

Department of Education
REHABILITATION SERVICES
Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Request

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*State tables reflecting actual fiscal year 2023 allocations and fiscal years 2024 and 2025 estimates are posted on the Department's webpage at:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/index.html>

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Appropriations Language

For carrying out, to the extent not otherwise provided, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Helen Keller National Center Act, \$4,397,033,000, of which \$4,253,834,000 shall be for grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act¹: Provided, That, notwithstanding sections 100(b)(1) and 100(c)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act, each State shall be entitled to an allotment equal to the amount such State received pursuant to section 110(a) of the Rehabilitation Act for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, prior to any additions or reductions under section 110(b) or section 111(a)(2)(B)²: Provided further, That the Secretary may use amounts provided in this Act that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States pursuant to section 110(b) of the Rehabilitation Act for innovative activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment as defined in section 7 of such Act for youth and other individuals with disabilities, including related Federal administrative expenses, for improving monitoring and oversight of grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act, for activities under section 14 of the Rehabilitation Act, and for information technology needs under section 15 and titles I, III, VI, and VII of the Rehabilitation Act³: Provided further, That up to 15 percent of the amounts available subsequent to reallocation for the activities described in the second proviso from funds provided under this paragraph in this Act, may be used for evaluation and technical assistance related to such activities⁴: Provided further, That any funds made available subsequent to reallocation for the purposes described in the second proviso may be provided to States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, for carrying out such activities⁵: Provided further, That States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, may award subgrants for a portion of the funds to other eligible entities⁶: Provided further, That any funds provided in this Act and

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Appropriations Language—continued

made available subsequent to reallocation for the purposes described in the second proviso shall remain available until September 30, 2026.⁷

NOTES

A full-year 2024 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the Budget was prepared; therefore, the Budget assumes this account is operating under the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2024 and Other Extensions Act (Division A of Public Law 118-15, as amended). The amounts included for 2024 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.

Each language provision that is followed by a footnote reference is explained in the Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes document which follows the appropriations language.

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p>¹ <u>... of which \$4,253,834,000 shall be for grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This language earmarks funds provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program.</p>
<p>² <u>Provided, That, notwithstanding sections 100(b)(1) and 100(c)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act, each State shall be entitled to an allotment equal to the amount such State received pursuant to section 110(a) of the Rehabilitation Act for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2024, prior to any additions or reductions under section 110(b) or section 111(a)(2)(B):</u></p>	<p>This language ensures that no State receives less funding through the formula allotment in fiscal year 2025 than it receives in fiscal year 2024, prior to reductions for maintenance of effort penalties or changes due to reallocation.</p>
<p>³ <u>Provided further, That the Secretary may use amounts provided in this Act that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States pursuant to section 110(b) of the Rehabilitation Act for innovative activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment as defined in section 7 of such Act for youth and other individuals with disabilities, including related Federal administrative expenses, for improving monitoring and oversight of grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act, for activities under section 14 of the Rehabilitation Act, and for information technology needs under section 15 and titles I, III, VI, and VII of the Rehabilitation Act:</u></p>	<p>This language allows the Secretary to use amounts that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States under the VR State Grants program for innovative activities aimed to increase competitive integrative employment for youth and other individuals with disabilities and for related administrative expenses, such as salaries or training costs for the Federal staff overseeing the use of these funds. This language also allows funds to be used for activities that will improve the effectiveness of monitoring and oversight of the VR State Grants program. This language also allows funds to be used for evaluation activities under section 14 of the Rehabilitation Act, such as studying the implementation and effectiveness of services provided under the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, this language allows funds to be used for RSA's information technology needs, such as supporting the online portals used by States and grantees to submit required data to RSA. The inclusion of this language ensures that unused funds remain available to improve the outcomes of individuals with disabilities, instead of being returned to the Treasury.</p>

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Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes—continued

<p><u>4 Provided further, That up to 15 percent of the amounts available subsequent to reallocation for the activities described in the second proviso from funds provided under this paragraph in this Act, may be used for evaluation and technical assistance related to such activities:</u></p>	<p>This language allows the Secretary to use up to 15 percent of the amounts that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States under the VR State Grants program to be used to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the project activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment for youth and other individuals with disabilities, and to provide technical assistance to support grantees in this work.</p>
<p><u>5 Provided further, That any funds made available subsequent to reallocation for the purposes described in the second proviso may be provided to States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, for carrying out such activities:</u></p>	<p>This language permits States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, to be eligible entities to receive funds for carrying out innovative activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment for youth and other individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p><u>6 Provided further, That States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, may award subgrants for a portion of the funds to other eligible entities:</u></p>	<p>This language permits States and other public, private and nonprofit entities, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, to use a portion of their project funds to make subgrants to other eligible entities for carrying out innovative activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment for youth and other individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p><u>7 Provided further, That any funds provided in this Act and made available subsequent to reallocation for the purposes described in the second proviso shall remain available until September 30, 2026.</u></p>	<p>This language permits the funds made available subsequent to reallocation of VR State Grant funds to remain available for two years.</p>

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Appropriation, Adjustments, and Transfers (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation/Adjustments/Transfers	2023	2024	2025
Discretionary:			
Appropriation	\$143,199	\$143,199	\$143,199 ¹
Total, discretionary appropriation	143,199	143,199	143,199
Mandatory:			
Appropriation	3,949,707	4,253,834 ²	4,253,834 ³
Sequester (P.L. 112-25)	-225,133	-242,469	-242,469
Total, adjusted mandatory appropriation	3,724,574	4,011,365	4,011,365
Total, discretionary and adjusted mandatory appropriation	3,867,773	4,154,564	4,154,564

¹ The Department of Education discretionary total is reduced by a discretionary change in a mandatory program (CHIMP) of \$128,364 thousand.

² The authorizing legislation specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU). The VR State Grants program is a mandatory appropriated entitlement; therefore, under a fiscal year 2024 annualized continuing resolution (CR), the program is entitled to all statutory adjustments provided for in section 110(a) for the Rehabilitation Act, including the statutory CPIU increase.

³ The fiscal year 2025 request includes a CHIMP, resulting in a request equivalent to the fiscal year 2024 mandatory funding level.

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Summary of Changes (dollars in thousands)

	2024	\$4,397,033 ¹
	2025	4,397,033 ²
Net change		0

Increases:	2024 base	Change from base
<u>Program:</u>		
Increase in Demonstration and training programs to provide greater flexibility in meeting the technical assistance needs of State VR agencies and their consumers.	\$5,796	+\$6,000
Subtotal, increases		+6,000
Decreases:	2024 base	Change from base
<u>Program:</u>		
Decrease in Training to shift funds to Demonstration and training programs to provide greater flexibility in meeting the technical assistance needs of State VR agencies and their consumers.	29,388	-6,000
Subtotal, decreases		-6,000
Net change		0

¹ Excludes the 5.7 percent reduction of mandatory VR State Grant funds pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) that went into effect on October 1, 2023. The reduced level for fiscal year 2024 subsequent to the 5.7 percent sequester is \$4,011,365 thousand, a reduction of \$242,469 thousand.

² Excludes the 5.7 percent reduction of mandatory VR State Grant funds pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25) that goes into effect on October 1, 2024. Based on the authorizing statute, the fiscal year 2025 mandatory pre-sequester amount would be \$4,389,957; however, the Administration is requesting to exclude the mandatory CPIU increase from the fiscal year 2025 request, which reduces the pre-sequester amount to the fiscal year 2024 mandatory pre-sequester amount, or \$4,253,834 thousand. The reduced level for 2025 subsequent to the 5.7 percent sequester is \$4,011,365 thousand, a reduction of \$242,469 thousand.

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Authorizing Legislation

(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2024 Authorized	2024 Annualized CR	2025 Authorized	2025 Request
Vocational rehabilitation (VR) State grants:				
Grants to States <i>(RA-I A, B (110, 111 and 113), and C)</i>	0 ¹	\$3,960,807 ²	To be determined ¹	\$3,960,807
Grants for Indians <i>(RA-I-C)</i>	(1,3)	53,615 ²	(1,3)	53,615
Client assistance State grants <i>(RA-I-112)</i>	0 ⁴	13,000	To be determined ⁴	13,000
Supported employment State grants <i>(RA-VI)</i>	0 ⁴	22,548	To be determined ⁴	22,548
Training <i>(RA-III-302)</i>	0 ⁴	29,388	To be determined ⁴	23,388
Demonstration and training programs <i>(RA-III-303)</i>	0 ⁴	5,796	To be determined ⁴	11,796
Services for older blind individuals <i>(RA-VII-2)</i>	0 ⁴	33,317	To be determined ⁴	33,317
Protection and advocacy of individual rights <i>(RA-V-509)</i>	0 ⁴	20,150	To be determined ⁴	20,150
Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults <i>(HKNCA)</i>	0 ⁵	19,000	To be determined ⁵	19,000
<hr/>				
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total discretionary appropriation		143,199		143,199
Total mandatory appropriation		4,253,834		4,253,834
Total appropriation		4,397,033		4,397,033
Portion of request not authorized		4,397,033		4,397,033
Total appropriation including required mandatory reduction		4,154,564 ²		

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action. The authorizing legislation specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change from October to October in the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPIU).

² The amount reflects the 5.7 percent reduction of mandatory programs that went into effect on October 1, 2023, pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25).

³ The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1.0 percent to 1.5 percent of the appropriation for Vocational Rehabilitation State grants be set aside for Grants to Indians.

⁴ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

⁵ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

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Appropriations History (dollars in thousands)

Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2016 ¹	\$3,532,109	\$3,529,605	\$3,487,864	\$3,529,605
2017 ²	3,541,389	3,534,027	3,536,389	3,535,589
2018 ³	3,563,008	3,562,582	3,562,418	3,361,143
2019 ⁴	3,634,977	3,657,689	3,656,189	3,657,189
2020 ⁵	3,719,527	3,752,076	3,745,239	3,747,739
2021 ⁶	3,782,952	3,827,500	3,805,500	3,814,220
2022 ⁷	3,894,820	3,896,820	3,874,145	3,858,320
2023 ⁸	4,125,906	4,104,906	4,093,406	4,092,906
2024 ⁹	4,405,533	4,397,033	4,397,033	4,397,033
2025	4,397,033			

¹ The levels for House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2016 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 114th Congress only through the House Committee and Senate Committee.

² The levels for House and Senate allowances reflect Committee action on the regular annual 2017 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects the Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2017.

³ The level for the House allowance reflects floor action on the Omnibus appropriations bill; the Senate allowance reflects Committee action on the regular annual 2018 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (P.L. 115-141).

⁴ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect Committee action on the regular annual 2019 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects enactment of the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 115-245).

⁵ The Senate allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; the Appropriation reflects the Further Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94).

⁶ The level for the House allowance reflects subcommittee action. The level for the Senate Allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; the Appropriation reflects Division H of the fiscal year 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act (P.L. 116-260).

⁷ The House allowance reflects floor action; the Senate allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; and the Appropriation reflects Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-103).

⁸ The House allowance reflects the regular annual fiscal year 2023 appropriation, which was introduced on the floor; the Senate allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; and the Appropriation reflects the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328).

⁹ The House allowance reflects Subcommittee action and the Senate allowance reflects Committee action on the regular annual 2024 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects the annualized continuing resolution level, which is assumed to include authorization to apply the statutory CPIU increase for the mandatory appropriation.

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Significant Items in FY 2024 Appropriations Reports

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Senate: The Committee directs the Department to use a portion of DIF funds for competitive grants, to be awarded in coordination with the Office of Disability Employment Policy, to eligible entities in partnership with State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies for innovative strategies that significantly increase competitive integrated employment of youth and adults with disabilities. The Committee expects this will focus on expanding the capacity and the State network of eligible entities providing employment supports in States, prioritizing States that have returned funds to RSA or States from the two lowest quintiles of labor force participation rates for people with disabilities.

Response: Subject to the availability of fiscal year 2024 Disability Innovation Funds (DIF) for obligation through fiscal year 2025, the Department will comply with this directive.

Senate: The Committee directs the Department to continue to brief the Committees on Appropriations; the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate; the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives; the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives at least every 6 months with updates on activities funded within DIF.

Response: The Department will comply with this directive.

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Summary of Request

People with disabilities represent a vital and integral part of our society. Providing workers with disabilities the support and the opportunity to acquire the skills that they need for in-demand jobs and careers is critical to growing our economy, ensuring that everyone who works hard is rewarded, and building a strong middle class. To help achieve this goal, the Rehabilitation Act seeks to empower individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society. The Rehabilitation Act was reauthorized in 2014 under Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which supports the Nation's workforce development system through programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation. WIOA expired in fiscal year 2020 and the one-year GEPA extension ended in fiscal year 2021; authorization for all programs within the Rehabilitation Services account for fiscal year 2025 is requested through appropriations language.

The Administration's 2025 request for the Rehabilitation Services account provides \$4.4 billion in mandatory and discretionary funding to support comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation for individuals with disabilities through direct services, training and technical assistance, and model demonstrations, as well as direct services to help older individuals who are blind live more independently.

The \$4.3 billion mandatory request for the **Vocational rehabilitation (VR) State grants** program is level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR, to assist States and Tribal governments in increasing the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. WIOA strengthened the alignment of the VR program with other components of the workforce development system to promote a coordinated and streamlined system. As an integral partner in this system, the VR program is the primary Federal vehicle for assisting individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, retain, or advance in high quality employment. Since many States have struggled to expend their full awards for several years, the fiscal year 2025 request excludes the Consumer Price Index increase specified in the authorizing statute, resulting in a post-sequester savings, or discretionary change in mandatory program (CHIMP), of \$128.4 million. The Administration's request includes a "hold harmless" provision to ensure that no State receives fewer funds through the formula allotment than it received in fiscal year 2024. As in previous years, States that are able to spend down their full awards will have the opportunity to obtain additional VR State Grant funding, if funds are available, through the annual reallocation process. The Department is also providing technical assistance to VR agencies to support the effective and timely expenditure of their awards.

The request includes an increase of \$6.0 million for the **Demonstration and training** program to provide greater flexibility in meeting the technical assistance needs of State VR agencies and their consumers. The request includes a corresponding decrease of \$6.0 million for **Training**.

The request would maintain support for all other programs in the Rehabilitation Services account at the 2024 annualized CR level based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation.

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Vocational rehabilitation State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Parts A, B (Sections 110, 111 and 113), and C)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

	2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	Change
State grants:			
Pre-sequester	\$4,200,219	\$4,200,219	0
Post-sequester	3,960,807	3,960,807	0
Set-aside for American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services	53,615 ²	53,615	0
Total pre-sequester	4,253,834	4,253,834 ³	0
Total post-sequester ⁴	4,011,365	4,011,365	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program supports formula grants to 56 States, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to provide individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, the services they need to obtain competitive integrated employment. Grant funds are administered by VR agencies designated by each State. There is currently a total of 78 State VR agencies. Thirty-four States and Territories operate a “combined” agency serving all disability categories. Twenty-two States operate a separate agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and a “general” agency for all other disability categories. The authorizing legislation requires the program to be

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action. The authorizing statute specifies that the amount to be appropriated for a fiscal year be at least the level of the prior fiscal year increased by the 12-month percentage change (from October to October) in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPIU). In fiscal year 2024 this amount is \$4,253,834 thousand. The VR State Grants program is a mandatory appropriated entitlement; therefore, under a fiscal year 2024 annualized continuing resolution (CR), the program is entitled to all statutory adjustments provided for in section 110(a) of the Rehabilitation Act, including the statutory CPIU increase. The authorizing statute also requires that not less than 1.0 percent, and not more than 1.5 percent, of the appropriation for each fiscal year for VR State Grants be set aside for Grants for American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

² The fiscal year 2024 President’s Budget proposed to reserve \$51,155 thousand for the AIVRS program. However, in order to maintain level funding in fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the Department anticipates setting aside \$53,615 thousand.

³ Based on the authorizing statute, the fiscal year 2025 mandatory pre-sequester amount would be \$4,389,957; however, the Administration is requesting a change in mandatory programs (CHIMP), resulting in a request equivalent to the fiscal year 2024 mandatory funding level.

⁴ The post-sequester amounts reflect the 5.7 percent sequester reduction for mandatory programs that took effect on October 1, 2023 for the fiscal year 2024 appropriation and will go into effect on October 1, 2024 for the fiscal year 2025 appropriation, pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011.

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funded at no less than the prior year level, increased by the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers.

Workforce Development System

The VR State Grants program was reauthorized in July 2014 in Title IV of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which supports a comprehensive, accessible, high-quality workforce development system that includes programs and investments in employment services, workforce development, adult education, and vocational rehabilitation. The workforce development system is aligned with regional economic development strategies to meet the needs of local and regional employers. WIOA's one-stop system, established under Section 121(e) of WIOA, operates through a network of centers in each State; the goal of the one-stop system is to provide a variety of services to assist both individuals in meeting their employment and training needs, as well as employers in recruiting a qualified workforce.

The VR State Grants program is a core program and a required partner in the one-stop service delivery system. It is governed by provisions in both the Rehabilitation Act (Title IV of WIOA) and Title I of WIOA. For a State to be eligible to receive Federal funds for the core programs of WIOA (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Formula programs (Title I of WIOA); the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (Title II of WIOA); the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service program (Title III of WIOA); and the VR program (Title IV of WIOA)), the Governor must submit a unified State plan including the VR plan. After approval of the VR portion of the plan by the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), the unified State plan is subject to the approval of both the Secretaries of Labor and Education.

VR agencies provide a wide range of services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for and engage in competitive integrated employment. In supporting individuals in achieving their career goals, VR agencies are encouraged to support the pursuit of postsecondary education and vocational training leading to recognized credentials to enable individuals with disabilities to advance in high-demand, high quality careers and maximize their self-sufficiency and independence. Individuals who are eligible for assistance include those with a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment and who require and can benefit from VR services to achieve and maximize employment and career goals. Program services are tailored to the specific needs of the individual through an individualized plan for employment (IPE). The VR program provides a variety of services, such as vocational evaluation, counseling, education, vocational training, job placement, rehabilitation technology, supported employment services, and treatment for physical disabilities or mental health support, that may reasonably be expected to reduce or eliminate one or more barriers to employment. Priority is given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities. Pre-employment transition services may be provided to students with disabilities who are in a secondary, postsecondary, or other recognized education program and are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services.

VR State Grants help cover the cost of direct services and program administration. The State matching requirement is 21.3 percent, except for the cost of construction of a facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, in which case the non-Federal share is 50 percent. If a State has met all matching requirements for the fiscal year in which funds were

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Vocational rehabilitation State grants

appropriated, the State may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year. States must also maintain non-Federal expenditures at no less than the level spent during the second preceding fiscal year. Amendments made by WIOA to Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act allow the Department to reduce a State's VR grant by the amount of a Maintenance of Effort (MOE) deficit from any previous fiscal year.

The Department allocates funds to States through a formula that takes into account population and per capita income. Each State is required to reserve and expend at least 15 percent of its Federal VR State Grant allotment to support pre-employment transition services to all students with disabilities in need of such services who are eligible or potentially eligible for services under Section 113 of the Rehabilitation Act. Each State is also required to reserve and use a portion of the Federal funds received under the VR State Grants program for innovation and expansion activities authorized in Section 101(a)(18).

Disability Innovation Fund

Beginning with the fiscal year 2012 appropriation, Congress provided authority to use amounts that remained available following the reallocation of funds to States under Section 110(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act to conduct innovative activities aimed at improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities ("Disability Innovation Fund" or DIF). Absent authority provided in appropriations language, these annual funds would lapse and no longer be available for Federal obligation. In addition, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, authorized the Department to use up to 15 percent of fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022 DIF funds for evaluation of, and technical assistance for, DIF activities. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, provided the same evaluation and technical assistance authority, while also allowing the Department to use DIF funds for Federal administrative expenses related to DIF, and for improving monitoring and oversight of grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act, including information technology modernization.

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to reserve between 1.0 percent and 1.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the VR State grants program for the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program (Section 121 of the Act), which pays part of the costs of VR services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near a reservation. The Department also must use between 1.8 percent and 2.0 percent of AIVRS funds to provide training and technical assistance to governing bodies of Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations.

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Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	Pre-Sequester (dollars in thousands)	Post-Sequester ¹ (dollars in thousands)
2020	\$3,610,040	\$3,397,048
2021	3,675,021	3,465,545
2022	3,719,121	3,507,131
2023	3,949,707	3,724,574
2024 Annualized CR	4,253,834	4,011,365

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$4.3 billion for the VR State Grants programs, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR, to help States and Tribal governments increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. The request excludes the Consumer Price Index increase specified in the authorizing statute, which if included, would increase the fiscal year 2025 mandatory amount to \$4,390 million, as specified in Section 100(b) of the Rehabilitation Act. The requested amount results in a mandatory post-sequester savings, or discretionary change in mandatory program (CHIMP), of approximately \$128.4 million. Since fiscal year 2020, many States have been unable to spend down their full allotments, relinquishing significant portions of their awards back to the Department. The Administration believes there is an urgent need for VR agencies to expend their full resources to close persistent gaps in employment among individuals with disabilities as detailed in the following paragraph. The Department has offered support to VR agencies to effectively spend down their awards through its monitoring, guidance and technical assistance as detailed further below. However, given the sustained and significant amount of returned funds from VR agencies, the Administration is not requesting an increase for the program. The Administration's request includes a "hold harmless" provision to ensure that no State receives fewer funds through the formula allotment than it received in fiscal year 2024. As in previous years, States that are able to spend down their full awards will have the opportunity to obtain additional VR State Grant funding, if funds are available, through the annual reallocation process. Of the amount requested, approximately \$53.6 million, or 1.3 percent, of the funds for the VR State Grants program will be set aside to support grants under the AIVRS program.

Individuals with disabilities are a vital and integral part of American society; however, some face particular barriers to obtaining employment. Although many people with disabilities find and retain jobs, the overall unemployment rate for people with disabilities is very high compared to individuals without disabilities. For example, 2022 employment data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that of those aged 16-64 (i.e., U.S. working age population), people with disabilities were significantly less likely to be employed (either full-time or part-time) than people without such disabilities (34.8 percent versus 74.4 percent, respectively). Of those people with disabilities who were employed, 30 percent usually worked part-time (less than 35 hours per

¹ The post-sequester amounts reflect the sequester reduction for mandatory programs pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25). The mandatory appropriation was reduced by 5.9 percent in 2020 and 5.7 percent in 2021 through 2023.

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week) compared to 16 percent of people without such disabilities.¹ VR program data demonstrate that receipt of VR services can significantly improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. In 2023, over half of all VR participants were employed in competitively integrated settings a year after exiting the program.

The VR State Grants program is a critical component of the WIOA workforce development system and continues to be the primary Federal vehicle for assisting individuals with disabilities—particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities—to obtain competitive integrated employment. Nationally, there are approximately 1.5 million individuals with disabilities, including students with disabilities, in various phases of the vocational rehabilitation process, about 57 percent of whom received VR services under an IPE during fiscal year 2023. Approximately 95 percent of these individuals were individuals with significant disabilities.

Examples of VR services include support for work-based learning experiences and postsecondary training that offer youth and adults with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, a pathway to the achievement of competitive integrated employment. These VR services ensure that individuals with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in the workforce in both traditional and high-growth industries like those related to Invest in America investments that include infrastructure, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, semiconductors, and biotechnology.

State VR agencies play an important role in ensuring that individuals with disabilities can successfully access and participate in such programs. For example, State VR agencies can provide a variety of services and supports that are beneficial to both eligible individuals with disabilities and employers including vocational assessment, career exploration, job readiness training, assistive technology services and devices, job accommodations, postsecondary education transition, tuition support, job coaching, job restructuring, and/or post-employment services, as necessary.

Supporting States to Fully Use Their VR State Grant Funds

For multiple years, a large number of States have relinquished a significant amount of funds during the reallocation process or have had a large balance of unused funds at the end of the program period in both the VR State grants program and the Supported Employment (SE) State grants program. In order to respond to the substantial amount of unused funds in both the VR State Grants program and the SE State grants program, the Department has updated its Monitoring and Technical Assistance Guide² (MTAG) in collaboration with six VR agency directors and leaders representing the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB). The MTAG explains the process through which the Department will conduct on-site monitoring and off-site reviews of, provide technical assistance to, and review the progress of, VR agencies in 1) maximizing the expenditure and use of Federal funds to improve the quality of services for,

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.htm>

² [https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/vr/FFY%202023%20MTAG%20Final%20\(06.15.2023%20update\).pdf](https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/vr/FFY%202023%20MTAG%20Final%20(06.15.2023%20update).pdf)

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and employment outcomes achieved by, individuals with disabilities, and 2) complying with requirements under the Rehabilitation Act.

In fiscal year 2023, the Department monitored 12 VR agencies, which included 7 on-site monitoring visits. In accordance with the Department's accountability model scoring, these agencies include Arkansas General, Florida Blind, Georgia Combined, Indiana Combined, Louisiana Combined, Nevada Combined, North Carolina General, Ohio Combined, Oklahoma Combined, Tennessee Combined, Texas Combined, and Puerto Rico Combined. The Department's monitoring teams and management staff are in the process of drafting the monitoring reports corresponding to these engagements, which will be posted to the VR Monitoring and Technical Assistance website¹ as they are finalized. In fiscal year 2024, the Department will conduct on-site monitoring visits to 8 VR agencies in accordance with the Department's accountability model scoring, including Arizona Combined, Colorado Combined, Florida General, Illinois Combined, Michigan General, New Jersey General, New York General, and Utah Combined. Fewer agencies will be monitored in 2024 to allow Department staff time to conduct WIOA State plan reviews, including related cross-agency collaboration and technical assistance to State agencies.

Specific to the focus areas addressed during the fiscal year 2023 and 2024 on-site monitoring and off-site reviews, each VR agency under review will develop and implement a strategic action plan (SAP) to demonstrate how it will reverse the return of unused funds and maximize the use and expenditure of Federal funds to improve performance and increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. The SAP should:

- identify causes for unused Federal funds and strategies and activities the VR agency will undertake to increase and maximize its ability to effectively and efficiently expend Federal VR and Supported Employment program grant funds;
- provide a written workable plan for taking action, which contains a timeline for implementation that demonstrates results within a reasonable specified time;
- be supported by documentation (e.g., fiscal reports, data, policies) showing implementation of the actions and results achieved; and
- demonstrate a roadmap and commitment for continuous improvement.

The Department will also continue to analyze expenditure patterns, provide technical assistance, continue monitoring and work with all grantees to better understand their challenges with providing the state dollar match and using VR funds, in order to ensure States are developing successful solutions to provide critical vocational rehabilitation services consistent with the intent of the authorizing statute.

¹ <https://rsa.ed.gov/about/programs/vocational-rehabilitation-state-grants/monitoring-of-vocational-rehabilitation-program/2023>

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Disability Innovation Fund

The Administration continues to request authority to use funds that remain available following reallocation for innovative activities aimed at improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including related administrative expenses, and for improving monitoring and oversight of grants for vocational rehabilitation services under title I of the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, the Administration continues to request authority to reserve up to 15 percent of DIF funds for evaluation of, and technical assistance for, DIF projects.

The Administration is requesting appropriations language that would expand the types of entities eligible to receive and subgrant DIF funds from just State entities to include States and other public, private, and nonprofit entities including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education. By expanding the pool of entities eligible to receive DIF funds and to subgrant a portion of the DIF funds, the Department will be able to broaden the impact of the funds and implement more innovative approaches toward increasing competitive integrated employment in high-demand employment sectors including those related to the Invest in America industries including infrastructure, clean energy, advanced manufacturing and biotechnology that require the collaboration of the education and workforce sectors to prepare the U.S. workforce for the incoming supply of new jobs. Cross-sector collaboration can develop and implement new and integrated innovative approaches to interventions such as work-based learning, college and career advising, dual enrollment and early college programs, and credential attainment.

Under the authority initially authorized in fiscal year 2023, which permits the Department to transfer DIF funds to the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), the Department is assessing the feasibility of conducting an evaluation of student outcomes using DIF funds. In fiscal year 2025, the Administration is requesting authority to use DIF funds for evaluation activities under Section 14 of the Rehabilitation Act, which would enable the Department to study the implementation and effectiveness of services provided under the Rehabilitation Act, including to adults and students. As an example, under this authority, the Department could further explore and evaluate implementation of the WIOA requirements, including but not limited to, implementation quality leading to expenditure challenges within the VR and Supported Employment programs. These types of evaluations would further support the Department's efforts to provide technical assistance to State VR agencies to improve the quality of services for, and employment outcomes achieved by, individuals with disabilities. Under the requested authority, RSA would still have the option to provide DIF funds to IES to conduct these evaluations.

The Administration is also requesting appropriations language that would provide RSA with authority to use DIF funds for RSA's ongoing information technology (IT) needs, in addition to its IT modernization needs. Subject to the availability of DIF funds in fiscal year 2025, this authority would allow RSA to fund approximately \$1.8 million of critical IT needs. These IT investments, detailed below, facilitate the reporting and sharing of data required by the Rehabilitation Act in a streamlined manner, provide grantees and the public with access to key resources and information, and enable RSA to analyze State data and provide the resultant analysis to States to support the effective and efficient use of formula funds provided under the Rehabilitation Act.

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Over recent years, the costs for RSA's IT systems have increased significantly as a result of changes to cybersecurity requirements, as well as an increased reliance on electronic submission, and the need for greater data analysis and digital access to information. RSA has met the need for increased funding through a combination of Program Administration salaries and expenses (S&E) funds, program funds, and other Department administrative funds; however, drawing from these funding sources is unsustainable given rising IT costs and the need to use these funds for their primary purpose. For example, as further explained below, using VR Training funds on IT costs reduced the Department's ability to support the training of VR staff at a time when many VR agencies are experiencing significant shortages of qualified personnel (see the VR Training section of the Congressional Justification for additional information).

At the start of the COVID pandemic, RSA shifted approximately \$90,000 of S&E funds, primarily from its travel budget, to cover increased IT needs for the Rehabilitation Services Administration Management Information System (RSAMIS)¹ and the State Wage Interchange System² (SWIS). Now that travel has resumed for monitoring and technical assistance, it is critical that RSA identify an alternate source of funding for the RSAMIS and SWIS. Therefore, under the proposed appropriations language approximately \$90,000 of DIF funds would be used to fund the RSAMIS and SWIS.

Under the proposed appropriations language, approximately \$700,000 of fiscal year 2025 DIF funds would be used in fiscal year 2026 for the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System (PDPDCS)³ contract, which supports the payback requirements related to the Long-Term Training grants. These funds are currently taken from the Rehabilitation Training program and are used predominantly for IT needs. Unfortunately, as the costs for this contract have increased due to changes in cybersecurity requirements, it has caused the amount of funds available for Rehabilitation Training grants to decrease. This portion of the request would

¹ The RSAMIS serves as the IT system wherein RSA grantees report performance data, fiscal data, and other information. The RSAMIS collects data for OMB-approved information collections, including the Case Service Report (RSA-911), WIOA Annual Report (ETA-9169), Resolution of Applicant/Client Appeals (RSA-722), Vocational Rehabilitation Financial Report (RSA-17), Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind (RSA-7-OB), Annual Client Assistance Program Report (RSA-227), Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights Report (RSA-509), Report of the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program (RSA-15), Grant Reallotment (RSA-692): Federal Formula Awards, and Federal Financial Report (SF-425): Federal Formula Awards.

² The SWIS allows States to exchange Wage Data on an interstate basis with other States needing the Wage Data for WIOA performance reporting, as well as for other permitted purposes specified in the SWIS Data Sharing Agreement. State VR agencies are permitted to access Wage Data, through the SWIS, for approved uses, including performance accountability provisions outlined in section 116 of WIOA. RSA transfers funds to the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (ETA) to administer the SWIS through a contract.

³ The PDPDCS provides for the collection of data from grantees, scholars, and their employers to track the enrollment, eligible employment of scholars, and service obligation fulfillment of scholars who have received program funds, until their service obligations are fulfilled, or they are referred to the Accounts Receivable and Bank Management Division for repayment of part or all of the funds received. The PDPDCS also provides technical assistance to all users and generates performance data for reporting annually on program results. The PDPDCS serves RSA along with the Office of Special Education Programs the Office of Indian Education. A component of the PDPDCS, the Payback Information Management System (PIMS) collects and analyzes data on scholars funded by Rehabilitation Long-Term Training (RLTT) program grants to track the service obligation of scholars and for use in reporting program performance measures. The PIMS tracks the eligible employment of scholars who have been awarded scholarships from RLTT grants until their service obligations are fulfilled or they are referred to the Secretary for repayment of part or all of the funding received.

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free up program funds so that additional Rehabilitation Training grants, which are needed to ensure a sufficient number of qualified VR professionals, may be awarded.

While Department administrative funds have been used to pay for RSA's share of the WIOA State Plan Portal.¹ in recent years, RSA's share of the cost to maintain this portal is expected to increase from approximately \$185,000 in fiscal year 2023 to around \$250,000 beginning in fiscal year 2024. Therefore, in fiscal year 2026, approximately \$250,000 of fiscal year 2025 DIF funds would be used to support the WIOA State Plan Portal under the proposed appropriations language.

RSA's existing Grants Management Database was initially built to run the formula allocations and very basic data analysis. However, fiscal challenges in RSA's programs exposed the need for a database that will allow for faster and more complex tracking, reporting, and analysis of fiscal data, thereby allowing RSA to provide more timely technical assistance to State agencies to address unfavorable trends in their fiscal data. Using the fiscal year 2023 authority to use DIF funds for IT modernization, RSA has begun to develop a new SQL fiscal database for all RSA formula grant programs and will continue to develop the database in fiscal year 2024. The cost for maintaining the database is expected to drop down to approximately \$150,000 per year beginning in fiscal year 2025.

Under the proposed appropriations language, approximately \$599,000 of DIF funds would be used to support the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials (NCRTM), which does not currently receive an appropriation. The NCRTM contract provides a central clearinghouse for information and resource availability for individuals with disabilities pursuant to Section 15 of the Rehabilitation Act. RSA currently uses funds from the Rehabilitation Training program to support limited NCRTM activities, with the majority of these funds in most years going toward IT needs. This portion of the request would free up these program funds so that additional Training grants, which are needed to ensure a sufficient number of qualified VR professionals, may be awarded.

Disability Innovation Fund Implementation

In fiscal year 2021, \$298.8 million was relinquished by States, and \$121.4 million was redistributed through the reallocation process, leaving \$177.4 million available for DIF projects through fiscal year 2022. The Department used most of the fiscal year 2021 funds for new awards through the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Innovative Model Demonstration Project DIF competition. This competition funded multiple innovative model demonstration projects designed to assist individuals with disabilities currently employed in, or contemplating, subminimum wage employment to engage with State VR agencies so they may obtain competitive integrated employment. The competition encouraged projects that support employment models in economic sectors, including essential workers, the green

¹ The Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Education (ED) collaborate to administer the joint State Plan Requirements Information Collection Request (OMB No. 1205-0522). As outlined in the joint information collection, the WIOA State Plan Portal is the approved method by which States submit and modify their Unified or Combined State Plans. DOL and ED use the Portal to collaboratively review, provide feedback, and approve State Plans. The Portal also serves as the database for each State Plan and modification under WIOA. It is available to the public while State and Federal users are granted accounts to manage the process.

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economy, home and community-based services, the arts and related fields, and transportation and related industries, but also allowed for field-initiated topics. The Department used \$167.3 million to fully fund 13 awards and partially fund a 14th award under this competition. In addition, the Department awarded a five-year, \$10 million contract for an independent evaluation of the DIF projects funded in fiscal year 2022.

In fiscal year 2022, approximately \$338.3 million was relinquished by States and \$13.1 million was made available due to maintenance of effort (MOE) penalties, resulting in \$351.4 million available for redistribution through the reallocation process. Approximately \$87.1 million was requested through reallocation, leaving \$264.3 million available for DIF projects through fiscal year 2023. Of the funds that were relinquished, \$4.5 million was reallocated to different State agencies within the same States that relinquished the funds. The Department reprogrammed approximately \$10 million to fully fund the 14th award from the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Innovative Model Demonstration Project DIF competition run in fiscal year 2022, leaving \$254.3 million available for use through fiscal year 2023.

The Department used most of the fiscal year 2022 funds for new awards through the Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project competition. The Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project is focused on the creation of systemic approaches to transition services for children and youth with disabilities. The Department used \$199.0 million to fully fund 20 new awards. The Department also awarded almost \$20 million toward a five-year evaluation of the Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project. In addition, the Department reprogrammed another \$14.3 million to support DIF programs awarded in prior years. Of this amount, the Department used \$5.5 million to extend the period of data collection and reporting for both the Career Advancement Initiative Model Demonstration Project grants and the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Project grants. The Department also made \$8.8 million in supplemental awards to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to support the expansion of services under their Career Advancement Initiative Model Demonstration Project awards, and to Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to expand services under its Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Project award.

Using the new flexibilities provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, the Department used approximately \$140,000 of DIF funding for DIF-related administrative expenses and improving monitoring and oversight for vocational rehabilitation services. As an example, these funds allowed RSA to increase the number of fiscal year 2023 on-site monitoring visits from four to seven and begin developing a fiscal database that interfaces with the RSA-911 database.

Finally, the Department reprogrammed DIF funds to other programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act, including \$2.0 million to the Client Assistance Program, \$2.8 million to Rehabilitation Training, and \$5.3 million to Demonstration and Training. Details for specific activities are shown in the Output Tables.

Additional information about DIF projects is provided in the Program Performance Information section of this request.

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American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The request would provide \$53.6 million for continuation awards under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program, allowing the Department to support 95 tribal VR projects and one training and technical assistance center. These funds enable Tribal governments to provide a program of VR services in a culturally relevant manner to American Indians with disabilities residing on or near reservations. The Department plans to reserve 2.0 percent of these funds to support training and technical assistance to governing bodies of Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

<u>Output Measures¹</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Individuals receiving VR services under an IPE	832,160	845,000	845,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals receiving services	95%	95%	95%
Eligible individuals whose case files were closed	327,746	350,000	350,000
Individuals whose cases were closed and received VR services	253,583	275,000	275,000
Individuals achieving an employment outcome	115,336	120,000	120,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of individuals achieving employment outcomes	93%	94%	94%

¹ The output measures data for 2024 and 2025 Vocational rehabilitation State grants are estimates based on prior year data.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Disability Innovation Fund Reprogramming

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures ¹	2023 Reprogramming
Client assistance State grants (CAP)	\$2,000
Training	
VR Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management	1,200
VR Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment	1,200
CAP Technical Assistance Center	330
Traditionally Underserved Populations ²	81
Subtotal	2,811

¹ The output measures show funds reprogrammed from fiscal year 2022 DIF funds that remained available until September 30, 2023, to supplement existing grants and contracts in CAP, Training, Demonstration and training, and previously awarded DIF programs.

² One percent of the funds reprogrammed to Training were used to supplement the Traditionally Underserved Populations program, per the requirement in The Rehabilitation Act that requires the Department to fund the Traditionally Underserved Populations program (section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act) through a reservation of 1 percent of the funds appropriated under the Training, Demonstration and Training, Supported Employment, and Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals programs.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

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Output Measures ¹	2023 Reprogramming
Demonstration and training programs ¹	
Parent Training and Information Centers	960
National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes ²	2,400
National Center for Information and Technical Support for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities ³	396
National Technical Assistance Center on Transition	800
Advanced Integrated Education Training Design Camp ⁴	720
Subtotal	5,276
Disability Innovation Fund ⁵	
Career Advancement Project ⁶	9,801
Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment ⁷	14,516
Subtotal	24,317
Total	34,404

¹ Funds reprogrammed to Demonstration and training supported activities and projects consistent with Section 303 of the Rehabilitation Act and administered by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE). All supplemental funds in support of these activities are administered in partnership RSA.

² A grant project administered by OSEP.

³ A grant project administered by OPE.

⁴ A contract administered by OCTAE.

⁵ Funds reprogrammed to support activities in DIF programs from prior years.

⁶ Includes \$6,119 thousand for a supplemental award to the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; \$1,426 thousand for a supplemental award to the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission; and \$2,256 thousand to extend the period of data collection and reporting for all Career Advancement Project grantees.

⁷ Includes \$10,061 thousand to fully fund the 14th award from the Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment competition run in fiscal year 2022; \$1,296 thousand for a supplemental award to the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency; and \$3,220 thousand to extend the period of data collection and reporting for all Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Project grantees.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

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American Indian vocational rehabilitation services

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025
Project funding:			
New awards	0	\$31,655 ¹	0
Continuation awards	\$49,637 ²	\$20,915	\$52,543
Technical assistance	\$1,013	\$1,013	\$1,072
Peer review of new awards' applications	0	\$32	0
Total	\$50,650	\$53,615	\$53,615
Number of AIVRS projects:			
New projects	0	46	0
Continuation projects	94	50	96
Total projects	94	96	96

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

VR State Grants

WIOA requires the core programs of the workforce development system, including the State VR Services program, to meet common performance accountability requirements, including the submission of common performance data to demonstrate that specified performance levels are achieved. Required data for the core programs include those related to the primary performance indicators, participant counts and costs, and participants' barriers to employment. Data definitions were changed by WIOA, limiting the validity of comparisons to performance data reported under the prior law. For fiscal years 2015 through 2020, the Department reported interim measures that were aligned with the WIOA performance indicators as State VR agencies continued to collect and report WIOA data.

¹ Includes \$3,152 thousand in frontloading awards in order to cover anticipated continuation costs in fiscal year 2025.

² Includes \$5,915 thousand in frontloading awards.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

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The Department has developed new performance measures that mirror three of the WIOA performance indicators and will report baseline data for 2021, 2022 and 2023 before establishing targets. Performance data reported in 2021 are based on data collected under the RSA-911 from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Performance data reported in 2022 are based on data collected under the RSA-911 from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Performance data reported in 2023 are based on data collected under the RSA-911 from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

These performance measures do not include data for Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Virgin Islands because the territories are not a part of the performance accountability system set forth in section 116 of WIOA.

Goal: Individuals with disabilities served by the VR program will achieve high quality employment outcomes and continue to work following their exit from the program.

Objective: *Ensure that individuals with disabilities, who are participating in an education or training program, are making progress towards earning a recognized postsecondary credential or achieving employment.*

Measure: The percentage of VR program participants who achieved measurable skill gains, in accordance with WIOA, during the program year.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	43.3%
2022	Baseline	43.0
2023	Baseline	48.7
2024	50.0%	
2025	50.5	

Objective: *Ensure that individuals with disabilities who exit the VR program with competitive integrated employment will be capable of maintaining employment as a result of the VR services they received.*

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Measure: The percentage of VR program participants who were employed during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	48.6%
2022	Baseline	52.5
2023	Baseline	56.2
2024	56.5%	
2025	57.0	

Measure: The percentage of VR program participants who were employed during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	44.0%
2022	Baseline	48.0
2023	Baseline	52.8
2024	53.0%	
2025	53.5	

American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

WIOA does not require the use of common performance measures and data for the AIVRS program, and the Department continues to use previously established performance and efficiency measures for this program.

During fiscal year 2019, the economy and labor markets on American Indian reservations began a significant decline that reduced viable employment opportunities for American Indians with disabilities. As a result of this decline, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic that began during fiscal year 2020, the Department anticipates that AIVRS program performance data will continue to show a downward trend in fiscal years 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Goal: To improve employment outcomes of American Indians with disabilities who live on or near reservations by providing effective tribal vocational rehabilitation services.

Objective: *Ensure that eligible American Indians with disabilities receive vocational rehabilitation services and achieve employment outcomes consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Measure: The percentage of individuals who leave the program with an employment outcome, after receiving services under an individualized plan for employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	68%	57%
2021	68	68
2022	68	55
2023	68	
2024	68	
2025	68	

Additional information: Data for fiscal year 2022 show that 1,416, or 55.0 percent, of the 2,552 American Indians with disabilities who exited the program after receiving services in that year achieved an employment outcome. Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in April 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification.

Efficiency Measures

Objective: *Ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

Measure: The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	76%	60%
2021	76	53
2022	76	38
2023	76	
2024	76	
2025	76	

Additional information: The cost per employment outcome varied significantly across projects, ranging from \$7,222 to \$564,977. The median annual cost per employment outcome for the 87 projects was \$39,929 in fiscal year 2022, while the mean annual cost per employment outcome was \$91,231 due to a small number of project outliers. Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in April 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Measure: The percentage of AIVRS projects that demonstrate an average annual cost of services per participant of no more than \$10,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	75%	64%
2021	75	42
2022	75	47
2023	75	
2024	75	
2025	75	

Additional information: The cost per participant varied significantly across projects, ranging from \$3,064 to \$451,896. The median annual cost per participant for the 87 projects was \$10,094 in fiscal year 2022, while the mean annual cost per participant was \$27,345 due to a small number of project outliers. Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in April 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification.

Disability Innovation Fund

Career Advancement Initiative Model Demonstration Project

In fiscal year 2021, VR funds remaining from the 2020 appropriation were used to award five-year grants to eight multi-site model demonstration projects designed to assist State VR agencies, in partnership with other entities—such as employers, community colleges and postsecondary institutions, entities that make up the workforce development systems, entities that provide apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, comprehensive rehabilitation centers, local or State educational agencies, and providers or other Federal or State agencies—to develop career pathways that are aimed at helping individuals with disabilities advance in their careers or change to high-demand, high-quality careers. Projects funded under this competition will help VR-eligible individuals with disabilities, including previously served VR participants in employment who re-enter the VR program, to:

- Advance in high-demand, high-quality careers such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields, including computer science;
- Enter career pathways in industry-driven sectors through pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeship programs;
- Improve and maximize competitive integrated employment outcomes, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion in society; and
- Reduce reliance on public benefits (e.g., Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and/or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and State or local benefits).

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Vocational rehabilitation State grants

Subminimum Wage to Competitive Integrated Employment Innovative Model Demonstration Project

In fiscal year 2022, the Department awarded five-year grants to 14 State VR agencies using unobligated fiscal year 2021 and fiscal year 2022 VR funds. The goal of these projects is to assist individuals with disabilities currently employed in, or contemplating, subminimum wage employment to engage with State VR agencies so they may obtain competitive integrated employment. Throughout the first year of project implementation, grantees developed plans for enrollment and service provision, identified implementation locations, established necessary partnerships, created evaluation and training plans, and hired and trained staff needed for administering and implementing the projects. All projects established workgroups and advisory councils to inform project activities.

In addition, the Department contracted for a five-year independent evaluation of the DIF demonstration projects awarded in fiscal year 2022. Additional information on the interim and final results of the evaluation will be shared as information becomes available.

Pathways to Partnerships Innovative Model Demonstration Project

In fiscal year 2023, the Department awarded five-year grants to 20 State VR agencies and State education agencies using unobligated fiscal year 2022 VR funds. These projects are focused on the creation of systemic approaches to transition services for children and youth with disabilities. In addition, the Department contracted for a five-year independent evaluation of the Pathways to Partnerships projects awarded in fiscal year 2023. Additional information on the interim and final results of the evaluation will be shared as information becomes available.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Client assistance State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title I, Section 112)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	Change
\$13,000	\$13,000	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) provides grants to States for services to assist eligible individuals and applicants for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program and other programs, projects, and services funded under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act). CAP focuses on promoting understanding of the rehabilitation services and benefits available under the Act, and advising eligible individuals of their rights and responsibilities in connection with those benefits. The program also offers eligible individuals and applicants a variety of other kinds of assistance, including individual or systemic advocacy, pursuit of legal and administrative remedies, and assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal and administrative remedies to ensure the protection of their rights. State VR agencies must operate a CAP in order to receive VR State grant funds, and are required to inform VR consumers about the services available from the CAP and how to contact the CAP.

Each Governor designates a public or private agency to operate a CAP. This designated agency must be independent of any agency that provides services under the Act, except in cases where the Act “grandfathered” agencies providing such services under the Act. If one of these “grandfathered” agencies should be restructured, the Governor is required to re-designate the CAP to an agency that does not provide services under the Act. Currently 45 CAPs are operated by independent private or non-profit organizations, 8 are operated by external State agencies, and 4 are operated by the State VR agency.

Allocations are based on population (using the most recent estimates published by the U.S. Census Bureau), with a minimum allotment in fiscal year 2023 of \$152,206 to each of the 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico and \$68,625 to each of the outlying areas.² When the appropriation increases, the Act also requires the Department to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by an amount not greater than the percentage increase in the appropriation.

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

² The minimum allotments in fiscal year 2023 reflect a reprogramming of \$2,000 thousand from the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) to CAP.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Client assistance State grants

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act also requires that funds be set aside under this program for two activities before awarding grants to eligible States and outlying areas with the remaining funds. The first set-aside reserves funds, at the same amount as provided to outlying areas, for an award to the eligible system established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to serve the American Indian consortium. In addition, if the appropriation rises to at least \$14 million, the Department is permitted to set aside between 1.8 percent and 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to CAPs established under this program. The Department currently provides such technical assistance to CAPs through the Rehabilitation Training program.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$13,000
2021	13,000
2022	13,000
2023	15,000 ¹
2024 Annualized CR	13,000

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$13.0 million for CAP, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation. CAPs promote understanding of the rehabilitation services and benefits available under the Rehabilitation Act and advise applicants and individuals who have been determined eligible for such services of their rights and responsibilities. In fiscal year 2023, CAPs responded to 13,416 requests for information inquiries and referrals (I&R) and provided 3,301 individual case services.

Data collected by the Department's Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) for fiscal year 2023 from the most recently available RSA Annual Client Assistance Program Report (RSA-227) show that approximately 35 percent of all I&R requests were for information regarding the VR program. The remaining requests were in reference to independent living programs, the Americans with Disabilities Act, CAP, and other related programs.

In addition, CAPs provided extensive services, such as assisting and advocating on behalf of a client, to 3,301 individuals in fiscal year 2023. Approximately 85 percent of the individual case services in which extensive services were provided by the CAP involved applicants for, or recipients of, services from the VR program who needed assistance related to the VR process or delivery of VR services. Of the 2,529 cases closed in fiscal year 2023, 922 cases (or 36 percent) were resolved by explaining the controlling policies to the individual; 474 cases (19 percent) resulted in the development or implementation of an individualized plan for employment (IPE); and 416 cases (16 percent) resulted in the reestablishment of communication between the individuals and other parties. The remaining closed cases focused on outcomes such as completing an application for services, expediting an eligibility determination, helping the individual participate in evaluation, assigning a new counselor or

¹ Reflects a reprogramming of \$2,000 thousand from the DIF to CAP in fiscal year 2023.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Client assistance State grants

office to the individual, identifying alternative resources for the individual, or filing a complaint. Of the cases closed, 76 percent were resolved in the individual's favor.

Specific examples of CAP activities are described below. Funds requested in fiscal year 2025 would support similar activities.

- In Virginia, a VR participant with severe anxiety and orthopedic disabilities who had difficulty maintaining employment due to anxiety sought help to change their employment goal on their individualized plan for employment. Their initial request for a vocational evaluation (VE) and a change in the IPE goal was denied by a VR office; however, after an intervention by the CAP, an informal administrative review was conducted. The Director of Field Rehabilitation Services reversed the decision, approving an extensive VE and agreeing to reconsider the employment goal post-evaluation. The VR participant felt heard and was grateful to the CAP for their support and for making the evaluation possible.
- In Oregon, a VR participant with physical disabilities from a stroke sought CAP assistance for career transition within their VR program. Initially aiming to shift from construction management to cybersecurity or IT, the participant faced resistance from their original VR counselor, who recommended staying in the current field. After CAP's intervention, which included advocating to the VR office's branch manager, the participant was reassigned to a new VR counselor. This new counselor assisted in securing financial resources for necessary education and training in cybersecurity and IT, aligning with the participant's career aspirations in their revised individualized employment plan.
- In New York, the VR program initially denied a client financial sponsorship for medical school, suggesting employment based on his current education instead. This decision overlooked VR's obligation to help individuals with disabilities advance in careers, including in law and medicine. To address this, the CAP, aided with self-advocacy tools, sought an informal review of the denial. Consequently, VR reversed its decision and updated the VR participant's individualized employment plan to include the goal of becoming a physician.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

Output Measures ¹	2023	2024	2025
Information inquiries/referrals	13,416	14,758	16,234
Individuals provided case services	3,301	3,601	3,961

¹ Data for fiscal years 2024 and 2025 are projected from actual final data reported for fiscal years 2017 through 2023.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Client assistance State grants

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Goal: To provide assistance and information to help individuals with disabilities secure the benefits available under the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program and other programs funded under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Objective: *Accurately identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activity to improve services under the Rehabilitation Act.*

Measure: The percentage of CAPs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in changes in policy or practice.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	68%	67%
2021	68	65
2022	73	72
2023	73	63
2024	73	
2025	73	

Additional information: The Department continues to support technical assistance and training to increase the capacity of CAP professionals to provide systemic advocacy. As a result of this technical assistance and training, and an increased focus on relationship-building and outreach among CAPs and VR agencies, we expect that performance on this measure will improve over time. Fiscal year 2022 data has been updated to include data from Iowa that was unavailable for the fiscal year 2024 Congressional Justification.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Client assistance State grants

Objective: *Resolve cases at lowest possible level.*

Measure: The percentage of cases resolved through the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR).

Year	Target	Actual
2020	98%	97%
2021	98	98
2022	98	99
2023	98	99
2024	98	
2025	98	

Additional information: The percentage of cases being resolved through the use of ADR strategies, such as technical assistance, negotiation, and mediation, has consistently ranged from about 97 to 99 percent. The use of such intervention strategies to resolve consumer complaints reduces the need for lengthy and costly interventions such as formal hearings and litigation. Fiscal year 2022 data has been updated to include data from Iowa that was unavailable for the fiscal year 2024 Congressional Justification.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 302)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2024 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2025 Request</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$29,388	\$23,388	-\$6,000

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Training program is to ensure that skilled personnel are available to meet the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities assisted through other vocational rehabilitation (VR) and independent living programs. The program supports training and related activities designed to increase the number of qualified personnel providing rehabilitation services. Grants and contracts are awarded to States and public and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including institutions of higher education (IHEs), to pay all or part of the cost of conducting training programs.

Awards may be made in any of 30 rehabilitation long-term training fields, in addition to awards for rehabilitation short-term training, innovative rehabilitation training, and training interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and persons who are deaf-blind. These training programs vary in terms of content, methodology, and type of trainee.

The rehabilitation long-term training (LTT) program supports academic training grants that must direct at least 65 percent of the funds to trainee scholarships, which may include student stipends, tuition and fees, books and supplies, and student travel in conjunction with training assignments. Students who receive financial assistance from projects funded under the program are required to either work in public or private non-profit rehabilitation agencies for a period of time after they complete their training or repay the cost of their training.

The rehabilitation short-term training program supports special seminars, institutes, workshops, and other short-term courses in technical matters relating to the vocational, medical, social, and psychological rehabilitation programs, supported employment programs, independent living services programs, and client assistance programs. These training projects may be of regional or national scope.

The innovative rehabilitation training program supports grants that develop new types of training programs or new and improved methods of training for rehabilitation personnel, including stand-alone modules and instructional materials to be incorporated into an existing degree program or short-term training, and demonstrate the effectiveness of such training programs.

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

The training of interpreters program supports programming throughout the country in order to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are deaf-blind. This includes providing financial assistance to establish interpreter training programs where they are needed and supporting established interpreter programs to train a sufficient number of qualified interpreters. The program focuses on training interpreters to effectively interpret and transliterate between spoken language and sign language, and oral or tactile modes of communication, as well as maintaining and improving the skills of qualified interpreters.

Awards may also be made for technical assistance centers, such as the VR Technical Assistance Center on Quality Employment. These awards are made to pay part of the costs of projects that provide State VR agency personnel with training and technical assistance designed to assist in increasing the numbers of, and upgrading the skills of qualified personnel, including rehabilitation counselors. In addition, the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials is contracted to establish a central clearinghouse for information and resource availability for individuals with disabilities.

Traditionally Underserved Populations

The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to fund the Traditionally Underserved Populations program (section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act) through a reservation of 1 percent of the funds appropriated under the Training, Demonstration and Training, Supported Employment, and Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals programs. In fiscal year 2023, this provision made \$910,490 available for the Traditionally Underserved Populations program, which is designed to improve the quality, access, delivery of services, and outcomes of those services under the Rehabilitation Act, especially services provided to individuals with disabilities from minority backgrounds. It also increases the capacity for minority entities and Indian Tribes to participate in activities funded under the Rehabilitation Act. The Department ran a new competition, Activities for Underserved Populations, and made one new award in the form of a cooperative agreement in fiscal year 2023.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were as follows:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$29,388
2021	29,388
2022	29,388
2023	32,199 ¹
2024 Annualized CR	29,388

¹ Reflects a reprogramming of \$2,811 thousand from the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) to the Training program in fiscal year 2023.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$23.4 million for the Training program, \$6.0 million less than a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation. The Administration is requesting a corresponding \$6.0 million increase to the Demonstration and Training program, where funds can better meet the technical assistance needs of State VR agencies and their consumers, as detailed further below and in the Demonstration and Training justification. Of the requested amount for Training, approximately \$18.7 million would be used to support new awards; \$4.3 million would be used to support continuation awards; \$234,000 would be used for the Traditionally Underserved Populations program; and \$152,000 would be used for peer review.

Technical assistance and evaluation activities under Training are statutorily required to focus on VR personnel. Two investments currently operating under the Training program—the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE) and Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM)—will receive their final year of grant funding in fiscal year 2024. The request proposes to move the funding currently dedicated to the VRTACs to the Demonstration and Training program, which would enable the Department to fund technical assistance and evaluation on a broader range of issues and outcomes, including participant outcomes and implementation of the VR system as a whole, to better meet the needs of State VR agencies.

The Training program supports projects that provide training to new VR staff or upgrade the qualifications of existing staff. In response to dramatic turnover at State VR agencies created by the retirement of a large number of qualified counselors, the Department has targeted funding for LTT programs on training new counselors. Similar shortages, though not as severe, have also been affecting other VR providers. The Department believes that the LTT program, in concert with the Innovative Training program, which supports the development of new types of training programs and new and improved methods of training rehabilitation personnel, are effective mechanisms for recruiting new graduates into the rehabilitation field and ensuring they have access to high-quality training. The request includes approximately \$19.2 million to support these activities through new grant awards and ongoing contracts.

In the fiscal year 2024 Request, the Administration requested appropriations language that would provide RSA with the authority to use Disability Innovation Funds for RSA's information technology needs. If this authority is provided, up to an additional \$1.1 million would be available for new awards under the Training program in fiscal year 2025. (See the associated footnote below and the VR State grants program section of this request for additional information about the related fiscal year 2025 Request, which impacts fiscal year 2026 outputs.)

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025 ¹
Program Funding:			
Long-Term Training:			
New awards	0	0	\$15,209
Continuation awards	\$14,580	\$16,057	\$500
Subtotal	\$14,580	\$16,057	\$15,709
Technical Assistance:			
New awards	0	0	0
Continuation awards	\$5,739	\$6,000	0
DIF Supplemental awards ²	\$2,400	0	0
Subtotal	\$8,139	\$6,000	0
Short-Term Training:			
New awards	0	0	0
Continuation awards	\$308	\$308	\$308
DIF Supplemental awards ²	\$330	0	0
Subtotal	\$638	\$308	\$308
Training for Interpreters for Individuals who are Deaf and Deaf-Blind:			
New awards	0	0	0
Continuation awards	\$3,718 ³	\$2,935	\$2,936
Subtotal	\$3,718	\$2,935	\$2,936
Innovative Rehabilitation Training:			
New awards	0	0	\$3,450
Continuation awards	\$3,363	\$3,150	0
Subtotal	\$3,363	\$3,150	\$3,450
National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials:			
New awards	0	0	0
Continuation awards	\$770	\$644	\$599
Subtotal	\$770	\$644	\$599

¹ If the Administration's fiscal year 2024 request for the authority to use DIF for information technology needs is provided, \$500 thousand under Long-Term Training (for the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System contract) and \$599 thousand under the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials will become available to support new awards under the Training program.

² Reflects the reprogramming of \$2,811 thousand from the DIF to the Training program in fiscal year 2023. This amount includes \$2,730 thousand in supplemental awards under the Training program and \$81 thousand to Traditionally Underserved Populations.

³ Includes \$783 thousand in supplements to existing grantees.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025 ¹
Other Activities:			
Peer review of new award applications	0	0	\$152
Traditionally Underserved Populations Set-aside	\$991 ²	\$294	\$234
Subtotal	\$991	\$294	\$386
Program Totals:			
New awards	0	0	\$18,659
Continuation awards	\$28,478	\$29,094	\$4,343
DIF Supplemental awards ²	\$2,730	0	0
Other Activities	\$991 ²	\$294	\$386
Total	\$32,199	\$29,388	\$23,388

¹ If the Administration's fiscal year 2024 request for the authority to use DIF for information technology needs is provided, \$500 thousand under Long-Term Training (for the Personnel Development Program Data Collection System contract) and \$599 thousand under the National Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials will become available to support new awards under the Training program.

² Reflects the reprogramming of \$2,811 thousand from the DIF to the Training program in fiscal year 2023. This amount includes \$2,730 thousand in supplemental awards under the Training program and \$81 thousand to Traditionally Underserved Populations.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Goal: To provide the public vocational rehabilitation (VR) sector with well-trained staff and to maintain and upgrade the skills of current staff.

Objective: To provide graduates who work within the vocational rehabilitation (VR) system to help individuals with disabilities achieve their goals.

Annual Performance Measures

Measure: The percentage of Master's level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through employment in State vocational rehabilitation agencies.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	40%	39%
2021	40	39
2022	40	33
2023	40	37
2024	40	
2025	40	

Measure: The percentage of Master's level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through qualifying employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	85%	88%
2021	85	84
2022	85	72
2023	85	73
2024	85	
2025	85	

Additional information: Qualifying employment includes employment in a State vocational rehabilitation agency or related agency in the field of study for which the training was received. The decline in the percentage of graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through qualifying employment in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 is likely because these cohorts graduated in fiscal years 2019 and 2020, respectively, and may have been seeking eligible employment during the height of the COVID pandemic. We anticipate that the fiscal year 2024 cohort may also be negatively impacted by the COVID pandemic.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Training

Efficiency Measures

Measure: The Federal cost per Master’s level RSA-supported rehabilitation counseling graduate.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	\$24,000	\$41,780
2021	24,000	45,831
2022	24,000	N/A
2023	24,000	N/A
2024	24,000	
2025		

Additional information: This measure is calculated for individual cohorts of grantees by dividing the total funding given to each grant over the life of the grant by the number of Master’s level scholars who successfully completed funded training programs ending in that year. Only those grants with at least 90 percent of the scholars in a Master’s program are included. The fiscal year 2019 data includes 47 closed grants with 1,101 completers. The fiscal year 2020 data includes 45 closed grants with 993 completers. The fiscal year 2021 data includes 3 closed grants with 65 completers. No grants closed in fiscal year 2022 or fiscal year 2023, so no data are available for these years.

The Department is currently reviewing options to revise the targets for this measure. During the process of analyzing data to identify appropriate targets, we identified potential concerns about whether the current methodology reflects the best approach to measure the cost efficiency of the LTT program. We are analyzing the impact of administrative costs and scholarship size on program outcomes to determine whether we should revise the current methodology. We will then determine if adjustments are needed to the targets or the performance measure. The Department intends to establish revised targets, and a revised methodology if appropriate, beginning with fiscal year 2025. However, the analysis to inform this decision is not yet complete, and a target will be included in the fiscal year 2026 request.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 303)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

<u>2024 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2025 Request</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$5,796	\$11,796	+\$6,000

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Demonstration and Training programs are designed to provide competitive grants to, or enter into contracts with, eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation (VR) and other services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act), or to further the purposes of the Act by supporting activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope, and quality of rehabilitation services under the Act, including related research and evaluation activities.

Specific activities include:

- Section 303(b) of the Act authorizes activities to demonstrate methods of service delivery to individuals with disabilities, as well as activities such as technical assistance, systems change, studies and evaluation, and dissemination and utilization of project findings. Eligible entities include State VR agencies, community rehabilitation programs, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations, and for-profit organizations. Competitions may be limited to one or more type of entity.
- Section 303(c) of the Act authorizes a parent information and training program to enable individuals with disabilities and their parents, family members, guardians, advocates, or other authorized representatives to participate more effectively with professionals in meeting the vocational, independent living, and rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Section 303(d) of the Act authorizes a Braille training program to support the cost of training in the use of braille for personnel providing vocational rehabilitation services or educational services to youth and adults who are blind.

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$5,796
2021	5,796
2022	5,796
2023	11,072. ¹
2024 Annualized CR	5,796

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$11.8 million for the Demonstration and Training programs, \$6.0 million more than a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation. The Administration is requesting a corresponding \$6.0 million decrease to the Training program. Additional details are provided further below and in the Training justification. Of the requested amount, approximately \$11.4 million of funding would be used for 14 new awards under Technical Assistance and Parent Information and Training. Remaining funding would be used to fund the Braille Training continuation awards and the Section 21 set-aside.

Technical assistance and evaluation activities under Training are statutorily required to focus on VR personnel. Two investments currently operating under the Training program—the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE) and Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center for Quality Management (VRTAC-QM)—will receive their final year of grant funding in fiscal year 2024. The request proposes to move the funding currently dedicated to the VRTACs to the Demonstration and Training program, which would enable the Department to fund technical assistance and evaluation on a broader range of issues and outcomes, including participant outcomes and implementation of the VR system as a whole, to better meet the needs of State VR agencies.

¹ Reflects a reprogramming of \$5,276 thousand from the DIF to Demonstration and Training programs in fiscal year 2023.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025
Program funding:			
Technical assistance			
New awards	0	0	\$8,689
Continuation awards ¹	\$2,689	\$2,689	0
DIF Supplemental awards ²	\$800	0	0
Braille training			
New awards	0	\$342	0
Continuation awards	\$342	0	\$342
Parent information and training			
New awards	0	0	\$2,700
Continuation awards	\$2,700	\$2,700	0
Supplemental awards	\$65	\$4	0
DIF Supplemental awards ¹	\$960	0	0
Other DIF Supplemental awards ¹	\$3,516	0	0
Peer review of new award applications	0	\$3	\$7
Traditionally Underserved Populations Set-aside ³	0	\$58	\$58
Total, Program funding	\$11,072	\$5,796	\$11,796
Number of awards:			
New awards	0	3	14
Continuation awards	15	12	3
DIF Supplemental awards	12	0	0
Total, Number of awards	27	15	17

¹ The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition is jointly funded with the Office of Special Education programs.

² Reflects the reprogramming of \$5,276 thousand from the DIF to Demonstration and Training programs in fiscal year 2023. This amount includes \$1,760 thousand to support activities under the Demonstration and Training programs portfolio and \$3,516 thousand to support activities under other portfolios for activities aligned with the authorities outlined under section 303 of the Rehabilitation Act.

³ In fiscal year 2023, the Department met the requirement for Traditionally Underserved Populations fully out of Training funds, so all Demonstration and Training funds were allotted to other statutorily approved activities.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

In prior years, approximately 60 percent of the funds provided for the Demonstration and Training program were used to support model demonstration projects; therefore, the Department's GPRA measures for this program focused on these projects. With the shift from model demonstration projects to providing more robust support for the Parent Information and Training (PTI) programs and the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition (NTACT), the Department is proposing new performance measures that more accurately reflect the impact of the bulk of the Demonstration and Training program funds. Fiscal year 2020 is the last year the Department will report on the Vocational Rehabilitation Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) Demonstration Projects and its associated measures. Performance information for the VR-CPID measures will be removed from the fiscal year 2026 request. The Department will set targets for all new performance measures based on the average of baselines established in fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023.

VR-CPID Measures

Goal: To develop replicable promising practices in the use of career pathways by VR State agencies to assist eligible individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities, to acquire marketable skills and recognized postsecondary credentials, and thus secure competitive integrated employment in high-demand, high-quality occupations.

Objective: Increase the number of career pathways accessible to individuals with disabilities, the number of individuals who obtain competitive employment through those career pathways, and the weekly earnings and benefits of those who obtain competitive employment through CPID-funded activities.

Measure: The total number of distinct career pathways accessed or created through CPID.

Year	Target	Actual
2018	114	103
2019	121	107
2020	131	111

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

Measure: The total number of VR-eligible individuals who achieve competitive integrated employment through CPID-accessed or created career pathways.

Year	Target	Actual
2018	150	201
2019	200	277
2020	250	292

Measure: The average weekly wages of VR-eligible CPID participants who obtained competitive integrated employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2018	\$600	\$650
2019	630	680
2020	680	685

Other VR-CPID Measures

VR-CPID grantees reported on two additional measures: (1) the numbers of competitive integrated employment and employer-provided benefits obtained by CPID participants compared to those obtained by VR consumers in their State outside of CPID; (2) the average weekly earnings of CPID participants who obtained competitive integrated employment compared to the average weekly earnings of VR consumers in their State who obtained competitive integrated employment outside of the CPID project. All four grantees reported higher results for CPID participants compared to non-CPID participants on both measures.

New Performance Measures

National Technical Assistance Center on Transition

Goal: To increase the number of students with disabilities who receive the VR services needed to prepare them for competitive integrated employment.

Objective: To provide VR State agencies with training and technical assistance that ensures that staff are well-trained in providing services for students with disabilities that lead to competitive integrated employment.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

Measure: Of VR agencies that receive targeted and/or intensive technical assistance from NTACT, the percentage that show an increase in the percentage of potentially eligible students receiving pre-employment transition services.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	60%
2022	Baseline	50
2023	Baseline	
2024	TBD	
2025	TBD	

Additional information: Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in late February 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification but was not available at the time of publication for this budget.

Measure: Of VR agencies that receive targeted and/or intensive technical assistance from NTACT, the percentage that show an increase in the percentage of potentially eligible students who become VR program participants.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	80%
2022	Baseline	83
2023	Baseline	
2024	TBD	
2025	TBD	

Additional information: Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in late February 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification but was not available at the time of publication for this budget.

Measure: Of the VR agencies that receive TA from NTACT to strengthen their SEA agreements, the percentage of those VR agencies that show an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities who receive VR services.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	20%
2022	Baseline	17
2023	Baseline	
2024	TBD	
2025	TBD	

Additional information: Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available in late February 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification but was not available at the time of publication for this budget.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Demonstration and training programs

Parent Information and Training Programs

Goal: To ensure that individuals with disabilities and their families have the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively advocate for vocational, independent living, and other rehabilitation needs.

Objective: *Individuals with disabilities and their families who are served by the Rehabilitation Services Parent Information Centers will be knowledgeable about their rights and available services.*

Measure: The percentage of individuals with disabilities and their families receiving PTI services who report enhanced knowledge and understanding of VR services.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	91%
2022	Baseline	89
2023	Baseline	89
2024	90	
2025	90	

Objective: *Improve the quality of parent training and information products and services.*

Measure: The percentage vocational rehabilitation or employment/employment products and services deemed useful, quality, and relevant.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	91%
2022	Baseline	89
2023	Baseline	89
2024	90	
2025	90	

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 509)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	Change
\$20,150	\$20,150	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program supports statewide systems that provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law. These systems protect the legal and human rights of individuals with disabilities who are ineligible for protection and advocacy (P&A) services provided under Part C of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness Act, or who need P&A services that are beyond the scope of the Client Assistance Program. States may use these funds to plan and carry out P&A programs for eligible individuals with disabilities and to develop outreach strategies to inform individuals with disabilities of their rights.

The program also requires the Department to reserve between 1.8 percent and 2.2 percent of the amount appropriated for training and technical assistance to eligible systems established under this program. In addition, the Department must award \$50,000 to the eligible system established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to serve the American Indian consortium. Remaining funds are allocated to eligible systems within the States and outlying areas based on population estimates (using the most recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau).

The Rehabilitation Act establishes a minimum allotment of \$100,000 for States, or one-third of 1 percent of funds remaining after the technical assistance set-side and grant for the American Indian consortium, whichever is greater. The Outlying Areas receive a minimum allotment of \$50,000. The program is current-funded, but States and Outlying Areas may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$17,650
2021	18,150
2022	19,150
2023	20,150
2024 Annualized CR	20,150

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$20.2 million for the PAIR program, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation, to help provide information and P&A services to individuals with disabilities. The Department plans to reserve 1.8 percent of the funds requested (\$362,700) to provide training and technical assistance to eligible statewide systems established under this program, as required by the authorizing statute.

During fiscal year 2022, PAIR programs nationwide reported handling 9,022 cases and responded to 22,625 requests for information or referral. Of the individual cases handled by PAIR programs in that year, most were related to education (18 percent), housing (17 percent), and employment (17 percent). The most frequent primary disability categories (i.e., the ones directly related to the issues/complaints raised) reported for such individuals were orthopedic impairments (25 percent), neurological impairments (15 percent), and other disabilities (13 percent).

In addition to providing representation to individuals, PAIR programs address systemic issues faced by persons with disabilities through a variety of methods, including negotiations with public and private entities and class action litigation. In fiscal year 2022, 55 out of the 57 PAIR programs (96 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities.

The following examples of case services provided in fiscal year 2022 illustrate how PAIR programs assist individuals and can bring about systemic change. Funds requested in fiscal year 2025 would support similar activities.

- In December 2021, Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), in partnership with the Maryland Suspension Representation Project (MSRP), successfully reserved a zero-tolerance discipline policy in a large Maryland school district. It appeared that the school district was using a zero-tolerance discipline approach and was automatically referring students for extended suspension or expulsion for certain offense types. DRM, through its representation of the student referred for expulsion, found evidence of this zero-tolerance approach in an illegal behavior contract used in the student's expulsion. MSRP, with DRM taking the lead, informed the district of its concerns regarding the district's zero-tolerance approach to discipline and use of the illegal behavior contract. MSRP included client summaries in the letter to illustrate its concerns and demanded that the school district make certain reforms. As a result, the school district agreed to, among other things: conduct trainings for all staff where staff will be informed that behavior contracts are not to be used and reminded that

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

Zero Tolerance is not practiced in the school district; send a memorandum to all staff reminding them that disciplinary decisions must be made on an individualized, fact specific basis; and add MSRP and DRM to the Community Resources List that is provided to students who are suspended.

- Disability Rights Pennsylvania (DRP) participates in the Amtrak Disability Services/Accessibility Workgroup, a national workgroup organized by Amtrak to monitor its ADA accessibility improvements to its stations, rail cars, and equipment. Amtrak provides updated information to the workgroup about its efforts to come into compliance with the ADA. To date, 103 of 387 train stations have been made fully accessible and an additional 69 have been made accessible except for the platforms. In addition to this work done in 2022, the Workgroup voiced its concerns about the narrow aisle design of the Intercity train cars that Amtrak planned to purchase. This led Amtrak to make a number of adjustments to the design, including increasing the number of accessible seats on each trainset.

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025
Information inquiries/referrals	23,900	24,000	24,000
Individuals provided case services	9,000	9,400	9,400

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Goal: To provide assistance and information to individuals with disabilities eligible for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights program and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.

Objective: *Identify problem areas requiring systemic change and engage in systemic activities to address those problems.*

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Protection and advocacy of individual rights

Measure: The percentage of PAIR programs that reported that their systemic advocacy resulted in a change in policy or practice.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	89%	74%
2021	89	96
2022	89	96
2023	89	
2024	89	
2025	89	

Additional information: Because PAIR programs cannot address all issues facing individuals with disabilities solely through individual advocacy, they seek to change public and private policies and practices that present barriers to the rights of individuals with disabilities, utilizing negotiations and class action litigation.

Fiscal year 2023 performance data is expected to be available and processed by late February 2024 and will be included in the fiscal year 2026 Congressional Justification but was not available at the time of publication for this budget.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

	<u>2024 Annualized CR</u>	<u>2025 Request</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$22,548	\$22,548	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program assists States in developing collaborative programs with appropriate public and private non-profit organizations to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The program provides formula-based supplemental funding to State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to assist VR consumers with the most significant disabilities in achieving the employment outcome of supported employment.

Supported employment uses a “place-train” model in which individuals with the most significant disabilities are placed in a job and provided intensive services and supports. These services are typically provided by a job coach in conjunction with supports provided by the employer to train the individual on the job site, followed by extended services after the individual’s ability to perform the job with support has stabilized. These services and supports enable individuals with the most significant disabilities to engage in and maintain competitive integrated employment.

An individual’s potential for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine if an individual is eligible for the Title I VR State Grants program. VR funds are used to pay the costs associated with assessment and the determination of eligibility, as well as other needed VR services prior to placement in supported employment. Ongoing services are provided by the VR agency, using funds under the SE State Grants program and/or the VR State Grants program, from the time of job placement until the transition to extended services, and thereafter by one or more extended services providers. A State VR agency may support an individual’s supported employment services solely with VR State grant funds, or it may support these services in whole or in part with funds under the SE State Grants program.

In addition, States are required, under the amendments to Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act made by WIOA, to use one-half of their SE program funding allotment to provide supported employment and extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities and to provide a State dollar match of 10 percent for the SE allotment portion used to serve such youth.

Supported employment funds are distributed based on population, using the most recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, with no State receiving less than \$300,000, or one-

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

third of 1 percent of the amount appropriated, whichever is greater. The minimum allotment for territories remains one-eighth of 1 percent of the appropriation.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$22,548
2021	22,548
2022	22,548
2023	22,548
2024 Annualized CR	22,548

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$22.5 million for SE State Grants, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation, to continue to provide a dedicated source of funding for supported employment services, including significant support for services to youth with the most significant disabilities.

When the SE State Grants program was first authorized in 1986, supported employment was a new promising practice in employing individuals who traditionally would not have achieved employment in the integrated labor market, and the program provided a critical incentive for State VR agencies to adopt this practice. State VR agencies now recognize supported employment as a viable employment option for individuals with the most significant disabilities, and an individual's potential for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine if an individual is eligible for the Title I VR State Grants program.

Even though states have demonstrated a need for funding, one issue of concern is that States have struggled to meet the requirement to use one-half of their SE allocations—along with a 10 percent State dollar match—to provide supported employment and extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities. Some of the challenges reported by States include limited vendor capacity due to the pandemic; restrictions around use of SE funds, including a requirement that funds be spent on individuals once they are employed, which limits the number of youth clients who qualify for services; availability of VR State Grant funding to support SE services, which has less complicated administrative requirements; and the need for additional staff training, policies and procedures related to utilizing SE funds.

The challenge of meeting these requirements is demonstrated by recent SE State Grant expenditure patterns. Grantees did not use more than \$3.7 million of fiscal year 2021 SE funds, the most recent cohort for which final data is available. As a result, more than 16 percent of the entire fiscal year 2021 SE appropriation, less set-asides, was returned to the Treasury. The amount of funds from the fiscal year 2021 SE appropriation that reverted to the Treasury is more than \$1.0 million greater than the amount of funds from the fiscal year 2019 SE appropriation that reverted to the Treasury.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

In order to respond to the substantial amount of unused funds in both the VR State Grants program and the SE State grants program, the Department has updated its Monitoring and Technical Assistance Guide¹ (MTAG) in collaboration with six VR agency directors and leaders representing the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) and the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB). The MTAG explains the process through which the Department will conduct on-site monitoring and off-site reviews of, provide technical assistance to, and review the progress of, VR agencies in 1) maximizing the expenditure and use of Federal funds to improve the quality of services for, and employment outcomes achieved by, individuals with disabilities, and 2) complying with requirements under the Rehabilitation Act.

In fiscal year 2023, the Department monitored 12 VR agencies, which included 7 on-site reviews. In accordance with the Department's accountability model scoring, these agencies include Arkansas General, Florida Blind, Georgia Combined, Indiana Combined, Louisiana Combined, Nevada Combined, North Carolina General, Ohio Combined, Oklahoma Combined, Tennessee Combined, Texas Combined, and Puerto Rico Combined. The Department's monitoring teams and management staff are in the process of drafting the monitoring reports corresponding to these engagements, which will be posted to the VR Monitoring and Technical Assistance website² as they are finalized. In fiscal year 2024, the Department will conduct on-site monitoring visits to 8 VR agencies in accordance with the Department's accountability model scoring, including Arizona Combined, Colorado Combined, Florida General, Illinois Combined, Michigan General, New Jersey General, New York General, and Utah Combined. Fewer agencies will be monitored in 2024 to allow Department staff time to conduct WIOA State plan reviews, including related cross-agency collaboration and technical assistance to State agencies.

Specific to the focus areas addressed during the fiscal year 2023 and 2024 on-site monitoring and off-site reviews, each VR agency under review will develop and implement a strategic action plan (SAP) to demonstrate how it will reverse the return of unused funds and maximize the use and expenditure of Federal funds to improve performance and increase employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities. The SAP should:

- identify causes for unused Federal funds and strategies and activities the VR agency will undertake to increase and maximize its ability to expend Federal VR and Supported Employment program grant funds;
- provide a written workable plan for taking action, which contains a timeline for implementation that demonstrates results within a reasonable specified time;

¹ [https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/vr/FFY%202023%20MTAG%20Final%20\(01.20.2023%20update\).pdf](https://rsa.ed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/vr/FFY%202023%20MTAG%20Final%20(01.20.2023%20update).pdf)

² <https://rsa.ed.gov/about/programs/vocational-rehabilitation-state-grants/monitoring-of-vocational-rehabilitation-program/2023>

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

- be supported by documentation (e.g., fiscal reports, data, policies) showing implementation of the actions and results achieved; and
- demonstrate a roadmap and commitment for continuous improvement.

The Department will also continue to analyze expenditure patterns, provide technical assistance, continue monitoring and work with all grantees to better understand their challenges with providing the state dollar match and using SE funds, in order to ensure States are developing successful solutions to provide critical supported employment and extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the intent of the authorizing statute.

Beginning in fiscal year 2018, the Department made changes to the implementation of the SE State Grant program in order to separate SE funds into two awards – one for SE services for youth with the most significant disabilities and one for SE services to non-youth. These changes allow the Department to better track expenditures and compliance with non-Federal match requirements; however, in order to give grantees time to adjust to the changes, the Department did not enforce the matching requirements immediately. After reviewing enforcement policies related to the VR State Grants program, the Department determined that it would implement enforcement of SE matching requirements in a similar manner to enforcement of VR pre-employment transition services requirements. As with the VR State Grants, the Department is using the transition authority of WIOA to delay enforcement of noncompliant expenditures through the end of the period of performance for fiscal year 2020 awards. The Department is making progress in identifying agencies who failed to satisfy the SE match requirements for the fiscal year 2021 award. In 2024, the Department will issue annual review letters for those agencies requiring them to develop a corrective action plan for bringing themselves into compliance.

The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to reserve 1 percent of the funds appropriated under the Training, Demonstration and Training, Supported Employment, and Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals programs for the Traditionally Underserved Populations program (section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act). The fiscal year 2025 request includes \$225,000 to meet this requirement.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures ¹	2023	2024	2025
Individuals with the most significant disabilities who exited with SE outcomes in competitive integrated employment	15,300	15,300	15,300
Individuals with the most significant disabilities who received SE services	47,000	47,050	47,100
Youth ² with the most significant disabilities who received SE services	23,350	23,400	23,450
Traditionally Underserved Populations Set-aside ³	0	\$225	\$225

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program and the VR State grants program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Data reported for these measures include outcomes for individuals who received supported employment services and exited the VR program with a supported employment outcome in competitive integrated employment, whether such services were paid for with VR State Grants or SE State Grants. Consequently, the measures do not permit independent assessment of the performance of the SE State Grants program.

The Department has established three new performance measures, including two measures that mirror the WIOA performance indicators, to replace the previous performance measures, which were reported until fiscal year 2021. The new measures are designed to more effectively assess the role of supported employment services in the outcomes that participants with the most significant disabilities achieve.

Performance data reported in 2021 are based on data collected under the RSA-911 from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Performance data reported in 2022 are based on data collected under the RSA-911 from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Performance data reported in 2023 are based

¹ The output measures data for Supported Employment State Grants are estimates based on program year 2022 data.

² "Youth" is defined as individuals 14 to 24 years old.

³ In fiscal year 2023, the Department met the requirement for Traditionally Underserved Populations fully out of Training funds, so all SE funds were allotted to States.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

on data collected under the RSA-911 for program year (PY) 2022 from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. The Department has reported baseline data for PYs 2020 and 2021 under the new measures for 2021 and 2022.

Goal: Individuals with the most significant disabilities who receive supported employment services will achieve high-quality employment outcomes and continue to work following their exit from the program.

***Objective:** Ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities, who exit the VR program with supported employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment, will be capable of maintaining employment as a result of the supported employment services they received and that, consistent with their informed choice, they will have opportunities to maximize the number of hours they work each week.*

Measure: Of those individuals who received supported employment services, the median hours worked per week at the time they exit from the program with supported employment outcomes in competitive integrated employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	20
2022	Baseline	20
2023	20	20
2024	21	
2025	21	

Measure: Of those individuals who received supported employment services, the percentage who were employed during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	61.3%
2022	Baseline	65.3
2023	65.3%	66.6
2024	66.0	
2025	66.5	

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Supported employment State grants

Measure: Of those individuals who received supported employment services, the percentage who were employed during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	53.8%
2022	Baseline	55.7
2023	55.7%	55.0
2024	56.0	
2025	56.5	

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Independent living services for older blind individuals

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Chapter 2)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined¹

Budget Authority:

2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	Change
\$33,317	\$33,317	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILOIB) program assists individuals aged 55 or older who have severe visual impairment making competitive employment extremely difficult to obtain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. Funds are used to provide independent living services, improve or expand services for these individuals, and improve public understanding of the challenges they face. ILOIB services are designed to help eligible persons adjust to their blindness by increasing their ability to care for their individual needs. Services under this program are not typically covered under private insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.

Grantees are State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies for persons who are blind and visually impaired or, in States with no separate agency for persons who are blind, State combined VR agencies. States participating in the ILOIB program must match 10 percent of their grant with non-Federal cash or in-kind resources in the year for which the Federal funds are appropriated. Awards are distributed to States according to a formula based on the population of individuals who are 55 years of age or older (using the most recent estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau). The minimum allotment for each of the 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico is \$225,000, with each of the territories receiving a minimum allotment of \$40,000.

Independent living services are typically provided through contracts with local providers administered by State VR agencies. The services most frequently provided to program participants in fiscal year 2023 were assistive technology devices and services (provided to 73.3 percent of participants), daily living skills training (58.8 percent), and information and referral services (55.0 percent), with some participants receiving more than one service. These services allow older individuals who are blind or severely visually impaired to be more independent at home and in the community. Service providers are knowledgeable about blindness and other visual impairments, as well as the needs of older individuals with such impairments, including adaptive strategies that can assist these individuals to adjust to their impairments and increase their ability to function more independently.

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2021. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Independent living for older blind individuals

The Department also reserves 1.8 percent of the funds appropriated to the ILOIB program, consistent with the requirements of WIOA, to provide training and technical assistance to Designated State Agencies or other providers of ILOIB services.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>(dollars in thousands)</u>
2020	\$33,317
2021	33,317
2022	33,317
2023	33,317
2024 Annualized CR	33,317

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$33.3 million for the ILOIB program, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation. Of the request, approximately \$600 thousand would be used for a competition for one new award to provide training and technical assistance to ILOIB grantees and service providers.

In fiscal year 2023, 53,389 individuals received services under the ILOIB program, 61.4 percent of whom were over 75 years of age and about 82.7 percent of whom were still living in a private residence. Approximately 52.0 percent of these individuals were either legally blind or totally blind, and 18.0 percent also had some degree of hearing impairment. Macular degeneration continues to be the most commonly reported eye condition, followed by other causes of visual impairments, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

The prevalence of disability increases with age, and the occurrence of a sensory disability is greater among older adults than working-aged people. Persons aged 55 or older, the target population of this program, are projected to comprise a larger share of the population over the next decade and beyond as nearly 75 million Americans who make up the baby-boomer generation (born from 1946 to 1964) continue to age. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey (1-Year Estimates), 5.9 percent of individuals 65 and older (about 3.3 million people) have a vision-related disability. In addition, the percentage of individuals who have a disability that affects their independent living status (including vision-related disabilities) increases with age, with a dramatic increase for individuals in the 75 years and over category, where 21.9 percent report having a disability that affects their independent living status.

The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to reserve 1 percent of the funds appropriated under the Training, Demonstration and Training, Supported Employment, and Independent Living Services for Older Blind Individuals programs for the Traditionally Underserved Populations program (section 21 of the Rehabilitation Act). The fiscal year 2025 request includes \$333,170 to meet this requirement.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Independent living for older blind individuals

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures:	2023	2024	2025
Minimum State award	\$225	\$225	\$225
Number of States at minimum	17	17	17
Average State award	\$626	\$620	\$620
Traditionally Underserved Populations Set-aside. ¹	0	\$333	\$333
Training and technical assistance	\$600	\$600	\$600

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Performance Measures

The Department established five new performance measures designed to measure the performance of the ILOIB program more accurately than the prior performance measures which were last reported for fiscal year 2020. The Department reported baseline data under the new measures for fiscal years 2021 and 2022 after which targets were set.

Objective: *To restore, improve, or maintain the independence of older individuals whose functional capabilities have been lost or diminished as a result of vision loss or blindness.*

¹ In fiscal year 2023, the Department fully met the requirement for Traditionally Underserved Populations through the use of funds appropriated under the Training program, so all ILOIB funds were allotted to States or reserved for training and technical assistance.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Independent living for older blind individuals

Measure: The percentage of individuals receiving assistive technology devices and services who demonstrated improvement in one or more functional capabilities during the reported federal fiscal year consistent with the objectives for receiving such devices and services.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	79%
2022	Baseline	84
2023	85%	85
2024	85	
2025	85	

Measure: The percentage of individuals receiving one or more independent living and adjustment training services who demonstrated improvement in functional capabilities during the reported federal fiscal year.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	78%
2022	Baseline	83
2023	84%	84
2024	84	
2025	84	

Measure: The percentage of individuals completing a plan of services who reported feeling that they are more confident in their ability to maintain their current living situation.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	87%
2022	Baseline	90
2023	92%	93
2024	92	
2025	92	

Measure: The percentage of individuals completing a plan of services who reported an increased ability to engage in their customary daily life activities in the home and community.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	77%
2022	Baseline	90
2023	90%	85
2024	90	
2025	90	

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Independent living for older blind individuals

Objective: *To ensure that State OIB programs demonstrate an efficient and effective use of funds to serve older individuals who are blind.*

Measure: The average annual cost per individual served through the program during the reported federal fiscal year.

Year	Target	Actual
2021	Baseline	\$942
2022	Baseline	933
2023	\$945	978
2024	945	
2025	945	

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

(Helen Keller National Center Act)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2025 Authorization: To be determined.¹

Budget Authority:

2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	Change
\$19,000	\$19,000	0

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) was created by Congress in 1967 and operates under the auspices of Helen Keller Services. HKNC provides services on a national basis to youth and adults who are deaf-blind, their families, and service providers through on- and off-campus services, professional learning, and information on combined vision and hearing loss. HKNC's mission is to enable each person who is deaf-blind to live, work, and thrive in their community of choice. This includes having access to local resources for community living and employment opportunities.

HKNC provides direct services through a residential training facility at its national headquarters center (Center) located in Sands Point, New York, where deaf-blind individuals receive intensive specialized services. The Center provides comprehensive services for individuals with deaf-blindness to enhance their potential for employment and help them live independently in their home communities. The Center's residential programs provide consumers with an array of services, and supports, including adaptive skills training to help them achieve their vocational and independent living goals. The Center's programs emphasize several areas such as enhanced mobility, improved and accessible communication (including the use of adaptive technology), constructive participation in home and community settings, leadership and advocacy training through mentoring, ongoing social and professional opportunities, and employment.

HKNC also provides services through a network of 10 regional field offices staffed by 11 regional representatives and 12 deaf-blind specialists. Through this network, HKNC assists deaf-blind individuals and their families and provides technical assistance to local service providers. The regional network offices provide counseling, information, transition assistance, and referral services for individuals who are deaf-blind and their families to assist them to achieve successful participation in their community and employment.

The HKNC Community Services Program (CSP), operated by HKNC in collaboration with the New York State Commission for the Blind and the California Department of Rehabilitation Services, provides comprehensive rehabilitation, vocational, and support services to eligible

¹ The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. Reauthorization for fiscal year 2025 is expected through appropriations action.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

persons who are deaf-blind in their homes, worksites, and communities. CSP is staffed by credentialed professionals in the fields of blindness and deafness, including orientation and mobility specialists, low vision specialists, vision rehabilitation teachers, and vocational specialists. All CSP staff are proficient in American Sign Language and other alternative modes of communication.

In addition, HKNC has developed a Deaf-Blind National Community of Practice, a 71-member collaborative of professional organizations working together to improve the quality of services to individuals who are deaf-blind through shared learning, research, and practice. These organizations consist of three national organizations, vocational rehabilitation agencies for both deaf and hard of hearing and blind consumers, many State deaf-blind projects, two schools for the deaf and blind, and agencies that provide support services (such as Support Service Provider and interpreting services) to deaf-blind individuals.

HKNC offers a program called the Deaf-Blind Immersion Experience, which provides consumers who are deaf-blind with intellectual disabilities, and their support teams, a 5-day training experience that includes participation in work experiences that match their interests, gifts, and abilities.

HKNC also provides professional development, training and technical assistance, and consultation to other organizations, programs, and providers serving individuals who are deaf-blind.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2020	\$16,000
2021	17,000
2022	18,000
2023	19,000
2024 Annualized CR	19,000

FY 2025 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2025, the Administration requests \$19.0 million for HKNC, level with a fiscal year 2024 annualized CR based on the fiscal year 2023 appropriation, to sustain regional office support for an estimated 1,900 individual consumers, 650 families, and 1,650 agencies and organizations, while also strengthening direct intensive services to approximately 90 consumers at HKNC's residential training and rehabilitation program.

While most of the request would support core activities at HKNC headquarters, approximately 30 percent of the funds requested would provide support to HKNC for field services, community education, and professional development programs, including the activities of HKNC's 10 regional offices and the Information, Research, and Professional Development department. These programs help reach consumers in their home communities and assist personnel at State agencies and other organizations to serve, or develop the capacity to serve, individuals who are deaf-blind through training, community education, and technical assistance.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

Output Measures	2023	2024	2025
Number of individuals served at headquarters:			
Adult training program clients	90	90	90
Specialized training services:			
Transition for high school students	15	15	15
Senior citizens	30	30	30
Individuals with intellectual disabilities	15	15	15
Targeted skills training	15	15	15
Community Services Program	165	165	165
Number of individuals served through regional representatives and deaf-blind specialists:			
Consumers	1,900	1,900	1,900
Families	650	650	650
Agencies/organizations	1,650	1,650	1,650
HKNC FTE staff	175	175	175

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, program goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data; and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the Federal resources provided for the program as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the unique health and developmental needs of the communities served by HKNC, several of the performance outcomes outlined below indicate notable shifts from past performance. These shifts are typically decreases and are found in performance measures designed to capture outcomes in spaces where service recipients are typically required to either live at HKNC headquarters or have extensive in-person contact with HKNC-affiliated staff. HKNC expects outcomes on these performance indicators to move back toward normality.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

Goal: Individuals who are deaf-blind will become independent and function as full and productive members of their local community.

Objective: *Individuals who are deaf-blind receive the specialized services and training they need to become as independent and self-sufficient as possible.*

Measure: The percentage of: (1) training goals set and achieved by adult consumers (both on and off campus); (2) adult consumers seeking employment who are placed in employment (both on and off campus); and (3) adult consumers seeking to maintain their ability to live independently or move to less restrictive settings who achieve their goals.

Year	Target # of Adult Consumers	Actual # of Adult Consumers (on/off)	Target % of Training goals met	Actual % of Training goals met	Target % Placed in Employment	Actual % Placed in Employment (on/off)	Target % in Less Restrictive Settings	Actual % in Less Restrictive Settings
2020	80	86/92	95%	87%	60%	33/50%	86%	93%
2021	80	82/95	95	88	60	10/41	86	12
2022	80	70/91	95	93	60	26/67	86	78
2023	80	62/80	95	97	60	28/55	86	97
2024	80		95		60		86	
2025	80		95		60		86	

Additional information: In fiscal year 2023, HKNC served 62 consumers through its virtual training and on campus programs sponsored by HKNC headquarters and 80 additional off-campus consumers through its NY Community Services Program. HKNC points out that the number of consumers served may fluctuate from year to year due to multiple factors beyond the control of HKNC. For example, the length of time an individual participates in training may vary anywhere from two weeks to beyond one year due to varying levels of training intensity and differing individual needs.

HKNC evaluates the progress of consumers in achieving the goals stated in their individualized training plans (ITPs). This measure represents the percent of adult consumers served by the HKNC who successfully achieved identified training goals during the program year.

In fiscal year 2023, 28 percent of consumers served by HKNC headquarters and 55 percent of regional consumers participating in the Community Services Program with an employment goal were placed in employment.

The “less restrictive settings” measure refers to consumers who move from settings such as living with parents or guardians, assisted living settings, and nursing homes to more independent living arrangements such as their own home or apartment or group homes.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

Objective: Increase the capacity of deaf-blind consumers to function more independently in the home community.

Measure: The number of individuals (or families on behalf of individuals) referred to State or local agencies or service providers by HKNC's regional offices.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	600	372
2021	600	384
2022	600	258
2023	600	365
2024	600	
2025	600	

Additional information: These referrals help deaf-blind consumers access resources within their home community that improve their ability to function independently.

Measure: The percentage of consumers who participated in services or programs (other than HKNC) as a result of receiving a referral from HKNC's regional offices.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	75%	75%
2021	75	75
2022	75	74
2023	75	61
2024		
2025		

Additional information: This measure provides information on the activities of the field services programs, including the regional representatives and deployed deaf-blind specialists. The referrals provided by regional representatives often are the gateway to finding appropriate and individualized supports from various agencies and organizations. In fiscal year 2023, two regional representative positions were unstaffed for at least part of the year, lowering the referral rate.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Helen Keller National Center

Objective: *HKNC will assist State vocational rehabilitation (VR) and employment programs in increasing employment outcomes for individuals who are deaf-blind.*

Measure: The number of referrals by HKNC’s regional offices to VR or related employment programs.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	65	79
2021	65	47
2022	65	54
2023	65	56
2024	65	
2025	65	

Additional information: HKNC field staff frequently facilitate interactions between consumers and VR agencies, including assistance for consumers who are returning to their State’s VR system after attending intensive training at HKNC headquarters. The number of referrals to VR agencies fluctuates depending on whether the consumers served by HKNC field staff have vocational goals.

Measure: The percentage of individuals who achieved successful employment outcomes in which HKNC’s regional offices played a collaborative role contributing training, advocacy and/or support to the consumer or job training agency.

Year	Target	Actual
2020	45%	35%
2021	45	35
2022	45	53
2023	45	62
2024	45	
2025	45	

Additional information: The numerator is the number of clients served by HKNC regional representatives who achieved employment outcomes in which HKNC’s regional offices played a collaborative role providing training, advocacy and/or support to the consumer or job training agency. The denominator is the total number of consumers served by HKNC regional representatives who achieved employment outcomes.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Account Summary Table

Select here for the online version.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2025 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET
(in thousands of dollars)

	Cat Code	2023 Appropriation	2024 Annualized CR	2025 Request	FY 2025 Request Compared to FY 2024 Annualized CR: Amount	FY 2025 Request Compared to FY 2024 Annualized CR: Percent
Rehabilitation Services						
1. Vocational rehabilitation State grants:						
(a) Grants to States (RA Title I-A, sections 110 and 111) ¹	M	3,899,057	4,200,219	4,200,219	0	0.00%
(b) Grants to Indians (RA Title I-C)	M	50,650	53,615	53,615	0	0.00%
Subtotal, Pre-Sequestration ²	M	3,949,707	4,253,834	4,253,834	0	0.00%
Subtotal, Post-Sequestration ³	M	3,724,574	4,011,365	4,011,365	0	0.00%
2. Client assistance State grants (RA section 112)	D	13,000	13,000	13,000	0	0.00%
3. Training (RA section 302)	D	29,388	29,388	23,388	(6,000)	-20.42%
4. Demonstration and training programs (RA section 303)	D	5,796	5,796	11,796	6,000	103.52%
5. Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA section 509)	D	20,150	20,150	20,150	0	0.00%
6. Supported employment State grants (RA VI)	D	22,548	22,548	22,548	0	0.00%
7. Independent living services for older blind individuals (RA VII, Chapter 2)	D	33,317	33,317	33,317	0	0.00%
8. Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	D	19,000	19,000	19,000	0	0.00%
Subtotal		143,199	143,199	143,199	0	0.00%
Total		4,092,906	4,397,033	4,397,033	0	0.00%
Discretionary	D	143,199	143,199	143,199	0	0.00%
Mandatory	M	3,949,707	4,253,834	4,253,834	0	0.00%

¹ This amount is pre-sequestration.

² The Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program is a mandatory appropriated entitlement; therefore, under an FY 2024 annualized CR, the program is entitled to all statutory adjustments provided for in section 110(a) of the Rehabilitation Act, including the statutory Consumer Price Index increase. The 2025 Request excludes the statutory Consumer Price Index increase of \$136,123 thousand.

³ The 2025 Request includes the CHIMP of -\$128,364 thousand, which equals the statutory Consumer Price Index increase reduced by sequestration (5.7%).

NOTES:

1) D = discretionary program; M = mandatory programs

2) Pursuant to the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25), for most mandatory programs, with the exception of Pell Grants, Credit Liquidating, and Credit Reestimates, the levels shown in the 2023 and 2024 Appropriation columns reflect the 5.7 percent reduction that went into effect on October 1, 2022 and October 1, 2023, respectively.

3) Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.