Career Centers) in serving individuals with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia.

Q27 Have you ever referred one of your clients to a Virginia Workforce Center?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q37 If Have you ever referred one of your clients to a Virginia Workforce Center? = No

Q28 Have the Virginia Workforce Centers helped any of your clients to get training for a job?

- Yes
- No
- I have never referred anyone for training

Q29 Have the Virginia Workforce Centers helped any of your clients to get a job?

- Yes
 - No
 - I have never referred a client for employment
-

Q30 In your opinion, how effectively do the Virginia Workforce Centers serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments?

- Very effectively
 - Somewhat effectively
 - Not effectively
 - They do not serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments
 - Unsure
-

Q31 What can the Virginia Workforce Centers do to more effectively serve individuals with blindness or other vision impairments in Virginia (select all that apply)?

- Improve physical accessibility
 - Improve programmatic accessibility
 - Train their staff on how to work with people with blindness or other vision impairments
 - Include individuals with blindness or other vision impairments when they fund for training for clients
 - Partner more effectively with DBVI
 - Other (please specify) _____
-

Q32

The next set of questions asks you about the

Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Q33 Have you ever referred a consumer to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI)?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: Q37 If Have you ever referred a consumer to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision... = No

Q34 How effectively does VRCBVI prepare your consumer to live independently?

- Very effectively
- Somewhat effectively
- Not effectively

Q35 Upon completion of the VRCBVI program, how prepared are your consumers to go to work?

- Very prepared
- Somewhat prepared
- Not at all prepared
- I do not send my consumers to VRCBVI to prepare for employment

Q36 Please identify at least two ways that VRCBVI can improve services to your consumers. You may include as many suggestions as possible, but please include at least two.

Q37 What is the most important change that DBVI could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

Q38 What is the most important change that vendors could make to support consumers' efforts to achieve their employment goals?

Q39 What are the top three changes that would enable you to better assist your DBVI consumers (please select a maximum of three changes)?

- Smaller caseload
 - More streamlined processes
 - Better data management tools
 - Better assessment tools
 - Additional training
 - More administrative support
 - More supervisor support
 - Improved business partnerships
 - Decreased procurement time
 - More effective community-based service providers
 - Increased outreach to clients in their communities
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q40 Your feedback is valuable to us, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey! Please select the "NEXT" button below to submit your responses.

Appendix E: Business Survey

Virginia DBVI 2021-22 CSNA - Business Survey

Q1

**Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Vocational Rehabilitation Program
Business Survey**

The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is a State agency that helps Virginia residents with blindness and vision impairments to prepare for, obtain and retain employment. DBVI is contracting with San Diego State University to conduct an assessment to learn more about the needs of businesses and employers with respect to partnering with DBVI and employing and accommodating workers with blindness and vision impairments. The information that you provide will help DBVI to more effectively respond to the needs of businesses and will influence the planning and delivery of vocational services to persons with blindness and vision impairments.

This survey will take approximately five minutes to complete. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will not be asked for your name or the name of your organization anywhere in the survey.

If you have any questions regarding this survey or if you would prefer to complete this survey in an alternate format, please contact Dr. Chaz Compton at San Diego State University at the following e-mail address: ccompton@interwork.sdsu.edu

Thank you very much for your time and input!

Page Break

Q2 Which of the following best describes your type of business? (select one response)

- Service
 - Retail
 - Manufacturing
 - Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing
 - Construction
 - Government
 - Education
 - Health care
 - Banking/Finance
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q3 How many people are employed at your business? (select one response)

- 1 - 15
 - 16 - 50
 - 51 - 250
 - 251 - 999
 - 1,000 or more
-

Q4 Disability in the Workplace:

Does your business need help... (select one response for each)

	Yes	No
Understanding disability-related legislation such as the Americans with blindness and vision impairments Act as amended, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Rehabilitation Act as amended?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying job accommodations for workers with blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting job applicants who are people with blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping workers with blindness and vision impairments to retain employment?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtaining training on the different types of blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtaining incentives for employing workers with blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Obtaining information on training programs available for workers with blindness and vision impairments?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q5 If you would like to comment further on any of your answers above, or if you have additional comments or needs regarding disability in the workplace, please describe them in the space below.

Page Break

Q6 Applicants with blindness and vision impairments:

With respect to applicants with blindness and vision impairments, does your business need help...
(select one response for each)

	Yes	No
Recruiting applicants who meet the job qualifications?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting applicants with good work habits?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessing applicants' skills?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discussing reasonable job accommodations with applicants?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q7 If you would like to comment further on any of your answers above, or if you have additional comments or needs regarding applicants with blindness and vision impairments, please describe them in the space below.

Q8 With respect to employees with blindness and vision impairments you have now or have had in the past, what are the positive employee traits you have experienced with them regarding job retention? (check all that apply)

- Flexibility
 - Reliability
 - Initiative/Ambition
 - Honesty/Integrity
 - Works well with their team
 - Positive attitude
 - Determined/dedicated
 - Independent
 - Punctual
 - Organized
 - Attention to detail
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q9 Employees with blindness and vision impairments:

With respect to employees with blindness and vision impairments you have now or have had in the past, what are the challenges you have experienced with them regarding job retention?

- I have no knowledge of any challenges we have had retaining employees with blindness and vision impairments
- Poor attendance
- Difficulty learning job skills
- Slow work speed
- Poor work stamina
- Poor social skills
- Physical health problems
- Mental health concerns
- Language barriers
- Identifying effective accommodations
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of ongoing support due to case closure
- Other (please describe) _____

Q10 If you would like to comment further on any of your answers above, or if you have additional comments or needs regarding employees with blindness and vision impairments, please describe them in the space below.

Q11 How would you rate your knowledge of DBVI and the services they can provide to businesses?

- Very knowledgeable
 - Somewhat knowledgeable
 - Little or no knowledge
-

Q12 Has your business utilized any of the services that DBVI provides?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Skip To: Q16 If Has your business utilized any of the services that DBVI provides? = No

Skip To: Q16 If Has your business utilized any of the services that DBVI provides? = I don't know

Q13 Which of the following services did DBVI provide to your business (please select all that apply)?

- Training in understanding disability-related legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Rehabilitation Act as amended?
 - Assistance identifying job accommodations for workers with blindness and vision impairments?
 - Recruiting job applicants who are people with blindness and vision impairments?
 - Helping workers with blindness and vision impairments to retain employment?
 - Obtaining training on the different types of blindness and vision impairments?
 - Obtaining training on sensitivity to workers with blindness and vision impairments?
 - Obtaining incentives for employing workers with blindness and vision impairments?
 - Obtaining information on training programs available for workers with blindness and vision impairments?
 - Recruiting applicants who meet the job qualifications?
 - Recruiting applicants with good work habits?
 - Recruiting applicants with good social/interpersonal skills?
 - Assessing applicants' skills?
 - Discussing reasonable job accommodations with applicants?
 - Identifying reasonable job accommodations for applicants?
 - Other (please describe) _____
-

Q14 How satisfied were you with the services you received from DBVI?

- Very satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very dissatisfied
-

Q15 How likely would you be to seek out services from DBVI again, or recommend DBVI to another employer?

- Very likely
 - Likely
 - Neither likely nor unlikely
 - Unlikely
 - Very unlikely
-

Q16 If your business has any needs related to applicants or workers with blindness and vision impairments that are not currently being met please describe them here:

Q17 Your feedback is valuable to us, and we would like to thank you for taking the time to complete the survey!

DBVI is also conducting focus groups and individual interviews as part of this assessment. If you are interested in participating in a focus group or individual interview, please contact Dr. Chaz Compton by email at ccompton@interwork.sdsu.edu. Thank you!

Please select the "NEXT" button below to submit your responses.

End of Block: Default Question Block

Appendix F: BPD's Technology Assessment Checklist

**BPD Technology Committee's
Technology Assessment Checklist for Social Work Practice (Version 2)
September 2018**

History: The BPD Technology Committee created the first version of the Technology Assessment Checklist for Social Work Practice in 2016, using the web-based mapping tool, *MindMeister* (<https://www.mindmeister.com>), with ten social workers contributing their suggestions this first version. After compiling all the ideas from the mapping tool, the list was reviewed by members of the committee, and was presented at BPD's 2017 Annual Conference during the Technology Committee's Board Sponsored Session in New Orleans. Feedback was provided and the next step was to revise the checklist. Here is a link that original document: <https://tinyurl.com/BPDTechChecklist3-2017>.

In 2018, we used an online collaborative process using *Google Docs* to crowd source the next round of revisions to the Technology Assessment List. Below is a list of the individuals who contributed to that process. A sample of the second version was shared at BPD's 2018 Annual Conference during the Technology Committee's Board-Sponsored Session in Atlanta, GA. Attendees reviewed the document for feedback, and the final version is included in this document.

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BPD Technology Committee's
Technology Assessment Checklist for Social Work Practice

Interpretation: Historically, social workers have been taught to assess the psychosocial well-being of clients in the context of their environment, including relationships with family members, peers, neighbors, and coworkers. With the increasing use of technology in society, it is important for social workers to also consider clients' relationships and comfort with technology. Such assessments could include client strengths, such as access to particular forms of technology and the ability to use technology for family, work, school, social, recreational, and other purposes. In addition, social workers should consider relevant needs, risks, and challenges, such as clients' reluctance to use technology; difficulty affording technology; limited computer knowledge or fluency with technology; and the risk of cyberbullying, electronic identity theft, and other behaviors regarding the use of technology.

This assessment checklist also addresses Standard 2.05 of the NASW Technology Standards for Social Work Practice: Assessing Clients' Relationships with Technology, which reads "When conducting psychosocial assessments with clients, social workers shall consider clients' views about technology and the ways in which they use technology, including strengths, needs, risks, and challenges." The goal of this assessment is to help social workers and other practitioners focus on practical issues of technology use across client systems and life span issues. There are seven sections of this assessment checklist:

- Section I: Access to Social & Digital Technology
- Section II: Digital literacy and Comfort of client to use technology
- Section III: Developmentally-based Considerations for Individuals
- Section IV: Intergenerational/Cultural issues
- Section V: Special Populations
- Section VI: Families
- Section VII: Social Worker Technology Self-Assessment

This checklist is not meant to be comprehensive, and a social worker can use any or all of these questions, in whatever order works best, when conducting an assessment on the use of technology. When using the questions on this checklist, please consider the following:

- Assess for strengths and needs as well as risks and challenges.
- Not every client will have or be aware of the available technology so you may want ask if they use a type of technology before asking about details (i.e. ask if they use email before asking for an email address).
- Although much research about technology use points to associations between mental distress and technology use, (a) the studies are typically correlational; (b) the effect of the correlation is often weak; and (c) the correlation typically occurs with very high rates of screen time, 5 or more non-work/school related hours.

Section I: Access to Social & Digital Technology

General questions

Note: Please adapt these questions for different types hardware and software.

- What hardware/devices do you own?
- What hardware/devices do you have access to? Where? When? How frequently?
- What devices do you wish you had access to (i.e. hearing aids, smartphone, laptop)?
- What are the barriers to owning or accessing hardware/devices (i.e. cost, knowledge of howto use, awareness of what is available/possible)?

Basic Information to obtain about technology ownership and access:

- Hardware Devices available to client (i.e. smartphone, e-readers, computers, etc.):
- Wearable devices
- Assistive technology (i.e. have you ever been prescribed to use/do you use?)
- Software/apps/frequently visited sites used by client
- Internet connection or access available to clients - DSL, Wi-Fi, in-home, and/or library?
- Email Accounts - how many and how used? Email addresses are often required to set-up an account for Electronic Health Records (EHR).
- Social Media Accounts - how many, which ones and how used?
- Apps - how many, which ones and how used?

General Use of Technology

- Number of hours spent engaged with technology each day; How much screen time per day; per week?
- What reasons do you use technology (i.e. social, financial, entertainment, educational, etc.)?
- For social reasons, what types of relationships (i.e. online dating or relationships, online friendships, online community or group memberships)?
- How would you describe your screen time and/or use of technology (i.e. productive vs. non-productive; problematic vs. non-problematic; passive such web surfing, watching ads, or watching videos vs. active use such as reading, communicating with others; or creating content)? How do others perceive your use?
- How does tech affect mood? What prompts tech use; how do you feel after?
- Is any online activity monitored? By who? How?
- Is any online activity private? Secret?

Financial Costs of Technology

- Is computer used for financial purposes (online banking, shopping, medication)?
- What is the monthly expenditure for technology?
- How much awareness do members of your family have regarding the financial impact their technology has on the family budget?
- What is your accessibility and ability to access innovative technology?
- What is your financial burden regarding technology?
- Do you understand their monthly phone/internet plan/bill?
- Are you using online payments for any bills, transactions, or online shopping? If so, what sites and how?
- Do you track your subscriptions? Micro-transactions?

- Are other people in or out of your household connected to these accounts?
- Do you share any subscriptions with anyone (i.e. *Netflix*, *Amazon*, etc.)?
- What percent of their spending is on *Amazon*, online shopping, etc. do you know ways to intervene in problematic tech use? Strategies for cutting back or taking breaks?

Resources:

- Pew Research Center. (n.d.). Internet & Technology Home Page. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/>
- Techopedia. (n.d.). *Techopedia Home Page*. Retrieved from <https://www.techopedia.com/>

Section II: Digital Literacy and Comfort of Client

Note: For this section, you are trying to assess a client's level of knowledge and skills about technology as well as their comfort with technology.

- Overall, how competent or comfortable do you feel using technology?
- Have you ever been uncomfortable with something you posted on someone else's social media site? Have you ever been uncomfortable (angry, sad, afraid) of a post someone send you on a social media site or by private message?
- Has technology created any benefits for you?
- Has technology created any problems for you?
- What do you want to learn or areas of where you need direct technical assistance?
- What is your comfort-level with use of technology with practitioner?
- News and other information - Where do you go for info? So you use trusted sites? How do you assess?
- Online help-seeking behaviors (i.e. medical, behavioral, etc.) - Where do you go for info? So you use trusted sites? How do you assess? How do you protect identity when you do?
- Identity Theft/Phishing – what do you do to protect your online identity? Do you use specific hardware or software?
- Netiquette - Is the client familiar with netiquette guidelines? How do the practice civility and etiquette in online environments?
- Tech-Mediated Communications/Interventions - Do you want to use tech-mediated communication/interventions? How do you think you would benefit from tech mediated interventions?

Resources:

- Belshaw, D. (2014). The Essential Elements of Digital Literacies. Retrieved from <http://digitalliteraci.es/>
- Jenkins, H., Clinton, K., Purushotma, R., Robison, A. J., & Weigel, M. (2009). *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*. Chicago, IL: MacArthur Foundation. Retrieved from https://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF

Section III: Developmentally-based Considerations for Individuals

Infants, toddlers, and young children:

- How much screen time does the child per day?
- What technology is shared with the child (i.e. caregiver's phone or tablet?)
- What are parents teaching their kids about the internet?
- Do parents actively participate with their children while they are using technology?
- What content, sites, or apps are parents using with their younger children?

Elementary school, Tweens, and Teens:

- Texting: With whom, do you have regular group texts? Who do you text one-on-one with themost?
- Social Media: What types of accounts do you have, use and how frequently used (*Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, Kik, YouTube, Vine*)? What types of posts, comments or stories on your accounts? What do you post, like, re-post or share? Who do you follow on these social media accounts? If using anonymous posting sites (i.e. *Yik-yak, Whisper, etc.*) assess for potential bullying, mean-girl/boy behavior or older adult posing as a younger person. What are some of the current social expectations about social media use (leaving friends unread, *Snapchat* replies, response time, etc.)?
- Music: How do you listen to music? (i.e. *Pandora, Spotify* or *YouTube*, etc.)
- Video: Do you watch *Netflix* or other video platforms such as *YouTube* or *Vine*? If so, when and what do you watch? Do you binge watch? What YouTube personalities do you follow? What movie or TV genres are most viewed? Be aware if child is viewing of high-risk content, including sexually-explicit, self-harm, and other that mismatches family values/practices.
- Create Content: Where do you generate content, and what is it about? (i.e. *YouTube* videos).
- Gaming: Which games? Length of gaming time? Online group video gaming? Any impact of daily functioning? What game streams are you watching? Do they participate in a role play game? Are they using micro-transactions or loot crates?
- Safety & Privacy: Have you discussed inappropriate conversations vs. appropriate conversations with online 'friends'? Have they developed safety provisions if they want to meet online friends or potential dating prospects? Are you currently experiencing any stressor discomfort related to social media use (inability to meet social expectations due to lack of access, not understanding social expectations)?
- Parental Involvement: Do parents speak with you about online issues or controversies, especially if you follow the online personality? Where does the phone/tablet/ computer reside during bedtime? Family time?
- School: What are the school's policy on phone use, access to computers, Wi-Fi, social media, etc.? How does this promote or hinder technology use by kids? Does the teen have access to phone or other devices that would allow for chat during school and free Wi-Fi? How is technology used for school work?
- Online Dating: Do you use in online dating apps? How many? Which ones? What is your profile like? Assess online dating practices and app use. Some teenagers also use *Snapchat* and within chat communication of gaming apps to date, they also date within role playing games online using the computer and games on *Xbox* etc.

Adults (19 -64 years of age):

- **Work:** How is technology used for work activities? What devices are work only devices? Does your profession require technological adaptation over the years? If so, in what era of informational and communication technology did you leave off?
- **Family & Friends:** What types of technology do their families or friends use? Are they connected to their families or friends on social media? What types? How often do they use it? If they do not connect with them, why? Lack of tech literacy? How aware are you of internet scams and other risk factors? Assess possible isolation and technological disconnectedness.
- **Leisure time:** How is technology used for leisure activities or socializing?
- **Texting:** With whom, do you have regular group texts? Who do you text one-on-one with the most?
- **Social Media:** What types of accounts do you have, use and how frequently used (*Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, Kik, YouTube, Vine*)? What types of posts, comments or stories on your accounts? What do you post, like, re-post or share? Who do you follow on these social media accounts? If using anonymous posting sites (i.e. *Yik-yak, Whisper*, etc.) assess for potential bullying, mean-girl/boy behavior or older adult posing as a younger person. What are some of the current social expectations about social media use (leaving friends unread, *Snapchat* replies, response time, etc.)?
- **Music:** How do you listen to music? (i.e. *Pandora, Spotify* or *YouTube*, etc.)
- **Video:** Do you watch *Netflix* or other video platforms such as *YouTube* or *Vine*? If so, when and what do you watch? Do you binge watch? What YouTube personalities do you follow? What movie or TV genres are most viewed? Be aware if child is viewing of high-risk content, including sexually-explicit, self-harm, and other that mismatches family values/practices.
- **Create Content:** Where do you generate content, and what is it about? (i.e. *YouTube* videos).
- **Gaming:** Which games? Length of gaming time? Online group video gaming? Any impact of daily functioning? What game streams are you watching? Do they participate in a role play game? Are they using micro-transactions or loot crates?
- **Online Dating:** Do you use in online dating apps? How many? Which ones? What is your profile like? Assess online dating practices and app use. (i.e. *Tinder* and other dating apps). About a third of romantic relationships now begin online. It is good to know the strengths and risks of various dating websites, whether your clients are using them, and how to assess their knowledge about strengths and risks.
- **Safety & Privacy:** Have you discussed inappropriate conversations vs. appropriate conversations with online 'friends'? Have they developed safety provisions if they want to meet online friends or potential dating prospects? Are you currently experiencing any stressor discomfort related to social media use (inability to meet social expectations due to lack of access, not understanding social expectations)?

Elderly (65 years of age and older):

- **Leisure time:** How is technology used for leisure activities or socializing? How often do you go online? What type of activities do you engage in online?
- **Family & Friends:** What types of technology do their families or friends use? Are they connected to their families or friends on social media? What types? How often do they use it? If they do not connect with them, why? Lack of tech literacy? How aware are you of internet scams and other risk factors? Assess possible isolation and technological disconnectedness.

- **Texting:** With whom, do you have regular group texts? Who do you text one-on-one with the most?
- **Social Media:** What types of accounts do you have, use and how frequently used (*Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook Messenger, Kik, YouTube, Vine*)? What types of posts, comments or stories on your accounts? What do you post, like, re-post or share? Who do you follow on these social media accounts? If using anonymous posting sites (i.e. *Yik-yak, Whisper*, etc.) assess for potential bullying, mean-girl/boy behavior or older adult posing as a younger person. What are some of the current social expectations about social media use (leaving friends unread, *Snapchat* replies, response time, etc.)?
- **Music:** How do you listen to music? (i.e. *Pandora, Spotify* or *YouTube*, etc.)
- **Video:** Do you watch *Netflix* or other video platforms such as *YouTube* or *Vine*? If so, when and what do you watch? Do you binge watch? What YouTube personalities do you follow? What movie or TV genres are most viewed? Be aware if child is viewing of high-risk content, including sexually-explicit, self-harm, and other that mismatches family values/practices.
- **Create Content:** Where do you generate content, and what is it about? (i.e. *YouTube* videos).
- **Gaming:** Which games? Length of gaming time? Online group video gaming? Any impact of daily functioning? What game streams are you watching? Do they participate in a role play game? Are they using micro-transactions or loot crates?
- **Online Dating:** Do you use in online dating apps? How many? Which ones? What is your profile like? Assess online dating practices and app use. (i.e. *Tinder* and other dating apps).
- **Safety & Privacy:** Have you discussed inappropriate conversations vs. appropriate conversations with online friends? Have they developed safety provisions if they want to meet online friends or potential dating prospects? Are you currently experiencing any stressor/discomfort related to social media use (inability to meet social expectations due to lack of access, not understanding social expectations)?

Resources:

- Albion. (n.d.). *Netiquette Home Page -- A Service of Albion.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>
- American Academy of Pediatrics. (n.d.). *Media and Children Communication Toolkit*. Retrieved from <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/pages/media-and-children.aspx>
- Common Sense Media. (n.d.). *Common Sense Media's Home Page*. Retrieved from <https://www.commonsensemedia.org/>
- University of Southern California School of Gerontology. (n.d.). *Designing Technology for the Aging Population [Infographic]*. Retrieved from: <https://gerontology.usc.edu/resources/infographics/designing-technology-for-the-aging-population/>

Section IV: Intergenerational/Cultural issues

- **Communication Preferences:** For this can we say something like, what is your preferred communication style? What about for your family members? Are there any differences? How do you navigate these? How do you and/or your family communicate regarding sensitive issues in your families (i.e. teens texting parents about topics that they can't discuss face-to-face)? What is the communication style/preference for communicating with technology across generations (i.e. texting conversations at the dinner table instead of face-to-face or

- older adults (maybe) prefer face-to-face while (maybe) teens prefer to text)?
- Grief, death & loss Does the client or family have a plan for social media and other digital accounts at the end-of-life? Who has access to account log-on information to access in case of an emergency? How familiar is the client with archiving or legacy account settings with different types of social media? How comfortable is the client or family with sharing private information via social media?
- Social Media: What cultural or personal beliefs encourage or discourage your interaction with social media?
- General Cultural Issues: Are there any cultural factor that affect how you use technology? How that may impact family dynamics? Has technology increased your access to your culture and heritage? If so, how?

Resources:

- Singer, J. B. (Producer). (2017, February 19). #109 - Death and Grief in the Digital Age: Interview with Carla Sofka, Ph.D. [Audio Podcast]. *Social Work Podcast*. Retrieved from <http://www.socialworkpodcast.com/2017/02/digital-death.html>

Section V: Special Populations

- Homeless: What are the options for battery life, Wi-Fi access? How willing are you to use device to communicate with service provider? What web-based programs do you use? Libraries available as resource? Welcoming or hostile? Social worker available? Some social workers program phone numbers and addresses of resources directly into the phones/direct technical assistance and/or set-up connections to a *Google* account to store phone numbers and addresses in case of phone loss or they lose the paper copy.
- Mental Health: What apps do you use to track your mental health? There are many apps that can be used to supplement mental health care (i.e. self-awareness, mindfulness, self-regulation, etc.).
- Foster Youth: Who are you allowed to contact, and how? What are the special safety issues? Do foster parents know how to monitor use?
- Clients with limited capacity/developmental disabilities: These clients may require extra support around psychoeducational, protection of personal information, online shopping, dating/sex-related sites, and gambling/addiction.
- Rural Communities: Many rural areas may have many dead spots for making phone calls but can still send and receive text messages for help.
- Online Education: Does the student have access to hardware, software and devices needed to access learning management systems? Is student aware of school's institutional policies, requirements and resources for online education? Does student have access to Wi-Fi?

Resources:

- Johnson, E. (2016). *Tech/SW Assessment*. Retrieved from <https://plus.google.com/100511899319175723425/posts/9nwu8RgkAiD>
- Hitchcock, L. I., Sage, M., & Smyth, N. J. (Eds.). (2018). *Technology in social work education: Educators' perspectives on the NASW Technology Standards for Social Work Education and Supervision*. Buffalo, NY: University of Buffalo School of Social Work, State University of New York.

Section VI: Families

- General perception of technology on family: Where does tech support, where does it create tension/harm/family conflict? A tech infused ecomap? Need direct technical assistance?
- Equal Access to Tech: Do the parents have the same kind of technology that their children have (e.g. Does dad have a flip phone while the teenager has an iPhone 6?)
- Norms: What are the family rules/norms about technology use? How are rules made?
- Who has passwords to media accounts? Do parents know each media account youth use? Is the computer in public/private place? Do parents/caregivers teach netiquette to children?
- Privacy & Monitoring: What privacy settings are used in media accounts, and who supports the understanding of privacy use? What circumstances lead to restriction of use or monitoring? Do children know how to screen for lock specific apps and secret phone/video apps?
- Online Friendships: Does internet friendship ever move to “in real life” sphere (phone number exchange, in person meeting)? How and who is involved?
- Technology used by other resources that influence the family: School, Work, Health Care Providers, Non-Profit agencies, etc.
- Divorce: What is the family plan for communicating? There are communication sites for mediation and high conflict or abuse situational divorces where parents need to communicate such as *Our Family Wizard* (<https://www.ourfamilywizard.com/pro/courts>).

Resources:

- Belluomini, E. (2013). *Technology Assessments for Families*. Retrieved from <http://www.socialworker.com/api/content/ce3c1470-3b8c-11e3-ade5-1231394043be/>

Section VII: Social Worker Technology Self-Assessment

- Knowledge & Skills: How knowledgeable are you about the technology that you use in your professional practice (i.e. could you explain privacy settings in *Facebook* to a client)? How familiar are you with online behaviors such as bullying, trolling, binge watching videos, etc.? How would you rate your digital literacy skills (i.e. spotting fake news; awareness of and ability to use software, apps, and devices; netiquette; social networking, etc.)?
- Technology Use: What technology do you use and how in your social work practice?
- Privacy & Confidentiality: How you protect client confidentiality related to the use of technology (i.e. use of encryption software, HIPAA compliant electronic records, etc.)? How do you protect client privacy related to the use of technology? If you have a website, *Facebook* page/group, blog, how do you inform clients about posting, self-identification, and confidentiality/privacy risk?
- Informed Consent: Do you use informed consent with clients about using technology to communicate, interact, etc.? If so, how?
- Social Media Policy: What are your social media professional practices? Do you have a social media policy?
- Professional Learning Network: Do you have a professional learning network? How do you stay current about tech trends (i.e. crisis texting services, telehealth, etc.)?
- Organizational Context: How does your agency support technology use (i.e. training, provides adequate tech, etc.)? Do you have a risk management plan for your technology in place of employment?
- Financial: What type of financial transactions do you use your phone/computer for? How do you track passwords? Do you use a fingerprint for financial transactions?

Resources:

- National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (2017a). *Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers*. Washington, DC: NASW Press. Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English>
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW). (2017b). *NASW, ASWB, CSWE, & CSWA standards for technology in social work practice*. Washington, DC: NASW Press. Retrieved from https://www.socialworkers.org/includes/newIncludes/homepage/PRA-BRO-33617.TechStandards_FINAL_POSTING.pdf
- National Association of Social Workers & Association of Social Work Boards. (2005). *Technology for social work practice*. Retrieved from <https://www.socialworkers.org/practice/standards/NASWTechnologyStandards.pdf>
- University at Buffalo School of Social Work. (n.d.). *Social worker's guide to social media*. Retrieved from <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/social-media-guide.html> (Includes an infographic and embedded videos).

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