

**Department of Education**  
**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**  
**Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Request**

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## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

For carrying out, to the extent not otherwise provided, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, and the Helen Keller National Center Act, [\$3,512,019,000] \$3,517,710,000: *Provided, That, of the amount provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program, the Secretary shall reserve \$10,000,000 to remain available to the Secretary until September 30, 2014, for the Workforce Innovation Fund, as established by this Act:*<sup>1</sup> *Provided further, That, after reserving the amount needed to pay the continuation costs of grants awarded under section 304 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$35,657,000 of the amount provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:*<sup>2</sup> *Provided further, That section 302(g)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:*<sup>3</sup> *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 improving the outcomes of individuals with disabilities as defined in section 7(20)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act, including activities aimed at improving the health, education, and post-school outcomes of children receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families[, including competitive grants to States to improve the provision and coordination of services for SSI child recipients in order to achieve improved health status, education and post-school outcomes, including completion of postsecondary education and employment, and to improve services and supports to the family or households of] that may result in long-term improvement in the SSI child recipient's[, such as education and job training for the parents] economic status and self-sufficiency:*<sup>4</sup> *Provided further, That States may award subgrants for a portion of the funds to other public and private, non-profit entities: *Provided further, That any funds made available subsequent to reallocation for innovative activities aimed at improving the**

outcomes of [children receiving SSI and their families] individuals with disabilities shall remain available until September 30, [2013]2014:<sup>5</sup> Provided further, That not to exceed \$20,000,000 of the amounts made available in the fourth proviso may be used for performance-based awards for Pay for Success projects:<sup>6</sup> Provided further, That, with respect to the previous proviso, any funds obligated for such projects shall remain available for disbursement until expended, notwithstanding 31 U.S.C. 1552(a):<sup>7</sup> Provided further, That, with respect to the sixth proviso, any deobligated funds from such projects shall immediately be available for programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973<sup>8</sup> [Provided further, That \$2,000,000 shall be for competitive grants to support alternative financing programs that provide for the purchase of assistive technology devices, such as a low-interest loan fund; an interest buy-down program; a revolving loan fund; a loan guarantee; or insurance program: Provided further, That applicants shall provide an assurance that, and information describing the manner in which, the alternative financing program will expand and emphasize consumer choice and control: Provided further, That State agencies and community-based disability organizations that are directed by and operated for individuals with disabilities shall be eligible to compete]<sup>9</sup>.

*(Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2012)*

#### NOTE

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

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p><sup>1</sup> <u>...<i>Provided</i>, That of the amount provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program, the Secretary shall reserve \$10,000,000 to remain available to the Secretary until September 30, 2014 for the Workforce Innovation Fund, as established by this Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language earmarks \$10 million of the funds provided for Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program to be used in combination with other funds in the Departments of Education and Labor, for an interagency Workforce Innovation Fund to encourage innovation and support projects to identify and validate effective strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act. These funds would be available for obligation for 2 years.</p>
<p><sup>2</sup> <u><i>Provided further</i>, That, after reserving the amount needed to pay the continuation costs of grants awarded under section 304 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Secretary of Education may allocate to States, in accordance with a formula determined by the Secretary, up to \$35,657,000 of the amount provided for the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language would allow the Secretary to reserve the amount needed to pay the continuation costs of grants awarded under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program from the funds made available from program consolidations and allocate the remaining funds under the VR State Grants program in a manner that ensures that States do not receive less than they would have received from the formula distributions of the program funds proposed for consolidation.</p>
<p><sup>3</sup> <u><i>Provided further</i>, That section 302(g)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act shall not apply to funds provided under section 302 of such Act:</u></p>	<p>This proposed language overrides the requirement that 15 percent of the Training program must be spent for in-service training of agency personnel. These funds are being consolidated with the VR State grants program.</p>

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p><sup>4</sup> <u>Provided further</u>, That the Secretary may use amounts provided in this Act that remain available subsequent to the reallotment of funds to States pursuant to section 110(b) of the Rehabilitation Act for <u>innovative activities aimed at improving the outcomes of individuals with disabilities as defined in section 7(20)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act, including activities aimed at improving the health, education, and post-school outcomes of children receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and their families[, including competitive grants to States to improve the provision and coordination of services for SSI child recipients in order to achieve improved health status, education and post-school outcomes, including completion of postsecondary education and employment, and to improve services and supports to the family or households of] that may result in long-term improvement in the SSI child recipient's[, such as education and job training for the parents] economic status and self-sufficiency:</u></p>	<p>This language would allow the Secretary to use amounts that remain available subsequent to the reallotment of funds to States under the VR State Grants program for innovative activities designed to improve the outcomes of individuals with disabilities, including, if needed, activities to improve the outcomes of children receiving SSI and their families under the PROMISE pilot program.</p> <p>The definition of individuals with disabilities referenced in the language (section 7(20)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act) is broad enough to include children with disabilities, including children receiving SSI.</p>
<p><sup>5</sup> <u>Provided further</u>, That any funds made available subsequent to reallotment for activities aimed at improving the outcomes of [children receiving SSI and their families] <u>individuals with disabilities shall remain available until September 30, [2013]2014:</u></p>	<p>This language would permit the funds made available subsequent to reallotment of VR State Grant funds for activities aimed at improving the outcomes of individuals with disabilities to remain available for two years.</p>
<p><sup>6</sup> <u>Provided further</u>, That not to exceed \$20,000,000 of the amounts made available in the fourth proviso may be used for <u>performance-based awards for Pay for Success projects:</u></p>	<p>This language would permit the Secretary to use up to \$20,000,000 of the funds used for innovative activities designed to improve the outcomes of individuals with disabilities for performance-based awards under the Pay for Success program.</p>
<p><sup>7</sup> <u>Provided further</u>, That, with respect to the <u>previous proviso, any funds obligated for such projects shall remain available for disbursement until expended, notwithstanding 31 U.S.C. 1552(a):</u></p>	<p>This language would permit funds designated by the Secretary for the Pay for Success projects to remain available until expended.</p>

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Analysis of Language Provisions and Changes

Language Provision	Explanation
<p><sup>8</sup> <u>Provided further, That, with respect to the sixth proviso, any deobligated funds from such projects shall immediately be available for programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.</u></p>	<p>This language requires any deobligated funds of the Pay for Success projects to be available for programs under the Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account.</p>
<p><sup>9</sup> [Provided further, That \$2,000,000 shall be for competitive grants to support alternative financing programs that provide for the purchase of assistive technology devices, such as a low-interest loan fund; an interest buy-down program; a revolving loan fund; a loan guarantee; or insurance program: <i>Provided further, That applicants shall provide an assurance that, and information describing the manner in which, the alternative financing program will expand and emphasize consumer choice and control: Provided further, That State agencies and community-based disability organizations that are directed by and operated for individuals with disabilities shall be eligible to compete]</i></p>	<p>This language, which earmarks funds to support alternative financing programs, is deleted because the request does not include funds for this program in FY 2013.</p>

**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Amounts Available for Obligation**  
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriation and Adjustments	2011	2012	2013
Discretionary budget authority:			
Annual appropriation .....	\$390,804	\$390,307	\$350,341
Across-the-board reduction (P.L. 112-10).....	-782	0	0
Across-the-board reduction (P.L. 112-74).....	0	-738	0
Discretionary modification of a mandatory appropriation (no CPIU adjustment) .....	0	0	-109,260
Discretionary modification of a mandatory appropriation (for Workforce Investment Fund) ....	0	0	10,000
Discretionary modification of a mandatory appropriation (for consolidation) .....	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>35,657</u>
Subtotal	390,022	389,569	286,738
Mandatory appropriation	<u>3,084,696</u>	<u>3,121,712</u>	<u>3,230,972</u>
Subtotal, discretionary and mandatory appropriation	3,474,718	3,511,281	3,517,710
Unobligated balance expiring .....	<u>-59,210</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total, direct obligations .....	3,415,508	3,511,281	3,517,710

**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Obligations by Object Classification**  
(dollars in thousands)

Object Class	2011	2012	2013
<b>Contractual services:</b>			
Advisory and assistance services.....	\$6,088	\$5,080	\$5,050
Peer Review	812	791	900
Other services .....	25	0	0
Purchases of goods and services.....	<u>325</u>	<u>325</u>	<u>325</u>
Subtotal .....	7,250	6,196	6,275
Grants, subsidies, and contributions.....	<u>3,408,258</u>	<u>3,505,085</u>	<u>3,511,435</u>
Total, direct obligations .....	3,415,508	3,511,281	3,517,710

**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Summary of Changes**  
(dollars in thousands)

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2012 .....	\$3,511,281
2013 .....	<u>3,517,710</u>
Net change.....	-6,429

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<b>Increases:</b>	<u>2012 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<u>Program:</u>		
Increase in funding for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants:		
from programs proposed for consolidation	\$3,083,814	+\$35,657
to support WIF		+10,000
Increase in funding for Demonstration and Training programs to support technical assistance activities	5,325	<u>+425</u>
Subtotal, increases		46,082

<b>Decreases:</b>	<u>2012 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<u>Program:</u>		
Eliminates funding for the Supported Employment State grants program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	29,068	-29,068
Eliminates funding for the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate this program into the VR State grants program.	1,262	-1,262
Decrease in funding for the Training program consistent with the Administration's proposal to consolidate In-Service Training with the VR State grants program.	35,515	-5,327
The requested level would enable NIDDR to cover the costs of new and on-going grants and contracts.	108,817	-2,000
The request does not include funds for a one-time competitive grants program for alternative financing that was authorized in the fiscal year 2012 appropriations act.	32,836	<u>-1,996</u>
Subtotal, decreases		-39,653

Net change - 6,429

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**REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH**

**Authorizing Legislation**  
(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2012 Authorized	2012 Estimate	2013 Authorized	2013 Request
Vocational rehabilitation (VR) State grants:				
Grants to States (RA-I A, B-110 and 111)	0 <sup>1,2</sup>	\$3,083,814	0 <sup>1,3</sup>	\$3,129,169
Grants for Indians (RA-I-C)	---	24	---	34
Client assistance State grants (RA-I-112)	0 <sup>1</sup>	12,240	0 <sup>1</sup>	12,240
Supported employment State grants (RA-VI-B)	0 <sup>5</sup>	29,068	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Migrant and seasonal farmworkers (RA-III-304)	0 <sup>5</sup>	1,262	0 <sup>5</sup>	0
Training (RA-III-302(a)-(g)(2),(h)-(i))	0 <sup>1</sup>	35,515	0 <sup>1</sup>	30,188
Demonstration and training programs (RA-III-303)	0 <sup>1</sup>	5,325	0 <sup>1</sup>	5,750
Independent living (IL):				
State grants (RA-VII-1-B)	0 <sup>1</sup>	23,359	0 <sup>1</sup>	23,359
Centers (RA-VII-1-C)	0 <sup>1</sup>	79,953	0 <sup>1</sup>	79,953
Services for older blind individuals (RA-VII-2)	0 <sup>1</sup>	34,018	0 <sup>1</sup>	34,018
Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA-V-509)	0 <sup>1</sup>	18,031	0 <sup>1</sup>	18,031
National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (RA-II)	0 <sup>1</sup>	108,817	0 <sup>1</sup>	106,817
Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	0 <sup>1</sup>	9,145	0 <sup>1</sup>	9,145
Assistive technology (ATA):				
Assistive technology programs (ATA-4,5, and 6)	0 <sup>6</sup>	30,840	0 <sup>6</sup>	30,840
Alternative financing programs	<u>0</u>	<u>1,996</u> <sup>7</sup>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total definite authorization	0		0	
Total appropriation (request not authorized)		3,511,281		3,517,710

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Authorizing Legislation—continued (dollars in thousands)

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; the program is authorized in FY 2012 through appropriations language. Continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2013 under appropriations language.

<sup>2</sup> The authorizing legislation specifies that the amount to be appropriated for VR State grants for a fiscal year be at least at 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 FY 2012, this amount was \$3,121,712 thousand.

<sup>3</sup> 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 CPIU. In FY 2013, this amount is \$3,230,972 thousand.

<sup>4</sup> 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 for Indians.

<sup>5</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004. The Administration is not proposing to authorize this program through appropriations language for FY 2013.

<sup>6</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language. Up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for National Activities, unless the amount available for AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for National Activities.

<sup>7</sup> The FY 2012 appropriation authorized funds for competitive grants to support alternative financing programs.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Appropriations History (dollars in thousands)

Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2004	3,002,913	2,999,165	3,004,360	3,011,270
2005	3,047,197	3,054,587	3,077,328	3,074,574
2006	3,059,298	3,128,638	3,133,638	3,125,544
2007	3,180,414	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	3,242,512
2008	3,184,263	3,279,743	3,286,942	3,276,768
2009	3,218,264	3,387,443 <sup>2</sup>	3,379,109 <sup>2</sup>	3,387,762
Recovery Act Supplemental (PL 111-5)	0	700,000	610,000	680,000
2010	3,500,735	3,504,305	3,507,322 <sup>3</sup>	3,506,861
2011	3,565,326	3,501,766 <sup>4</sup>	3,542,510 <sup>3</sup>	3,474,718
2012	3,541,111	3,522,686 <sup>5</sup>	3,511,735 <sup>5</sup>	3,511,281
2013	3,517,710			

<sup>1</sup> This account operated under a full-year continuing resolution (P.L. 110-5). House and Senate Allowance amounts are shown as N/A (Not Available) because neither body passed a separate appropriations bill.

<sup>2</sup> The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2009 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

<sup>3</sup> The levels for the Senate allowance reflects Committee action only.

<sup>4</sup> The levels for the House allowance reflects the House-passed full-year continuing resolution.

<sup>5</sup> The level for the House allowance reflects an introduced bill and the level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Committee action only.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Significant Items in FY 2012 Appropriations Reports

#### **Demonstration and Training Programs**

Senate: Report 112-84. The Committee recommends continued support for parent training and information centers. The Committee expects the Rehabilitation Services Administration to coordinate with the Office of Special Education Programs in carrying out this activity.

Response: The funds provided in the conference bill for the Demonstration and Training programs are only sufficient to cover the continuation costs of ongoing activities. Therefore, funds are not available for new awards, including awards for parent training and information centers in fiscal year 2012. The Department will use the funds appropriated to support continuation costs under the Demonstration and Training Programs; no new grant competitions will be conducted in fiscal year 2012.

#### **National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research**

Senate: Report 112-84. The Committee strongly supports the Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems [TBIMS] Centers program funded by NIDRR. Almost 500 peer-reviewed publications have resulted from TBIMS research since 1987, bringing dramatic improvements to the treatment of traumatic brain injury for both civilian and military populations. The Committee is aware that the TBIMS Centers will compete for new 5-year awards in fiscal year 2012. The Committee bill includes sufficient funds to support the current size of the TBIMS Centers program and to provide adequate resources to meet the research objectives of the TBIMS program. The Committee intends that funds provided will enhance the capability of the TBIMS Centers to conduct critical multi-center investigations, expand the TBIMS Centers' scope of intervention studies, maintain the ongoing high quality TBIMS Centers' longitudinal research while keeping pace with the increased number of participants followed, and promote continued collaboration to improve outcomes for civilians and military populations with traumatic brain injury. The Committee also commends NIDRR for establishing collaboration between the TBIMS Centers program and the Department of Veterans Affairs and encourages continuation of these efforts.

Response: The Department will conduct a competition for new 5-year awards under the Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems [TBIMS] Centers program in fiscal year 2012.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Significant Items in FY 2012 Appropriations Reports - Continued

#### Assistive Technology

- Senate: Report 112-84. The Committee recommendation includes \$25,645,340 for State grant activities authorized under section 4 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, \$4,325,720 for protection and advocacy systems authorized by section 5 and \$926,940 for technical assistance activities authorized under section 6.
- Conference: Report 112-331. The conference agreement provides \$2,000,000 for competitive grants to support alternative financing programs that provide for the purchase of assistive technology (AT) devices. The conferees' goal in providing these funds is to allow greater access to affordable financing to help people with disabilities purchase the specialized technologies needed to live independently, to succeed at school and work and to otherwise live active and productive lives. The conferees intend that applicants incorporate credit building activities in their programs, including financial education and information about other possible funding sources. Successful applicants must emphasize consumer choice and control and build programs that will provide financing for the full array of AT devices and services and ensure that all people, regardless of type of disability or health condition, age, level of income, and residence have access to the program.
- Response: The fiscal year 2012 appropriations bill provides a total of \$32,835,823 for AT Act programs, including \$1,996,220 for Alternative Financing Programs, \$25,560,599 for AT State grants, \$4,282,890 for Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology, and \$996,114 for National Activities. The Department will conduct a competition in fiscal year 2012 to support 1-year awards for States and community-based organization to provide alternative financing programs for assistive technology devices for individuals with disabilities.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2013 PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

(in thousands of dollars)						
Account, Program and Activity	Category Code	2011 Appropriation	2012 Appropriation	2013 President's Budget	2013 President's Budget Compared to 2012 Appropriation	
					Amount	Percent
<b>Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research</b>						
1. Vocational rehabilitation (VR) State grants:						
(a) Grants to States (RA Title I-A, sections 110 and 111) <sup>1</sup>	M	3,041,146	3,083,814	3,129,169	45,355	1.471%
(b) Grants to Indians (RA Title I-C)	M	43,550	37,898	38,200	302	0.797%
Subtotal		3,084,696	3,121,712	3,167,369	45,657	1.463%
Discretionary modification to CPIU adjustment	D	0	0	(109,260)	(109,260)	---
Discretionary modification for Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF)	D	0	0	10,000	10,000	---
Discretionary modification for consolidation of three VR programs	D	0	0	35,657	35,657	---
Mandatory baseline	M	3,084,696	3,121,712	3,230,972	109,260	3.500%
2. Client assistance State grants (RA section 112)	D	12,263	12,240	12,240	0	0.000%
3. Supported employment State grants (RA VI-B)	D	29,123	29,068	0	(29,068)	-100.000%
4. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers (RA section 304)	D	1,856	1,262	0	(1,262)	-100.000%
5. Training (RA section 302(a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i))	D	35,582	35,515	30,188	(5,327)	-14.999%
6. Demonstration and training programs (RA section 303)	D	6,459	5,325	5,750	425	7.981%
7. Independent living (RA VII):						
(a) State grants (Chapter 1, Part B)	D	23,403	23,359	23,359	0	0.000%
(b) Centers (Chapter 1, Part C)	D	80,105	79,953	79,953	0	0.000%
(c) Services for older blind individuals (Chapter 2)	D	34,083	34,018	34,018	0	0.000%
Subtotal		137,591	137,330	137,330	0	0.000%
8. Protection and advocacy of individual rights (RA section 509)	D	18,065	18,031	18,031	0	0.000%
9. National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (RA II)	D	109,023	108,817	106,817	(2,000)	-1.838%
10. Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNCA)	D	9,163	9,145	9,145	0	0.000%
11. Assistive technology programs (ATA, sections 4,5, and 6)	D	30,898	32,836	30,840	(1,996)	-6.079%
Subtotal		390,022	389,569	350,341	(39,228)	-10.070%
Total		3,474,718	3,511,281	3,517,710	6,429	0.183%
Discretionary	D	390,022	389,569	286,738	(102,831)	-26.396%
Mandatory baseline	M	3,084,696	3,121,712	3,230,972	109,260	3.500%

NOTES: -Category Codes are as follows: D = discretionary program; M = mandatory program.  
 -Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

<sup>1</sup> The amount requested in FY 2013 for VR Grants to States includes \$10 million that would be set aside to support an interagency Workforce Innovation Fund.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Request

People with disabilities represent a vital and integral part of our society. As a nation, our goals include independence, equal opportunity, and productivity for Americans with disabilities, many of whom require a range of services and supports in order to learn, work productively and live in the community. Numerous pieces of federal legislation establish policies to meet these requirements. We recognize that once these supports and services are provided, people with disabilities contribute to the fabric of our country just like everyone else.

The Department of Education will participate in a government-wide review of ways to improve the effectiveness of disability programs through better coordination and alignment of priorities and strategies. This will build on previous efforts that have sought to better coordinate policies and programs across Federal, State and local governments, the service provider community and employers to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of programs serving individuals with disabilities. While some significant coordination efforts have proven successful, the Administration expects collaboration and innovation to improve efficiency and effectiveness as well as reduce costs even further. The focus of the upcoming review will be to work with agencies authorized to run disability-specific programs and those programs that impact and affect people with disabilities to explore how they can achieve better results for this population by sharing data; defining shared objectives; coordinating goal-setting, integration, implementation and measurement to track progress; and improving management response time when adjustments are needed.

The Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account supports grants to States for vocational rehabilitation (VR) and independent living services and a variety of smaller research, demonstration, and service programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act, as well programs authorized under the Helen Keller National Center Act and the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (the AT Act). The Administration's 2013 request for this account provides \$3.5 billion to support comprehensive and coordinated vocational rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals with disabilities through research, training, demonstration, technical assistance, evaluation, and direct service programs.

The \$3.2 billion request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve accountability. A total of \$35.7 million would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of the Supported Employment State Grants and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs, as well as funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program. The Administration is seeking authority to pay the continuation costs of the remaining four Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers projects from the consolidated funds.

In addition, the amount requested for VR State Grants includes \$10 million that would be set aside to support an interagency Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) that would be used in combination with other funding provided by the Departments of Education and Labor. Funds would be used to encourage innovation and support projects to identify and validate effective

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Summary of Request

strategies for improving the delivery of services and outcomes for beneficiaries under programs authorized by the Workforce Investment Act, including individuals with significant disabilities.

The fiscal year 2013 request also includes language that would allow the Secretary to use amounts that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States under the VR State Grants program pursuant to section 110(b) of the Rehabilitation Act to support innovative activities aimed at improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including activities under the PROMISE program, and that would provide authority for these funds to remain available for Federal obligation until September 30, 2014.

The request for tDemonstration and Training programs is \$5.8 million, \$425,000 above the fiscal 2012 level, to support model demonstrations, technical assistance, and projects designed to improve program performance and the delivery of vocational rehabilitation and independent living services.

The budget also provides \$137.3 million for the three independent living programs, the same as the 2012 level. These programs provide independent living services through formula grants to designated State agencies and competitive grants to centers for independent living.

The Administration requests \$30.2 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2013, a decrease of \$5.3 million from the 2012 level to reflect the consolidation of the funds for the In-Service Training program with the VR State grants program.

The \$106.8 million request for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research would enable the Institute to cover the costs of grants and contracts that began in previous fiscal years (\$69.6 million) and provide \$26.2 million for new grant activities.

The \$30.8 million request for Assistive Technology (AT) programs includes \$25.6 million for the AT State grant program, \$4.3 million for the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology program, and \$1.0 million for technical assistance required under the AT Act's National Activities authority. The request does not include funds for a one-time competitive grants program for alternative financing that was authorized in the fiscal year 2012 appropriations act.

All other programs in the Rehabilitation Services and Disability Research account would be maintained at the 2012 level. The Administration believes that this level will provide sufficient funds for the activities in these programs.

The Rehabilitation Act requires that 1 percent of the aggregate funds appropriated for programs authorized in Titles II, III, VI, and VII be used for minority outreach activities. In fiscal year 2013, this amount would total \$2.8 million, and to the extent possible, the requirement will be implemented by reserving 1 percent of the funds provided for each of the specified programs.

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

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0 <sup>1, 2</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
State grants	\$3,083,814	\$3,129,169 <sup>3</sup>	+\$45,355
Indian set-aside	<u>37,898</u>	<u>38,200</u>	<u>+302</u>
Total	3,121,712	3,167,369	+45,657

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

<sup>2</sup> 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 FY 2013 this amount is \$3,230,972 thousand. 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 Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants be set aside for Grants for American Indians.

<sup>3</sup> The amount requested for State grants includes \$10 million that would be set aside to support an interagency Workforce Innovation Fund.

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program supports VR services through formula grants to State VR agencies. These agencies provide a wide range of services designed to help persons with disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment to the extent of their capabilities. Individuals with a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to employment who can benefit in terms of an employment outcome and require VR services are eligible for assistance. The VR State Grants program is a required partner in the one-stop service delivery systems under section 121 of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Program services are tailored to the specific needs of the individual through an individualized plan for employment (IPE). An eligible individual, or as appropriate, the individual's representative, may develop all or part of the IPE with or without assistance from a qualified rehabilitation counselor, or with technical assistance from other outside resources. The IPE must be agreed to by the individual and approved and signed by a qualified rehabilitation counselor employed by the State VR agency. The program may provide a variety of services, such as vocational evaluation, counseling, mental and physical restoration, education, vocational training, job placement, rehabilitation technology, and supported employment services. Priority is given to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities.

This is a current-funded formula grant program that provides financial assistance to States to cover the cost of direct services and program administration. The authorizing legislation requires the program to be funded at least at the prior year level, and increased by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPIU) over the past year. States

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may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year, if a State has met all matching requirements for the fiscal year in which funds were appropriated.

An allotment formula that takes into account population and per capita income is used to distribute funds among the States. The fiscal year 2011 State allotments were based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released on December 21, 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2011 estimates published in December 2011. Per capita income averages for fiscal year 2011 were based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2005, 2006, and 2007 as reported by the Department of Commerce on September 18, 2008. Per capita income averages for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 are based on Bureau of Economic Analysis revised estimates for calendar years 2007, 2008, and 2009 as reported by the Department of Commerce as September 22, 2011.

Grant funds are administered by VR agencies designated by each State. There are currently a total of 80 State VR agencies. Thirty-two (32) States operate a “combined” agency serving all disability categories. Twenty-four (24) States operate a separate agency for individuals who are blind or visually impaired and a “general” agency for all other disability categories. The State matching requirement is 21.3 percent, except the State share is 50 percent for the cost of construction of a facility for community rehabilitation program purposes. States are required to maintain the level of State expenditures made under the State plan from non-Federal sources at least at the level spent during the fiscal year 2 years earlier. 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).

Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the establishment of evaluation standards and performance indicators for the VR program that include outcome and related measures of program performance. Each State VR agency must report program performance data 60 days after the end of each fiscal year that is used to determine if it is in compliance with the evaluation standards and performance indicators. A State agency failing to meet the standards must develop a program improvement plan outlining specific actions to be taken to improve program performance. The Department provides technical assistance to those State agencies that perform below the established evaluation standards to assist them to improve their performance.

Title VIII of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) provided additional funds, \$540 million, for grants to States to carry out the VR Services program. These awards were in addition to the awards received under the regular fiscal year 2009 appropriation for the VR State Grants program. However, State VR agencies were not required to match these funds. The Recovery Act funds were available for obligation by State VR agencies until September 30, 2011 and had to be liquidated by December 30, 2011, unless an extension of the liquidation period was requested and granted by the Department. The Rehabilitation Act requires that not less than 1.0 percent or more than 1.5 percent of the funds appropriated for the VR State grants program be set aside for grants under the American Indian VR Services program (section 121 of the Act). Service grants for up to 60 months are awarded to Indian tribes on a competitive basis to help tribes develop the capacity to provide VR services to American Indians with disabilities living on or near reservations.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$2,874,043
2009.....	2,974,635
Recovery Act .....	540,000
2010.....	3,084,696
2011.....	3,084,696
2012.....	3,121,712

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$3.167 billion to assist States and tribal governments to increase the participation of individuals with disabilities in the workforce. The request for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program reflects the Administration's proposal to consolidate the funds of the smaller VR-related programs and eliminate their separate funding authorities under the Rehabilitation Act in order to reduce duplication of effort and administrative costs, streamline program administration at the Federal and local level, and improve efficiency and accountability. An additional \$35.657 million over the 2012 level would be made available to the VR State Grants program from the consolidation of employment-related programs. Direct service programs proposed for consolidation include Supported Employment State Grants (\$29.068 million) and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers programs (\$1.262 million). In addition, funds currently provided to State VR agencies to support in-service training for agency personnel under section 302(g)(3) of the Training program (\$5.327 million) would be included in this consolidation.

The Administration requests that \$38.200 million of the total funds appropriated be set aside to support grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program. The request also includes \$10 million to be set aside to support a cross-agency Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) that would be jointly administered by the Departments of Education and Labor. The request does not include the CPIU adjustment specified in the authorizing statute, which in fiscal year 2013 is \$109.260 million.

Under its consolidation proposal, the Administration intends for every State to receive at least the amount it would have received in fiscal year 2013 under the formula grant programs being consolidated (i.e., VR State Grants, Supported Employment State Grants, and the formula allocation under the In-service Training program) if they were continued at the fiscal year 2012 level. To implement this policy, the State's base amount under the VR formula (currently the State's 1978 award) would be increased by an amount that is equal to the amount the State would have received in fiscal year 2013 under the Supported Employment State Grants allocation and its formula allocation under the In-service Training program, assuming level funding. In addition, the Administration is seeking authority to pay the continuation costs of the remaining four Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers projects from the consolidated funds.

The direct service programs proposed for consolidation have the primary purpose of assisting individuals with disabilities to obtain employment. All of the individuals receiving supported

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employment services with funds provided under the State Supported Employment program also receive services through the VR program. In addition, all of the individuals receiving services under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program are eligible to receive VR services and most of these individuals are currently receiving these services. Consolidating these programs will reduce administrative costs, paperwork, and other administrative burden, as well as improve efficiency, accountability, and the provision of services. The Administration believes that the benefits of the proposed consolidation outweigh the costs of any short term disruption that may be encountered as a result of this consolidation.

The Administration is also examining options that will help to ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in providing supported employment services. All States that have significant numbers of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including States that currently have projects funded under the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program, would be encouraged to use their VR funds to carry out the strategies and practices that have been found to be effective in reaching out to this population.

Although many people with disabilities are obtaining jobs and remaining employed, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is still unacceptably high. For example, in its *2009 Annual Disability Status Report (2011)*, the Cornell University Rehabilitation and Research Center on Disability Demographics and Statistics reported results from the 2009 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau) indicating that of those aged 21-64 (U.S. working age population), people with sensory, physical, mental, and/or self-care disabilities are much less likely to be employed (either full-time or part-time) than people without such disabilities (36.0 percent versus 76.8 percent respectively) and that only 22.5 percent of working-age individuals with disabilities were working full-time/full-year.

The VR State Grants program is the primary Federal vehicle for assisting individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, to prepare for, obtain, or retain employment. Nationally, there are about 1 million individuals with disabilities in various phases of the vocational rehabilitation process within the VR system, about 93 percent of whom are individuals with significant disabilities. If a State VR agency cannot serve all eligible persons, it must serve first those individuals with the most significant disabilities under an "order of selection." For fiscal year 2012, the State Plans of 35 of the 80 State VR agencies documented that the agency had established an order of selection, the same as in fiscal year 2011. This total includes 59 percent of the general and combined State VR agencies and 8 percent of the State VR agencies serving blind individuals. In fiscal year 2011, preliminary waiting list data from the RSA Cumulative Caseload Report show that there were about 78,760 individuals with disabilities on the waiting list for VR services at some point during the fiscal year, about 30,843 fewer than in fiscal year 2010. Most of this decrease resulted from 6 agencies, particularly one agency that reported over 20,000 fewer individuals that were on the waiting list during fiscal year 2011. Despite significant decreases in the number of individuals who went on the waiting list from application in fiscal year 2011, VR agencies reported a total of 35,189 individuals remaining on waiting lists (about 2,000 more than in 2010) at the end of fiscal year 2011, 76 percent of whom were individuals with significant disabilities. Thus, the reported decreases may primarily reflect changes in the way some VR agencies are managing order of selection and use of the waiting list as opposed to a change in the need for services.

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In addition, the number of individuals on a waiting list varies considerably among State agencies operating under an order of selection. For example, only 28 of the 35 agencies that identified in the Caseload Report that they were operating under an order of selection in fiscal year 2011 reported that there were individuals on the waiting list during the fiscal year. At the end of fiscal year 2011, 6 agencies had 11 or fewer individuals on a waiting list, while 11 agencies had lists that ranged from over 1,094 to 4,612 individuals. As compared to the end of fiscal year 2010, eight agencies had significantly fewer individuals on waiting lists at the end of fiscal year 2011, while seven VR agencies reported significant increases in the number of individuals on their waiting lists in fiscal year 2011. Two of the VR agencies that had significant increases were agencies that did not have any individuals on their waiting list at the end of fiscal year 2010.

State VR agencies also play a major role under the Ticket to Work program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA). Under this program, most Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries between the ages of 18 and 64 are offered a “ticket,” which they may use to obtain employment services, VR services, and other support services from an employment network of their choice to enable them to enter the workforce. State VR agencies have the option of participating in the Ticket to Work program as an employment network or remaining in the traditional reimbursement system, including the option to elect either payment method on a case-by-case basis. Under the traditional system, the VR program is reimbursed for the costs of services provided to SSDI and SSI beneficiaries with a single payment after the beneficiary performs substantial gainful activity (for 2010 and 2011, earnings in excess of \$1,000 per month for non-blind disabled beneficiaries and \$1,640 per month for blind beneficiaries) for at least 9 consecutive months. As of January 19, 2012, about 231,302 Ticket-Holders are working with a State VR agency under the traditional reimbursement arrangement and have their tickets “in use” with the State VR agency. In addition, about 34 percent of the 63,482 tickets that have been assigned have been assigned to State VR agencies and about 66 percent have been assigned to other employment networks.

### Funds to Support Innovation

The \$10 million set aside to support the Workforce Innovation Fund (WIF) will be jointly administered by the Departments of Education and Labor. WIF would provide an opportunity to work across program and agency lines, as well as to encourage partnerships among State, local, and private entities, to identify the most promising approaches for improving the delivery of services and achieving better outcomes for individuals with disabilities served under WIA, the Rehabilitation Act, or the Wagner-Peyser Act.

WIF funds will be dedicated primarily to bold systematic reforms initiated by States, regions, and localities to produce better employment and education outcomes at a lower cost and would also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of those reforms in meeting the goals. Grants would be competitively awarded to States that are willing to undertake bold reforms, more effectively link training to employers needs, and establish the data, reporting, and funding systems to be fully accountable for the employment and education outcomes they produce—including for populations with barriers to employment, including individuals with disabilities. The Department will collaborate with the Department of Labor to identify specific priorities for any competition and will establish requirements to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, benefit substantially from activities supported under the WIF. In order to

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encourage applicants to propose innovative ideas and facilitate substantial changes in service delivery, the Administration requests authority to waive statutes and regulations relating to the WIA, the Rehabilitation Act, and the Wagner-Peyser Act. Waivers will be granted only when they are necessary for project implementation, and this additional flexibility would require guarantees of accountability and plans for rigorous evaluation.

The fiscal year 2012 appropriations bill included language that allows the Secretary to use amounts that remain available subsequent to the reallocation of funds to States under the VR State Grants program pursuant to section 110(b) of the Rehabilitation Act for improving the outcomes of children receiving SSI and their families under the PROMISE pilot program. In addition, the bill language provided authority for these funds to remain available for Federal obligation for two years (September 30, 2013). Similarly, the fiscal year 2013 request includes language that would allow the Secretary to use such amounts to support innovative activities aimed at improving outcomes for individuals with disabilities, including activities under the PROMISE program, and that would provide authority for these funds to remain available for Federal obligation until September 30, 2014. (See additional information about this program under the budget request for the Special Education account.)

Section 110(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act requires the Commissioner to make available for reallocation any funds that were allotted but not utilized by a State to carry out the VR program to States that will be able to use such additional amounts during the current or subsequent fiscal year, provided they are able to pay the non-Federal share of the cost in the fiscal year for which the funds are appropriated. VR funds become available for reallocation when a State is unable to provide the required non-Federal share (21.3 percent) for the total amount of funds allotted to the State under the formula distribution or when a State is unable to meet its maintenance of effort (MOE) requirement (and did not request or receive a full or partial waiver of its MOE requirement). Historically, the Department has been able to reallocate all of the funds that have been returned or unallotted due to MOE penalties because the request for additional funds exceeded the amounts available for reallocation. However, in fiscal years 2010 and 2011 the amount of funds returned exceeded the additional funds requested due to the increase in the number of States that were unable to match the Federal funds they were initially allotted and the large amount of funds that were relinquished by a small number of these States. As a result, these annual funds lapsed and were no longer available for Federal obligation and reverted to the Treasury. As in fiscal year 2012, the proposed appropriations language would ensure that these funds would be used to assist individuals with disabilities to prepare for and obtain employment.

### **American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

The Administration requests \$38.200 million for grants under the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) program. The request would enable the Administration to provide support for about 85 tribal VR projects, including 23 new awards and 62 continuation awards. These funds assist tribal governments to provide a program of VR services, in a culturally relevant manner, to American Indians with disabilities residing on or near reservations.

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

##### Vocational rehabilitation State grants

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Individuals receiving services <sup>1</sup>	1,008,388	1,009,000	1,009,000
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals receiving services	93%	93%	93%
Total number of cases closed	486,510	487,000	487,000
Individuals whose cases were closed and received VR services	330,320	332,000	332,000
Individuals achieving an employment outcome <sup>2</sup>	178,270	179,500	179,500
Individuals with significant disabilities as a percent of all individuals achieving an employment outcome	91%	91%	91%

Notes: Data for fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013 are projections based on actual data for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 and preliminary data for fiscal year 2011 from the RSA Quarterly Cumulative Caseload Report (RSA-113). Estimates for fiscal year 2011 reflect the combination of the program's regular appropriations and the appropriation received under the Recovery Act.

<sup>1</sup> Includes all eligible individuals who received VR services during the fiscal year.

<sup>2</sup> Number of individuals who exited the program after receiving services and achieved an employment outcome.

##### American Indian vocational rehabilitation services

<u>Program funding</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Project funding:			
New project funding	\$10,457 <sup>1</sup>	\$4,203 <sup>2</sup>	\$11,315
Continuation funding	\$33,065	\$33,665	\$26,835
Peer review of new award applications	\$27	\$30	\$50
Number of projects:			
New projects	9	9	23
Continuation	<u>76</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>62</u>
Total projects	<u>85</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>85</u>

<sup>1</sup> Of the total amount of new project funding, about \$1.796 million was awarded to support a portion of the FY 2012 continuation costs of 7 of new projects awarded in FY 2011. In addition, the total amount of new project funding includes \$3.865 million that will be used to support the FY 2012-2015 continuation costs of 2 new projects awarded in FY 2011. These additional funds which became available following the reallocation of funds under the VR State Grants program carried out pursuant to section 110(b)(2) will be used to support all 5-years of these 2 new AIVRS projects from the slate of grantees that were recommended for funding as a result of the FY 2011 competition.

<sup>2</sup> Of the total amount of available for new awards, about \$500 thousand would be awarded to support a portion of the FY 2013 continuation costs of new projects to be awarded in FY 2012.

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#### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

##### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA 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 resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Fiscal year 2011 data for the VR State Grants and the American Indian VR Services programs will be available in April of 2012.

##### VR State Grants

**Goal:** Individuals with disabilities served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program will achieve high quality employment.

**Objective:** *Ensure that individuals with disabilities who are served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program achieve employment consistent with their particular strengths, resources, abilities, capabilities, and interests.*

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 55.8 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	76	79
2009	78	61
2010	80	48
2011	70	
2012	55	
2013	58	

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 68.9 percent of individuals receiving services to achieve employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	66	67
2009	66	42
2010	67	54
2011	60	
2012	58	
2013	58	

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**Additional information:** This measure assesses the performance of State VR agencies in meeting program performance indicator 1.2 established in program regulations pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act. Indicator 1.2 measures the percentage of individuals who the State VR agency determines to have achieved an employment outcome out of all the individuals who exit the VR program after receiving services. In order to pass indicator 1.2, a general or combined agency must achieve an employment outcome rate of 55.8 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 68.9 percent.

In fiscal year 2010, the program did not meet the targets set for either the general and combined State VR agencies or the State VR agencies for individuals who are blind. Compared to fiscal year 2009, seven fewer general and combined State VR agencies and two additional State VR agencies for individuals who are blind met their respective performance criteria (55.8 percent and 68.9 percent) in fiscal year 2010. For the general and combined State VR agencies, excluding outlying areas, employment outcome rates ranged from 37.9 percent to 81.9 percent, with a median of 68.2 percent. For the State VR agencies for individuals who are blind, employment outcome rates ranged from a low of 25.8 percent to 73.4 percent, with a median of 54.5 percent. In fiscal year 2009, there was a large decrease in the total number of individuals who obtained an employment outcome (12 percent) with 78 percent of the total 80 State VR agencies reporting a decrease in employment outcomes. While the number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome continued to decline in fiscal year 2010, the overall drop in employment outcomes was smaller (4.8 percent), with only 52 percent of the general and combined State VR agencies reporting a decrease in the number of employment outcomes. Preliminary fiscal year 2011 data show an increase of about 3.6 percent in the number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome.

Among States, decreases in employment outcomes ranged from less than 1 percent to almost 61 percent in fiscal year 2010. The decrease in employment outcomes can, at least in part, be attributed to the general decline in available employment opportunities. For example, many VR agencies in States experiencing high rates of unemployment for the general population have had a difficult time assisting the individuals with disabilities they serve to obtain employment. However, there were a few VR agencies in States with high rates of unemployment that did not experience a decrease in employment outcomes, including some of which reported an increase in employment outcomes.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	96	96
2009	97	93
2010	97	95
2011	97	
2012	97	
2013	97	

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**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	79	79
2009	79	92
2010	80	83
2011	80	
2012	85	
2013	85	

**Additional information:** This measure is derived from Section 106 performance indicator 1.3, which measures the percentage of individuals who achieve competitive employment of all individuals who achieve employment. Competitive employment is defined under the State VR program as work in the competitive labor market that is performed on a full-time or part-time basis in an integrated setting, and for which an individual is compensated at or above the minimum wage, but not less than the customary wage and level of benefits paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by individuals who are not disabled. In order to pass indicator 1.3, a general or combined agency must achieve a rate of 72.6 percent, while an agency for the blind must achieve a rate of 35.4 percent.

The GPRA measure is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion than the State VR agency performance indicator 1.3 because in fiscal year 2006 nearly all of the VR agencies passed indicator 1.3. Under the GPRA measure, general and combined agencies must assist at least 85 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment, and agencies for the blind must assist at least 65 percent of individuals with employment outcomes to achieve competitive employment. Despite the decline in the number of employment outcomes, States have been fairly successful in sustaining the percentage of competitive employment outcomes. In fiscal year 2010, the target for the general and combined agencies was not met, however performance improved as compared to the previous year. In fiscal year 2010, only 3 of the 56 general and combined agencies did not meet the performance criterion, including 1 combined State agency and 2 of the territories. The percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by general and combined agencies in 2010 ranged from 36 percent to 99.7 percent with a median of 97.7 percent. In 2010, four agencies for the blind did not meet their criterion, two more than in fiscal year 2009. The percentage of individuals with employment outcomes who achieved competitive employment reported by agencies for the blind ranged from 36.9 percent to 100 percent with a median of 90.5 percent.

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**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies for which at least 80 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	90	88
2009	89	87
2010	89	89
2011	89	
2012	90	
2013	90	

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind for which at least 90 percent of the individuals achieving competitive employment have significant disabilities.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	100	100
2009	100	100
2010	100	96
2011	100	
2012	100	
2013	100	

**Additional information:** This measure is derived from the Section 106 performance indicator 1.4, which measures the percentage of individuals achieving competitive employment who have significant disabilities. In order for a general or combined agency to pass this indicator, at least 62 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The GPRA measure for general and combined agencies is more ambitious and has a higher performance criterion than performance indicator 1.4. Under this measure, at least 80 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability.

For an agency for the blind to pass indicator 1.4, at least 89 percent of individuals achieving competitive employment must have a significant disability. The performance criterion for agencies for the blind on the GPRA measure is only slightly higher, 90 percent compared to 89 percent.

In fiscal year 2010, 89 percent of general and combined agencies achieved the 80 percent criterion and the GPRA target was met. All but one of the agencies for the blind met the 90 percent performance criterion and the 100 percent GPRA target was not met.

### Efficiency Measures

**Objective:** *Ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management.*

The Department has established three efficiency measures to ensure that State VR agencies demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome, cost

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per participant, and a consumer expenditure rate. The Department is in the process of revising the cost per participant and cost per outcome measures to adjust for the effect of inflation. The Department believes that this change is needed to provide a better measure of the program's cost rates. Fiscal year 2013 performance targets for these measures will be established after the methodology is revised.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome between \$6,000 and \$16,500.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	70	68
2009	70	55
2010	70	45
2011	70	
2012	60	
2013		

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	71	54
2009	71	46
2010	71	42
2011	71	
2012	60	
2013		

**Additional information:** At the national aggregate level, the cost per employment outcome can be calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2010, the average annual cost per employment outcome was \$17,680. However, there was a significant difference in the cost per employment outcome between general and combined State VR agencies and agencies serving the blind. The average cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies was \$16,865 compared with \$39,968 for agencies for the blind. In fiscal year 2010, only 25 of the 56 (45 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per employment outcome between \$6,000 and \$16,500 – 4 fewer agencies than in fiscal year 2009. Thirty-one of the general and combined State VR agencies (55 percent) had an average cost per employment outcome above \$16,500. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 10 (42 percent) had an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$38,000 – 1 fewer agency than in fiscal year 2009. There is wide variation in the cost per employment outcome across these agencies. The cost per employment outcome for general and combined State VR agencies (excluding the outlying areas) ranged from about \$6,407 to \$56,999. The cost per employment outcome for agencies

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for the blind ranged from \$16,159 to \$113,151. The fiscal year 2012 targets for have been adjusted downward to offset the effect of inflation on the cost per employment outcome.

The *Study of Variables Related to State VR Agency Performance* (October 2004) indicated that whatever measure of cost efficiency is used, large differences are evident by agency type (blind, combined, general). For example, agencies for the blind are much smaller and still must maintain the same core administrative infrastructure. They also do not benefit from economies of scale available to larger agencies. In addition, on average, blind consumers spend more time in the program and the average cost of purchased services tends to be higher.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	73	63
2009	70	61
2010	70	70
2011	70	
2012	70	
2013		

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	70	63
2009	70	58
2010	70	58
2011	70	
2012	65	
2013		

**Additional information:** A common efficiency measure for job training programs is the cost per participant. At the national aggregate level, the cost per participant is calculated by dividing the total appropriation (minus the set-aside for Grants to Indians) by the total number of eligible individuals who received VR services. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-113 Caseload Report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. For fiscal year 2010, the average annual cost per participant for general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was \$2,860 with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of \$1,414 to \$6,237. For agencies for the blind, the average annual cost per participant ranged from \$3,907 to \$16,293, with an average of \$7,290. In fiscal year 2010, 39 of the 56 (70 percent) general and combined State VR agencies had an average cost per participant between \$1,200 and \$3,300 – six agencies more than in fiscal year 2009. Of the 24 agencies for the blind, 14 (58 percent) had an average cost per participant of no more than \$8,000, the same percentage as in 2009. The

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fiscal year 2012 target for agencies for the blind has been adjusted downward to offset the effect of inflation on the cost per participation.

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	73	80
2009	74	79
2010	74	73
2011	74	
2012	74	
2013	75	

**Measure:** Percentage of State VR agencies for the Blind that demonstrate an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	67	54
2009	65	58
2010	65	71
2011	65	
2012	65	
2013	70	

**Additional information:** The third efficiency measure examines the percentage of State VR agencies whose consumer service expenditure rate is at or above a specified level. Under this measure, the consumer service expenditure rate is calculated by dividing the agency's consumer service expenditures by the agency's total VR program expenditures. The sources of data for this measure are State agency data from the RSA-2 report and RSA final State agency allocation tables. In fiscal year 2010, 41 of 56 general and combined VR agencies (73 percent) demonstrated an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 83 percent and the target was not met. The average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all general and combined State vocational rehabilitation agencies was 88 percent with a range (excluding the outlying areas) of 62 percent to almost 100 percent. In 2010, 17 of the 24 agencies for the blind (71 percent) had an average annual consumer expenditure rate of at least 70 percent and the target was met. The average annual consumer service expenditure rate for all agencies for the blind ranged from 47 percent to 100 percent, with an average of 75 percent.

### American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services

#### Performance Measures

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

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**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.*

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	66	66
2009	66	61
2010	66	62
2011	66	
2012	66	
2013	66	

**Additional information:** The numbers of American Indians with disabilities achieving an employment outcome continue to increase annually along with the number of projects funded under the program. In fiscal year 2010, the 79 projects operating in that fiscal year (projects funded with fiscal year 2009 appropriations) assisted a total of 1,778 American Indians with disabilities to achieve an employment outcome. Data for fiscal year 2010 show that 62 percent of the 2,868 individuals with disabilities who exited the program after receiving services achieved an employment outcome and the target for this measure was not met. There is a wide variation in the percentage of individuals who achieved an employment outcome reported by AIVRS projects. In 2010, the percentage of individuals achieving an employment outcome reported by the 79 projects ranged from 16 percent to 100 percent. One of the new projects in 2010 was unable to serve or place any individuals because of delays in getting the project underway.

There are several factors that may have accounted for the decrease in performance on this measure in fiscal years 2009 and 2010. Probably the most significant factor was the poor economic conditions. American Indian tribes already experience some of the worst economic conditions in the country with limited labor markets and very few job opportunities. When those same economic conditions affect communities outside the reservation, it compounds the difficulty in achieving employment outcomes.

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#### Efficiency Measures

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

The Department has established two efficiency measures to ensure that AIVRS projects demonstrate effective fiscal management. These include cost per employment outcome and cost per participant.

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	66	64
2009	68	71
2010	70	71
2011	72	
2012	72	
2013	73	

**Additional information:** This AIVRS program efficiency measure examines the percentage of AIVRS projects having a cost per employment outcome within a specified range. The source of data for this measure is the AIVRS Annual Reporting Form. At the national level, the average cost per employment outcome for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome. Using this method for the AIVRS program in fiscal year 2010, the overall average cost per employment outcome was approximately \$20,229 with a median of \$22,086. However, the cost per employment outcome varied significantly across projects. Excluding the new project that was unable to serve or place any individuals in fiscal year 2010, average cost per employment outcome ranged from about \$6,753 to \$259,452.

The target for this measure was exceeded in fiscal year 2010, with 56 of the 79 AIVRS projects reporting (71 percent) demonstrating an average cost per employment outcome of no more than \$35,000.

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	76	82
2009	77	83
2010	78	86
2011	82	
2012	84	
2013	86	

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**Additional information:** At the national level, the average annual cost per participant for this program is calculated by dividing the amount of the set-aside, excluding peer review costs, by the total number of individuals who received services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). In fiscal year 2010, AIVRS projects reported serving a total of over 8,395 American Indians with disabilities. For fiscal year 2010, the overall average annual cost per participant was approximately \$4,284. Excluding the new project that was unable to serve or place any individuals in fiscal year 2010, the average cost per participant ranged from \$1,155 to \$29,431 with a median of \$5,222. In fiscal year 2010, 68 of the 79 AIVRS projects (86 percent) had an average cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

Targets for fiscal years 2007 – 2010 were established based on the number of individuals served in the reporting period whose IPE was developed during the current 5-year grant cycle. These targets did not take into account individuals served in the reporting period whose IPE was developed in the previous 5-year grant cycle because data collected on these individuals were not reliable. However, RSA has since made improvements in its reporting system and provided guidance that makes these data more reliable. Beginning with fiscal year 2008, grantees report all individuals receiving services with current grant funds, including individuals whose IPE was developed in the previous 5-year grant cycle. The targets for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 are higher than previous targets to reflect the fact that the including both groups of individuals in the calculation of performance on this measure lowers the cost per participant and increases the percentage of projects that have a cost per participant of no more than \$10,000.

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### Client assistance State grants

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

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$12,240	\$12,240	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### 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). Services are provided to help eligible individuals and applicants understand the rehabilitation services and benefits available under the Act, and to advise them of their rights and responsibilities in connection with those benefits. Assistance may also be provided to help eligible individuals and applicants in their relationships with those providing services under the Act, including assistance and advocacy in pursuing legal and administrative remedies to ensure the protection of their rights. State VR agencies must inform VR consumers about the services available from the CAP and how to contact the CAP. States must operate a CAP in order to receive VR State grant funds.

States and outlying areas have adopted different organizational structures for meeting the requirement to establish a CAP in each State. 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 services under the Act. In the event one of these “grandfathered” agencies is restructured, the Act requires the Governor to redesignate the CAP in an agency that does not provide services under the Act.

Current designations include the following:

- 28 of the Governors have designated their State Protection and Advocacy (P&A) system to provide CAP services;
- 12 of the Governors have designated the VR agency to provide services; and
- the remaining 16 Governors have designated other entities to provide CAP services.

Of the 16 CAPs located outside State VR agencies and not within the P&A system, 5 are located in the Governor’s Office; 6 are located in another State agency, office, or government-

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sponsored commission or group; 4 are located in legal aid and nonprofit organizations; and 1 is located in a private law firm.

The CAP is a current-funded formula grant program. When appropriations exceed \$7.5 million, funds are distributed on the basis of population, with a minimum allotment of \$100,000 to each of the 50 States, D.C., and Puerto Rico and \$45,000 to each of the outlying areas. When the appropriation increases, the Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the appropriation. The fiscal year 2011 allotments were based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 allotments are based on the July 1, 2010 population estimates published in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2011 Census data released in December 2011.

Grantees may carry over unobligated Federal funds for an additional year.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$11,576
2009.....	11,576
2010.....	12,288
2011.....	12,263
2012.....	12,240

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$12.240 million for the Client Assistance program (CAP) in fiscal year 2013, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. This request will help ensure that individuals with disabilities who are applying for or receiving services funded under the Rehabilitation Act will receive appropriate services and have access to administrative, legal, and other appropriate remedies when needed to protect their rights.

Data collected in fiscal year 2010 show that, nationwide, CAPs responded to 50,203 requests for information and provided extensive services to 7,128 individuals. Slightly less than 95 percent of those cases in which extensive services were provided involved applicants for or recipients of services from the VR program. In 95 percent of all cases, the issues related to the delivery of VR services. These data also demonstrate that in 34 percent of the cases closed, CAPs enabled individuals with disabilities to advocate for themselves through the explanation of policies; 19 percent resulted in the development or implementation of an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE); and 18 percent resulted in the reestablishment of communication between individuals with disabilities and other parties. In addition, 68 percent of the cases requiring action by the CAP on behalf of the individual were resolved in the individual's favor.

CAPs also address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Rehabilitation Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies

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and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in the policymaking process, and negotiation with State agencies.

Examples of CAP activities during fiscal year 2010 include:

- In Maryland, a 57 year old female with mental illness contacted CAP for assistance following VR's denial of her business plan to establish a salon where she could work as an Esthetician, Pedicurist, and Manicurist. The VR agency stated that the business plan submitted by the consumer did not contain enough details about the cost of inventory or the gross income by the business to be approved. The VR agency also informed the individual that she should give up on her business plan and find employment working for someone else. CAP assisted the consumer in getting an IPE approved that had self-employed aesthetician as the vocational goal and in completing a business plan that was approved by the VR agency. CAP also provided support to the individual while she worked with her vocational counselor in ordering her business supplies and equipment. The individual is now successfully self-employed.
- In Arizona (AZ), CAP represented a consumer who filed an appeal after the AZ VR State agency denied his employment goal of gunsmith. The AZ VR stated that it had enacted a policy which prevented them from providing any funding for "training and/or use" of firearms. The AZ VR acknowledged that the policy also prevented persons with disabilities from pursuing occupations that involved training in use of firearms. It appears that with this policy, occupations such as security guard or even police officer may have been excluded. After months of attempted negotiation with the AZ VR failed to resolve the case, a request for an Administrative Fair Hearing was made by CAP and later held in November 2009. The Administrative Law Judge ruled in the consumer's favor, stating that VR's policy on firearms was too broad and arbitrary and in violation of Federal regulations. The AZ VR filed an appeal with the Department of Economic Security (DES) Director regarding the decision from the Fair Hearing. The DES Director agreed with CAP and upheld the Administrative Law Judge's decision. As a result of this case and additional efforts by CAP, the policy on firearms was removed from the VR Manual in September 2010.
- In New York, CAP was contacted by a consumer with multiple psychiatric and physical disabilities. He left a position providing maintenance for a shop after developing respiratory problems due to the chemicals in the cleaning agents. He applied to VR and was accepted for Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) services. After being found eligible for VR services, the consumer was given a diagnostic vocational evaluation (DVE) to determine his capacity to work in competitive employment. The DVE came back with the recommendation that the consumer was unable to work at the present time. The consumer felt the evaluation was incorrect and subsequently contacted the CAP and provided documentation from his doctors stating he could work with some restrictions. The CAP advocate contacted the local CAP legal services attorney who reviewed VESID policy and found VESID did not follow its own procedures. The local CAP legal service found that before VESID can determine an individual unable to work, they must provide the individual with a trial work experience that places the individual in various different work settings. CAP agreed to represent the

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consumer at a hearing. CAP legal services also contacted VESID and reminded them of their own requirement that determinations of ineligibility due to severity of disability must be made following a trial work experience or, if not feasible, an extended evaluation. In lieu of a hearing, the case was settled through negotiations between CAP and VR. As a result, VESID agreed to open a new case for the consumer.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	50,200	50,200	50,200
Individuals provided case services	7,150	7,150	7,150

Note: Data for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2010 in which CAPs responded to 50,203 requests for information and provided extensive services to 7,128 individuals. Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in December of 2012.

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this 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
2008	60	70
2009	60	80
2010	60	64
2011	67	
2012	70	
2013	70	

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**Additional information:** CAPs address numerous systemic issues related to the provision of VR and other services under the Act. CAPs utilize a variety of methods to achieve changes in policies and practices, including individual advocacy, participation in the policymaking process, and negotiation with State agencies. Permanent systemic change is very difficult to achieve, and some States undertake activities that may take years to accomplish. All 56 CAPs currently are engaged in work that should ultimately result in systemic change, but this indicator measures only those States that report their activity as complete. Data are compiled from narrative reports submitted by all CAPs. Onsite compliance reviews are conducted and random sample of files are cross-checked with reported data to verify the data quality. The grantees input their data into the RSA Management Information System (MIS), which has edit checks to verify the accuracy of the information entered into the data fields.

The baseline was established in fiscal year 1999, when 24 of the 56 CAPs (43 percent) reported changes in practice or policy due to their efforts. In fiscal year 2006, 34 of the 56 CAPs (61 percent) reported success with their efforts, exceeding the target for the fifth successive year. In light of these data the Department raised the targets from 54 percent to 60 percent for fiscal years 2007 through 2010. Based on improved performance in 2008 and 2009, the Department increased the target to 70 percent for 2012. The fiscal year 2010 data reflects a large decrease in the number of CAPs reporting success for this measure. The data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in December 2012.

**Objective:** *Resolve cases at lowest possible level.*

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008	84	98
2009	85	99
2010	86	98
2011	98	
2012	98	
2013	98	

**Additional information:** The performance targets through fiscal year 2008 were based on fiscal year 2001 data, which showed 84 percent of CAP cases were resolved through alternative dispute resolution (ADR). The target was first exceeded in fiscal year 2006, when 4,977 of the 5,855 closed cases (85 percent) were resolved through ADR techniques. However, data from fiscal year 2007 reflect a huge increase to 98 percent of the closed cases being resolved through ADR. The percentage of cases being resolved through the use of ADR held steady at 98 percent during 2008, and rose to 99 percent in 2009. The data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in December 2012.

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### Supported employment State grants

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI, Part B)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$29,068	0	-\$29,068

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; no appropriations or new reauthorizing legislation is sought for FY 2013.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program is to assist States in developing collaborative programs with appropriate public and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. Under this formula grant program, State vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies receive supplemental funds to assist VR consumers with the most significant disabilities in achieving the employment outcome of supported employment. The term "supported employment" includes both competitive employment and working in an integrated setting toward competitive employment. Individuals in competitive employment must earn at least the minimum wage.

Supported employment placements are achieved by augmenting short-term vocational rehabilitation services (supported employment services) with ongoing support provided by other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations (extended services) for the duration of that employment. State VR agencies provide time-limited services for a period not to exceed 18 months, unless a longer period to achieve job stabilization has been established in the individualized plan for employment (IPE). The IPE for an individual with a goal of supported employment must specify the expected extended services that will be needed to support the individual in integrated employment and identify the source of extended services at the time the IPE is developed, including the basis for determining that there is a reasonable expectation that those services will become available.

An individual's potential for supported employment must be considered as part of the assessment to determine eligibility for the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program. The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the Title I VR State Grants program and the Title VI-B SE State Grants program. A State VR agency may support an individual's supported employment services solely with VR State Grant funds, or it may fund the cost of SE services in whole or in part with funds under the SE State Grants program. Title VI-B SE funds may only be used to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement Title I funds.

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To be eligible for this current-funded formula grant program, States must submit a supplement to their Title I VR State Grants program plan. Funds are distributed on the basis of population, except that no State receives less than \$300,000, or one-third of 1 percent of the sums appropriated, whichever is greater. The minimum allotment for Territories is one-eighth of 1 percent of the sums appropriated. The fiscal year 2011 allotments were based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State allotments are based on the April 1, 2010 Census data released in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2011 estimates published in December 2011. States may carry over unobligated funds to the next fiscal year.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$29,181
2009.....	29,181
2010.....	29,181
2011.....	29,123
2012.....	29,068

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

No funds are requested for fiscal year 2013 for the Supported Employment (SE) State Grants program. The Administration requests that funding for this program be consolidated with the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program. The Administration recognizes that supported employment can be an effective strategy in assisting individuals with the most significant disabilities to obtain competitive employment in integrated settings. However, because supported employment is now an integral part of the VR State Grants program, the Administration believes that there is no longer a need for a separate funding stream to ensure the provision of such services. The proposed program consolidation will reduce unnecessary administrative burden at the national, State, and local levels and will enhance efforts to assess and improve the provision and effectiveness of supported employment services. The Administration's proposal would ensure that each State receive under the VR State Grants program at least the amount it received in fiscal year 2012 under the separate formula grant programs being consolidated. The Administration is also examining options to help ensure that State agencies continue to invest appropriate levels of their resources in supported employment.

The Supported Employment State Grants program was first authorized under the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986 to provide supplemental grants to assist States in developing collaborative programs with public agencies and private nonprofit organizations for training and time-limited post-employment services for individuals with the most severe handicaps. At that time, supported employment was a new promising practice in employing individuals who traditionally would not have achieved employment in the integrated labor market. Initially, many rehabilitation professionals were skeptical about its feasibility and concerned about the potential costs. As a supplemental source of dedicated funds, the SE State grant program provided an incentive for State VR agencies to provide supported employment services.

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In addition, from 1986 to 1996 the Department of Education supported a number of supported employment discretionary grant projects designed to further develop and expand the provision of supported employment services. These included a total of 54 State-wide systems change grants to 47 States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands; 2 national scope projects; 2 national technical assistance projects; and a total of 66 community-based supported employment projects. Finally, in fiscal year 1997, the Department awarded a 3-year cooperative agreement to support the Supported Employment Consortium whose purpose was to identify and disseminate replicable policies, models, and supported employment practices appropriate for dissemination and to provide technical assistance.

Data from the fiscal year 2010 RSA 911 Case Service Report show that approximately 36,000 individuals whose cases were closed that year after receiving services had a goal of supported employment on their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) at some time during their participation in the VR program. This number includes individuals who received support for SE services entirely through funds provided under the VR State Grants program and those individuals whose services were, at least in part, supported with funds under the SE State Grants program. On a national level, individuals who had a goal of supported employment represented about 11 percent of the total individuals whose cases were closed in fiscal year 2010 after developing an IPE. However, information on how State VR agencies use their SE State Grant funds to supplement their VR funds is limited. State agencies report whether any SE funds were used to provide services to an individual with a supported employment goal, but not the amount of SE funds that were expended for such individuals. Because VR agencies may use funds from one or both funding sources to purchase supported employment services, information on the actual cost of providing SE services to an individual with a SE goal, including individuals who did or did not obtain a supported employment outcome is unavailable. Data collected through the RSA 911 report indicate that there is significant variation in SE practices and the use of SE funds among State agencies.

As a part of a current effort to re-design the VR program data collections, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) plans to include SE-related data elements that are needed to better monitor the services, service costs, and the outcomes achieved by individuals with a supported employment goal. The proposed consolidation, in conjunction with this and other efforts, will facilitate the Department's ability to monitor and assess national and State performance in obtaining supported employment outcomes for individuals with the most significant disabilities and in identifying those agencies that need technical assistance.

The SE State Grants program has accomplished its goal. State VR agencies recognize supported employment as an integral part of the VR program and a viable employment option for individuals with the most significant disabilities. State VR agencies continue to spend VR State Grant funds (including State matching funds) to provide supported employment services for those individuals who require such services to participate in the integrated labor market. State VR agencies must also give priority to serving individuals with the most significant disabilities, many of whom may require supported employment services. The Department expects that State VR agencies will continue to provide supported employment services in fiscal year 2013 through the consolidated VR State Grants program to at least as many individuals as they did under the two separate authorities.

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### Supported employment State grants

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Individuals with a supported employment IPE goal who received services and exited the program.	36,000	36,000	36,000
Employment outcomes: <sup>1</sup>	18,225	18,500	18,500
Supported employment outcomes <sup>2</sup>	14,000	14,225	14,225
Employment without supports in an integrated setting <sup>3</sup>	4,000	4,050	4,050
Other employment outcomes <sup>4</sup>	225	225	225
<u>Minority outreach</u>	<u>\$291</u>	<u>\$291</u>	<u>0</u>

Note: Estimates for FYs 2011, 2012, and 2013 are based on actual 2008, 2009, and 2010 closure data from the RSA-911 Case Service Report for all VR consumers with a supported employment goal identified on their IPE (including consumers who received SE services with funds provided under the VR State Grants and/or under the Supported Employment State Grants programs). For FY 2013, program output estimates include consumers whose cases were closed in FY 2013 and received SE services with funds provided under VR State Grants as well as consumers who received SE services with funds provided under Supported Employment State Grants in previous years.

<sup>1</sup> Includes employment outcomes for VR consumers who had or are estimated to have a supported employment goal.

<sup>2</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who were employed in an integrated setting and receiving ongoing support services.

<sup>3</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program but who were not receiving ongoing support services.

<sup>4</sup> Of the individuals who had a supported employment goal, the number who met the employment outcome criteria for the VR State Grants program who were either self-employed, employed in a Business Enterprise Program, a family worker, or a homemaker.

#### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

##### **Performance Measures**

This section presents program performance information, including, for example, GPRA 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 resources provided for this program and the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants program in previous years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by these programs. With the exception of the program's efficiency measure, performance on supported employment measures would continue to be assessed in fiscal year 2013 as part of GPRA reporting for the VR State Grants program.

**Goal: Individuals with significant disabilities with a goal of supported employment will achieve high quality employment.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that individuals with significant disabilities with a supported employment goal achieve high quality employment.*

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**Measure:** Of those individuals with significant disabilities who had a supported employment goal and achieved an employment outcome, the percentage who obtained competitive employment, including individuals who receive supported employment services funded under the VR State Grants program and/or the Supported Employment State Grants program.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	94	92
2009	94	91
2010	94	92
2011	94	
2012	94	
2013	94	

**Additional information:** Individuals with a supported employment goal who achieve an employment outcome may be working in competitive employment (employment at least at the minimum wage in an integrated setting) or may be working in an integrated setting toward competitive work (receipt of the minimum wage). In fiscal year 2010, 18,031 individuals, or 51 percent of individuals whose service records were closed after receiving services who had a SE goal, including both consumers who received SE services from funds provided under the VR State Grants and under the Supported Employment State Grants programs, achieved an employment outcome. Of those who achieved an employment outcome, 92 percent of individuals with a supported employment goal achieved a competitive employment outcome, a slight increase from the previous year (from 90.9 to 92.4 percent). However, it was the third year for which the performance target has not been met or exceeded for this measure. The performance targets for fiscal years 2008 upward were increased based on performance in 2006 and 2007 data, during which years actual performance rose to 94 percent.

Fiscal year 2010 RSA 911 Case Service Report data show a decrease in the total number of individuals with a supported employment goal who achieved an employment outcome. However, there was a slight increase (from 75.2 to 76.7 percent) in the percentage of such individuals achieving an employment outcome who obtained a supported employment outcome (employment in the integrated labor market and receiving ongoing supports). Data for fiscal year 2011 are expected to be available in April 2012.

**Measure:** Average weekly earnings for individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	Set a Baseline	199
2009	199	188
2010	203	208
2011	203	
2012	203	
2013	205	

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Supported employment State grants

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**Additional information:** The Department established a new measure in FY 2008 to monitor the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome. As previously stated, individuals with significant disabilities in supported employment may be working in competitive employment or may be working in an integrated setting toward the receipt of the minimum wage. Performance data for this measure are calculated by dividing the average weekly earnings for all individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings by the total number of individuals who obtained a supported employment outcome with earnings. The performance data do not include individuals served by State VR agencies for the Blind. Performance targets were set based on 2007 and 2008 data.

For the performance group, the average weekly earnings of individuals with significant disabilities who achieved a supported employment outcome were \$208 in FY 2010, an increase of \$20 from the previous year and the performance target was met. However, the median average weekly earnings for agencies in the performance group increased from \$180 to \$187. In 2010, average weekly earnings ranged from a low of \$89 to a high of \$442. About 21 percent of the performance group reported a decrease in average weekly earnings as compared to 2009. In FY 2009, about half of the performance group reported a decrease in average weekly wages. In 2010, average hourly earnings increased \$8.03 per hour to \$8.68 per hour. Although on a national level there was a slight increase in average hours worked, 22.7 hours in 2009 compared to 23.2 in 2010, about 32 percent of the agencies in the performance group reported a decrease in average hours worked as compared to 2009.

### Efficiency Measure

**Objective:** *Ensure that State VR agencies effectively use Supported Employment Grant funds to achieve supported employment outcomes.*

**Measure:** Percentage of general and combined State VR agencies that demonstrate at least 30 supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grant funds.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	Set a baseline	79
2009	75	67
2010	75	67
2011	70	
2012	70	

**Additional information:** The efficiency measure developed for the Supported Employment State Grants program examines the percentage of State VR agencies for which the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 received in SE Grants funds is within a specified range. For the purpose of this measure, the number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 is calculated by dividing the reported number of individuals that achieved a supported employment outcome by the amount of a State agency's SE allocation and multiplying the result by 100,000. The performance group does not include State VR agencies for the Blind or for the 4 territories because they receive less than \$100,000 in SE Grants funds. The performance range and targets were established based on fiscal year 2007

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Supported employment State grants

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and 2008 data. In fiscal year 2007, 65 percent of the performance group achieved at least 30 supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 and in fiscal year 2008 performance was 79 percent. However, performance at the higher fiscal year 2008 level was not sustained and performance dropped in fiscal year 2009 to 67 percent, slightly above the FY 2007 level. In fiscal year 2010, performance remained the same as in fiscal year 2009. As a result, the performance target was not met for a second year. The performance levels for fiscal year 2011 and fiscal year 2012 have been adjusted to reflect the fact that fiscal year 2009 data appears to be atypical.

On a positive note, the average number of supported employment outcomes per \$100,000 increased to 68 in fiscal year 2010 after its drop in 2009 to 63. In fiscal years 2007 and 2008, the average for the performance group was 71 and 73, respectively. However, among agencies in the performance group, the average number in fiscal year 2010 ranged significantly from 2.3 (Hawaii) to 287 (Oregon), with a median of 40 supported employment outcomes per \$100,000. A fiscal year 2013 performance target has not been set for the efficiency measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the SE Grants program and consolidate these supplemental funds with those provided under the larger VR State Grants program.

### Other Performance Information

The Department is currently conducting a study to obtain a more in-depth understanding of how State VR agencies provide SE services for their consumers, including how the supplemental SE appropriation is used in conjunction with VR State Grant funds to assist individuals with the most significant disabilities to achieve a supported employment outcome. The Department anticipates that collection of the survey data will begin in April 2012. The Department is also providing funds to the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Vocational Rehabilitation (VR RRTC), funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, to obtain additional information on supported employment. The purpose of this sub-study is to identify the role and impact of the VR program within the larger supported employment delivery system. Examples of topics to be investigated include providers and sources of funding for supported employment, the availability of supported employment services, SE placements, and extended services, and methods or models of collaboration and coordination in providing SE services that can be identified within or across States. The VR RRTC is in the process of collecting survey data related to supported employment from VR agencies, Intellectual and Developmental Disability agencies, community rehabilitation providers, mental health agencies, and welfare agencies. In addition, case studies are being conducted in six States (Maryland, Washington, New Mexico, New York, Minnesota, and Texas). A summary of the data and case study findings as well as detailed preliminary reports based on the data collected is expected by February 2012.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 304)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$1,262	0	-\$1,262

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; no appropriations or new reauthorizing legislation is sought for FY 2013.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program makes comprehensive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services available to migrant and seasonal farmworkers with disabilities, with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for them. Projects also develop innovative methods for reaching and serving this population. Emphasis is given in these projects to outreach, specialized bilingual rehabilitation counseling, and coordination of VR services with services from other sources. Projects provide VR services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers and to members of their families when such services will contribute to the rehabilitation of the worker with a disability. Discretionary grants are limited to 90 percent of the costs of the projects providing these services. This is a current-funded program.

The Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers program is administered in coordination with other programs serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, including programs under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act, the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act, and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

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

(dollars in thousands)

2008.....	\$2,239
2009.....	2,239
2010.....	2,239
2011.....	1,856
2012.....	1,262

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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#### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

No funds are requested for the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) program in fiscal year 2013. Instead of seeking separate funding for this program, the Administration proposes to consolidate the funding for this small, duplicative competitive grants program with the larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program. For fiscal year 2013, the Administration is seeking authority to pay the continuation costs of the remaining four grants under this program from the consolidated funding for the VR State grants program. The Administration believes that consolidating this small program into the much larger VR State grants program will eliminate administrative inefficiencies and help focus Federal efforts on ensuring that States provide effective appropriate services to all eligible individuals, including the population served under this program.

The authorizing legislation for the VR State grants program requires States to submit a plan to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) that describes how the State will provide services to all eligible individuals within that State. The statute contains many provisions to ensure that State VR agencies reach and serve all individuals with disabilities within the State, including minority, unserved, and underserved populations--

- States must provide for the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with other components of the Statewide workforce investment system. Specifically, States must describe their interagency cooperation with, and utilization of the services and facilities of, Federal, State and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the Department of Agriculture's Under Secretary for Rural Development.
- States must provide an assurance that the State will not impose a residence requirement that excludes from services any individual who is present in the State.
- States must conduct comprehensive, statewide assessments describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the States, particularly the VR service needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR State grants program. Using the statewide assessment, States must identify their goals and priorities in carrying out their programs.
- States must provide a description of the strategies they will use to address the needs identified in the comprehensive, statewide assessment and to achieve the identified goals and priorities, including outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR State grants program.

Specialized services, such as those provided through the MSFW program, can be beneficial in meeting the complex needs of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities. However, the specialized services provided under the MSFW program are services all State VR agencies should be providing to reach and appropriately serve underserved populations under the VR State grants program and should not depend on the availability of separate funding. For example, outreach activities in churches and community centers that identify farmworkers with disabilities would also assist in identifying other persons with disabilities who visit these places.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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The hiring of bilingual counselors benefits all consumers who are monolingual in a non-English language, whether those consumers are farmworkers or not. In addition, the provision of transportation services for rural areas will benefit all rural residents, whether farmworkers or not.

The Administration believes that continuing to provide separate funding for this small, narrowly targeted program is not the best way to ensure appropriate and high quality services for special populations who may be underserved under the VR State grants program. With the increase in funding that the Administration is requesting for the VR State grants program, State VR agencies would have additional resources to provide services that would benefit migrant or seasonal farmworkers, along with other unserved or underserved populations. The Administration believes that RSA should focus its monitoring and technical assistance efforts on improving the performance of the VR State grants program, including its delivery of services to and the outcomes of its most needy and vulnerable populations.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES (dollars in thousands)

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
<b>Program funding:</b>			
Continuation projects	\$1,838	\$1,249	0
Minority outreach	18	13	0
Peer review of new award applications	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	1,856	1,262	0
<b>Number of projects:</b>			
New projects	0	0	0
Continuation projects	<u>10</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	10	7	0

### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

#### Performance Measures

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

**Goal: To increase employment opportunities for migrant and seasonal farmworkers who have disabilities.**

**Objective:** *Ensure that eligible Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers with disabilities receive Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services and achieve employment.*

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Migrant and seasonal farmworkers

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**Measure:** The percentage of migrant or seasonal farmworkers with disabilities served by both VR and the VR Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers projects who were placed in employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	65	55
2009	65	67
2010	65	60
2011	65	
2012	65	

**Additional information:** During fiscal year 2010, the 13 projects in the 12 States with MSFW projects served 137 individuals, placing 82 in employment (59.9 percent), a decrease in performance from fiscal year 2009. Four of the grantees in 4 States met or exceeded the performance target for fiscal year 2010. The 9 remaining projects in 8 States reported employment rates that ranged from 0 to 50 percent. States without a Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) project reported serving 1,450 migratory workers in fiscal year 2010 and placing 804 in employment (55.5 percent). However, RSA is concerned about the decrease in the overall numbers served by those States with a MSFW project. In fiscal year 2007, 280 individuals were served; in fiscal year 2008, 218 were served; in fiscal year 2009, 189 were served, and in fiscal year 2010, only 137 individuals were served. Through its grantee-conference call oversight, RSA is working with the 13 grantees in order to assess the reasons for the decline in the numbers served.

A fiscal year 2013 performance target has not been set for this measure because the Administration is proposing to eliminate the separate funding authority for the MSFW program and consolidate these funds with funds provided under the larger VR State grants program.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Training

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title III, Section 302 (a)-(g)(2), (h)-(i))

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0 <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$35,515	\$30,188	-\$5,327

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for reauthorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### 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 the vocational rehabilitation (VR), supported employment, 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, to pay all or part of the cost of conducting training programs.

Awards may be made in any of 31 long-term training fields, in addition to awards for continuing education, short-term training, experimental and innovative 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. For example, the Long-Term Training program supports academic training grants that must direct 75 percent of the funds to trainee scholarships. Students who receive financial assistance from projects funded under the program are required to pay back such assistance, either by maintaining acceptable employment in public or private non-profit rehabilitation agencies for a period of time after they complete their training, or by making a cash repayment to the Federal Government.

The Training program authority requires recipients of grants under the Long-Term Training program to build closer relationships between training institutions and State VR agencies, promote careers in the public vocational rehabilitation program, identify potential employers who would meet students' payback requirements, and ensure that data on student employment are accurate. Training of statewide workforce systems personnel is authorized under the Training program, and such training may be jointly funded by the Department of Labor. Statewide workforce systems personnel may be trained in evaluation skills to determine whether an individual with a disability may be served by the VR State grants program or another component of the statewide workforce system.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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Of the funds appropriated for the Training program, 15 percent must be used to support the In-Service Training program. This program is intended to assist State VR agencies in the training of State agency staff consistent with the State's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). Under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, each State is required to establish procedures to ensure there is an adequate supply of qualified staff for the State agency, to assess personnel needs and make projections for future needs, and to address the current and projected personnel training needs. States are further required to develop and maintain policies and procedures for job-specific personnel standards that are consistent with certification, licensure, or other State personnel requirements for comparable positions. If a State's current personnel do not meet the highest requirements for personnel standards within the State, the CSPD must identify the steps a State will take to upgrade the qualifications of its staff, through retraining or hiring. VR State grant funds may be used to comply with these requirements.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$37,766
2009.....	37,766
2010.....	37,766
2011.....	35,582
2012.....	35,515

### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Administration requests \$30.188 million for the Training program in fiscal year 2013, a reduction of \$5.327 million from the fiscal year 2012 level. The Administration is not seeking funding for the In-Service Training program under the Training program, but is, instead, proposing the consolidation of \$5.327 million for the In-Service Training program with the larger Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State grants program, which it believes will improve the efficiency of training delivered under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act).

The Training program is designed to support programs that provide training to new VR staff or upgrade the qualifications of existing staff. In recent years, the major focus of the program has been to address the shortage of qualified State VR agency staff by supporting long-term training programs at institutions of higher education (IHEs) to train new counselors and administrators. Currently, VR agencies are undergoing dramatic turnover in their staffs due to the retirement of a large number of qualified counselors. According to 2010 data from State VR agencies, there were 1,222 vacancies out of the 16,064 total positions nationwide in these offices. Over the next 5 years, these agencies projected an additional 5,481 vacancies. This would mean that, in the next 5 years, State VR agencies may need to hire as much as 42 percent of their staff to maintain current staffing levels. The Administration believes that similar shortages, though not as severe, will also affect other VR providers in the same timeframe. In order to address this issue, the Administration has focused a considerable amount of resources in the Training program on long-term training, and is seeking to further target funds to address those areas of greatest need. Additionally, the Act requires that 75 percent of the funds awarded to universities under the Long-Term Training (LTT) program must go directly to students for tuition

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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assistance and stipends. Since this tuition assistance must be repaid through work in State VR agencies and other appropriate work settings, the Administration believes it is the best mechanism for recruiting new graduates into the field of rehabilitation.

The Act also requires that State VR agencies provide additional training to existing staff to ensure that they meet the highest certification standard in the State. However, given the fact that the State VR agencies have the responsibility to provide needed professional development and can use the funds provided under the VR State Grants program for this purpose, the Administration believes that providing a separate revenue stream to support in-service training through the Training program is inefficient and may, in fact, reduce State contributions to this effort. As a result, the Administration is proposing to consolidate the In-Service Training program with the larger VR State Grants program.

Currently, the Act requires that 15 percent of the funds appropriated for the Training program be set aside to support the training of existing State VR agency personnel. Under the Administration's consolidation proposal, these funds would be consolidated with the larger VR State Grants program and would continue to be available to State VR agencies for training State agency personnel, consistent with the agency's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) plan under Title I of the Act. The proposed consolidation would eliminate the administrative costs involved in making small grants to State agencies each year, while ensuring that State VR agencies have resources available to support in-service training for their personnel.

In fiscal year 2013, the Administration will also continue support for continuing education and technical assistance to State VR agencies and their partners to improve their performance under and compliance with the Rehabilitation Act. The majority of funds requested for fiscal year 2013 would be used to support continuations in this area and the larger Long-Term Training program.

### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Program Funding:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Long-Term Training:			
New	0	0	\$4,591
Continuations	<u>\$18,990</u>	<u>\$19,134</u>	<u>14,157</u>
Subtotal	18,990	19,134	18,748
Technical Assistance & Continuing Education:			
New	0	0	6,400
Continuations	<u>8,039</u>	<u>8,088</u>	<u>1,788</u>
Subtotal	8,039	8,088	8,188
Short-Term Training:			
New	0	0	250
Continuations	<u>450</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>
Subtotal	450	200	450

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Program Funding:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Unit In-Service Training:			
New	0	0	0
Continuations	<u>\$5,337</u>	<u>\$5,337</u>	<u>0</u> <sup>1</sup>
Subtotal	5,337	5,337	0
Training for Interpreters for Individuals who are Deaf and Deaf-Blind:			
New	0	0	0
Continuations	<u>2,100</u>	<u>2,100</u>	<u>\$2,100</u>
Subtotal	2,100	2,100	2,100
General Training:			
New	0	0	0
Continuations	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
Subtotal	300	300	300
<u>Program Totals:</u>			
New	0	0	11,241
Continuations	35,216	35,159	18,545
Peer review of new award applications	10	0	100
Minority outreach	<u>356</u>	<u>356</u>	<u>302</u>
Total	35,582	35,515	30,188

<sup>1</sup> Under the Administration's FY 2013 proposal, funding for this activity (\$5.327 million) is being consolidated with the VR State Grants program.

### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

#### **Performance Measures**

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA 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 resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this 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.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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This program has three annual performance measures. All three of these measures are designed to provide information on various aspects of the program, including its ability to address the shortage of State VR agency counselors and staff, the proportion of scholars fulfilling their payback requirements, and the proportion of currently employed State VR agency counselors who meet their State's CSPD requirements. While these measures alone do not provide a comprehensive view of the Training program, the Administration believes that they do provide evidence as to the efficacy of the program and its expenditures.

**Measure:** The percentage of Masters-level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through employment in State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	53	37
2009	53	37
2010	53	40
2011	53	
2012	53	
2013	55	

**Additional Information:** The Department annually collects data about scholars through the Payback Reporting Form, which grantees submit by November 30 of each year. After a consistent decline from 2005 to 2008, the proportion of Masters-level counseling graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through employment in State VR agencies remained at 37 percent from 2008 to 2009 before increasing to 40 percent in 2010. While program graduates are not mandated to meet their service obligation by working in State VR agencies, the Administration believes that these agencies should be the main employer of these graduates, especially given the current and future shortages outlined above. This overall downward trend may have been the result of a confluence of factors, including, but not limited to, the range of acceptable employment for meeting the service obligations outlined in statute, State hiring freezes, and the salary and working conditions in State VR agencies relative to those in other acceptable employment settings. According to the Act, program graduates are able to meet the requirements of their payback through employment in a number of different types of agencies, including employment in private VR agencies or in related State agencies, such as special education. As a result, some of the program's graduates are able to find acceptable employment in a number of different settings other than State VR agencies. When combined with the lower salary offered by State VR agencies compared to those in private firms, it may be that more program graduates are opting to seek employment elsewhere, while still meeting the terms of their service obligation. Of all Masters-level graduates, 82 percent were fulfilling their service obligation in some form of acceptable employment in 2010, with roughly 49 percent of the employed graduates opting to work in settings other than the State VR agency.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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**Measure:** The percentage of RSA-supported graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	85	78
2009	86	76
2010	86	82
2011	87	
2012	87	
2013	87	

**Additional Information:** Using the annual Payback Reporting Form, grantees are required to report the number of RSA-supported graduates fulfilling their payback requirements through acceptable employment. This measure captures all program graduates who received RSA-supported scholarships, including those receiving undergraduate and graduate degrees and certificates. It also includes individuals maintaining acceptable employment in all acceptable agencies, not just State VR agencies. The Act requires that all program graduates maintain acceptable employment for at least 2 years for every year they received assistance from an RSA-supported grant. However, only four in five scholars are currently doing so. It is possible that some portion of program graduates are receiving waivers of their payback requirements for various reasons, including exceptions and deferrals provided in accordance with 34 CFR 386.41, such as permanent disability or full-time enrollment in an institution of higher education. It is also possible that some subset of individuals who received scholarship support opt to obtain employment in for-profit rehabilitation agencies and simply repay their initial scholarship as if it were a loan. Without further information, the Department cannot determine the extent to which these explanations hold, but RSA has revised the Payback Reporting Form to be used by grantees in order to significantly improve the quality and accuracy of the data RSA receives about scholars.

**Measure:** The percentage of currently employed State Vocational Rehabilitation agency counselors who meet their state's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) standards.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	73	76
2009	74	75
2010	75	
2011	76	
2012	77	
2013	78	

**Additional Information:** The Department annually collects data from State VR agencies about the qualifications of their currently-employed counselors. Since 2002, the proportion of currently employed State VR agency counselors who meet their State's CSPD standards consistently

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Training

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increased before stagnating in the last several years. The increase could be due, in part, to enhanced training made possible through the Training program. However, it could also be due to the natural aging of the State VR workforce. If a portion of the current State VR staff retire each year and are replaced by new counselors who must meet the State's CSPD requirements, this measure could show annual increases, even if in-service training was not adequately provided. The Administration believes that both factors may have contributed to the increased qualifications of State VR counselors, but cannot definitively parse out the individual effects of each. More information is needed about this measure and the potential causes of the recent plateau.

### Efficiency Measures

The Department has adopted an efficiency measure for the Long-Term Training program (LTT). This measure is the cost per Master's-level vocational rehabilitation counseling graduate.

**Measure:** The Federal cost per RSA supported rehabilitation counseling graduate at the Masters-level.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	10,702	10,022
2009	10,702	10,036
2010	10,702	
2011	10,702	
2012	10,702	
2013	10,500	

**Additional Information:** The measure is calculated by dividing the total funds spent on long-term training during a fiscal year by the number of graduates supported under that program during the same fiscal year. Since 2001, the Federal cost per RSA supported rehabilitation graduate at the Masters level has typically ranged from \$10,000 to \$12,000. Beginning in 2007, the Department has calculated this measure for individual cohorts of grantees by dividing the sum of all project costs supported with Federal funds (across all years of each individual scholar's training) by the number of degree recipients who successfully completed funded training programs closing in that year. Prior to 2007, this measure was calculated using only the funds directly made available for scholarships. Given that the number of graduates per grantee increased in 2008 and 2009 from prior levels, there has been an evident decrease in cost per graduate.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Demonstration and training programs

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

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$5,325	\$5,750	+\$425

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Demonstration and Training programs are authorized to provide competitive grants to, or contracts with, eligible entities to expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act (the Act) and to further the purposes and policies of the Act. These current-funded discretionary programs also are authorized to support activities that increase the provision, extent, availability, scope, and quality of rehabilitation services under the Act, including related research and evaluation activities.

Section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act authorizes the support of activities to demonstrate methods of service delivery to individuals with disabilities, as well as activities such as technical assistance, systems change, special studies and evaluation, and dissemination and utilization of project findings. Eligible entities include State Vocational Rehabilitation (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.

Sections 303(c) and (d) of the Act authorize a parent information and training program and a Braille training program.

The majority of projects currently supported under Demonstration and Training programs are designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by expanding and improving the availability and provision of rehabilitation and other services. These projects are intended to increase employment outcomes for individuals for whom vocational rehabilitation services were previously unavailable or who previously did not take advantage of such services.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Demonstration and training programs

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(dollars in thousands)
2008 .....	\$10,151 <sup>1</sup>
2009 .....	9,594 <sup>2</sup>
2010 .....	11,601 <sup>3</sup>
2011 .....	6,459
2012 .....	5,325

<sup>1</sup> Includes \$3,100 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

<sup>2</sup> Includes \$3,088 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

<sup>3</sup> Includes \$5,095 thousand for Congressional earmarks.

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$5.750 million for the Demonstration and Training programs in fiscal year 2013, an increase of \$425,000 over the 2012 level for this program. The majority of all funds requested for fiscal year 2013 would provide funding for the continuation of activities that began in previous fiscal years.

Of the amount requested, \$4.9 million would be used to continue support for a grantee that is demonstrating how State VR agencies can achieve high quality employment outcomes for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients. This activity began in fiscal year 2010. The request would also continue support for two Braille Training grants (\$300,000) that began in fiscal year 2009.

This request would also support \$425,000 for new technical assistance (TA) activities. Under this authority, RSA has the flexibility to strategically direct all of its program improvement resources to the greatest need areas and effectively assist the field through technical assistance to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Demonstration and training programs

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Program funding and awards</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
<b>Project funding:</b>			
SSDI/SSI demonstrations	\$1,032 <sup>1</sup>	\$4,893	\$4,893
Braille training	300	300	300
Transition model demonstrations	3,037	0	0
Parent information and training centers	769	0	0
Technical assistance support activities	1,088	0	425
Program performance activities	<u>155</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>55</u>
Subtotal—Program funding	6,381	5,272	5,673
<b>Other program costs:</b>			
Peer review of new award applications	13	0	20
	<u>65</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>57</u>
Minority outreach			
Subtotal—Other program costs	78	53	77
Total—Program funding and program costs	6,459	5,325	5,750
<b>Number of projects:</b>			
New	1	0	1
Continuation	<u>17</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	18	5	5
Total—Number of projects			

<sup>1</sup> FY 2010 funds were used to cover \$516,000 in FY 2011 continuation costs.

#### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

##### **Efficiency Measure**

**Goal:** To expand, improve or further the purposes of activities authorized under the Act.

**Objective:** *Expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation services that lead to employment outcomes.*

The efficiency measure for this program is the percentage of projects that met their goals and objectives as established in their original applications, or as modified during the first year. This efficiency measure is designed to determine whether the grantees are providing the services for which they were awarded funding through the competitive process. During fiscal year 2012, RSA will have 13 grantees submitting their final progress reports, including 6 Transition Model Demonstrations and 7 Parent information and Training Centers. RSA will review the applications submitted by these grantees in relation to their final reports to determine whether these

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### Demonstration and training programs

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grantees achieved the goals and objectives they set out to accomplish. In addition, RSA will assess this process to determine if this measure must be modified in order to accurately capture meaningful data regarding performance.

**Additional information:** RSA has developed performance measures tailored to the specific projects being funded under this program. For example, in fiscal year 2010, RSA established performance measures for the grantee funded under the Model Demonstration Project to Improve Outcomes for Individuals Receiving Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Served by State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies. In order to assess the success of this grantee, RSA will convene a panel of experts to conduct a review to determine the feasibility of the intervention model developed. If determined feasible, the grantee will implement and evaluate the model so that it may be replicated in other State VR agencies. RSA will assess the effectiveness of the model and the grantee's performance in the following areas:

- The degree to which the data collected from the project sites show that the intervention model results in improvement in employment outcomes, such as employment rate, wages at case closure, average hours worked, and percentage of individuals earning an amount greater than substantial gainful activity, as determined by the Social Security Administration, at closure;
- The degree to which the project recommended strategies that could be used by other State VR agencies to implement the model;
- The degree to which the grantee has disseminated its findings to State VR agencies; and
- The responsiveness of the grantee to recommendations made through the reviews conducted by the panel of experts.

The SSDI Demonstration grantee has completed its first year of activity and selected the following 6 States for site visits: Alabama, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Minnesota, Missouri, and Virginia. The grantee has four major activities currently in progress: data analysis of Social Security Data and RSA 911 data to identify State VR agencies that have either better than average performance on achieving employment above substantial gainful activity (SGA) earnings levels; a panel on identifying key components of VR services likely to lead to SGA outcomes; case studies of high performing VR agencies to observe and discuss potential transferrable practices related to improved employment outcomes for SSDI customers; and an early development of the intervention model.

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### Independent living

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII, Parts B and C, and Chapter 2)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
Independent living State grants	\$23,359	\$23,359	0
Centers for independent living	79,953	79,953	0
Services for older individuals who are blind	34,018	34,018	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the independent living programs is to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of American society. Independent living programs provide financial assistance to sustain, expand, and improve independent living services; develop and support statewide networks of centers for independent living; and foster working relationships among State independent living rehabilitation programs, centers for independent living, Statewide Independent Living Councils, Rehabilitation Act programs outside of Title VII, and other relevant Federal and non-Federal programs. The independent living programs are current-funded.

The **Independent Living State Grants** program supports formula grants to States, with funds allotted based on total population. States participating in the State Grants 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. The fiscal year 2011 State allotments are based on the July 1, 2009 estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2010 population counts released in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 allotments are based on the July 1, 2011 estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2011.

To be eligible for financial assistance under the Independent Living (IL) State Grants or Centers for Independent Living program, States are required to establish a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). Each State must also submit a State Plan for Independent Living that is jointly developed and signed by the director of the designated State vocational rehabilitation unit(s) (DSU) and the chairperson of the SILC. States may use these funds to provide resources to support the operation of the SILC and for one or more of the following purposes:

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- to demonstrate ways to expand and improve independent living services;
- to provide independent living services;
- to support the operation of centers for independent living;
- to increase the capacity of public or nonprofit agencies and organizations and other entities to develop comprehensive approaches or systems for providing independent living services;
- to conduct studies and analyses, gather information, develop model policies and procedures, and present information, approaches, strategies, findings, conclusions, and recommendations to Federal, State, and local policymakers;
- to provide training on the independent living philosophy; and
- to provide outreach to populations who are unserved or underserved by programs under Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

The **Centers for Independent Living (CIL)** program provides grants for consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, nonresidential, private nonprofit agencies that are designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provide an array of independent living services. At a minimum, centers are required to provide the core services of information and referral, independent living skills training, peer counseling, and individual and systems advocacy. Most centers are also actively involved in one or more of the following activities: community planning and decisionmaking; school-based peer counseling, role modeling, and skills training; working with local governments and employers to open and facilitate employment opportunities; interacting with local, State, and Federal legislators; and staging recreational events that integrate individuals with disabilities with their non-disabled peers.

A population-based formula determines the total amount that is available for discretionary grants to centers in each State. In most cases, the Department awards funds directly to centers for independent living. In fiscal year 2011, 356 centers and two States received funding from the CIL program. If State funding for CIL operation exceeds the level of Federal CIL funding in any fiscal year, the State may apply for the authority to award grants under this program through its DSU. There are currently only two States, Massachusetts and Minnesota, that are both eligible and have elected to manage their own CIL programs.

In addition to funding centers for independent living, the Department must award between 1.8 and 2 percent of the funds appropriated for this program for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to provide training and technical assistance with respect to planning, developing, conducting, administering, and evaluating centers for independent living. Each State must submit an annual performance report providing information regarding the centers' and SILCs' most pressing training and technical assistance needs.

The Rehabilitation Act establishes a set of standards and assurances that centers for independent living must meet and requires the Department to develop and publish indicators of minimum compliance with the standards. These standards and assurances are used in

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evaluating compliance in the following areas: philosophy, including consumer control and equal access; provision of services on a cross-disability basis; support of the development and achievement of the independent living goals chosen by consumers; advocacy to increase the quality of community options for independent living; provision of independent living core services; resource development; and community capacity-building activities, such as community advocacy, technical assistance, and outreach. Each year, the Department must conduct compliance reviews of at least 15 percent of the centers and one-third of the designated State units funded under this part. The Rehabilitation Act requires the Department to award grants to any eligible agency that had been awarded a grant as of September 30, 1997. In effect, all centers funded by the end of fiscal year 1997 are "grandfathered in" and thus guaranteed continued funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances.

The **Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind** program supports services to assist individuals aged 55 or older whose recent severe visual impairment makes competitive employment extremely difficult to obtain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible. Funds are used to provide independent living services, conduct activities that will improve or expand services for these individuals, and conduct activities to improve public understanding of the problems of these individuals. Services are designed to help persons served under this program to adjust to their blindness by increasing their ability to care for their individual needs. Services provided under this program are typically not covered under private insurance or Medicaid.

Grantees are State vocational rehabilitation agencies for persons who are blind and visually impaired or, in States with no separate agency for persons who are blind, State combined vocational rehabilitation agencies. States participating in the Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind 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. When appropriations for this program exceed \$13 million—as they have since fiscal year 2000—awards are distributed to States according to a formula based on the population of individuals who are 55 years of age or older. The fiscal year 2011 allotments were based on the July 1, 2009 estimates of the population of individuals age 55 and older published by the Census Bureau in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 and 2013 State allotments are based on the April 1, 2010 population counts published in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 allotments will be revised when new population estimates by age group become available.

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### Independent living

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Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

#### Independent living State grants

(dollars in thousands)

2008.....	\$22,193
2009.....	23,450
Recovery Act.....	18,200
2010.....	23,450
2011.....	23,403
2012.....	23,359

#### Centers for independent living

(dollars in thousands)

2008.....	\$73,334
2009.....	77,266
Recovery Act.....	87,500
2010.....	80,266
2011.....	80,105
2012.....	79,953

#### Services for older individuals who are blind

(dollars in thousands)

2008.....	\$32,320
2009.....	34,151
Recovery Act.....	34,300
2010.....	34,151
2011.....	34,083
2012.....	34,018

### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Administration requests \$23.36 million for the Independent Living State Grants (IL State Grants) program, \$79.95 million for the Centers for Independent Living program (CIL), and \$34.02 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (Older Blind) program. The request for each program is the same as the 2012 appropriation.

#### **IL State Grants and Centers for Independent Living**

The Administration requests \$23.36 million for the State Grants program and \$79.95 million for the CIL program, the same as the fiscal year 2012 appropriation. The request for the CIL program would continue support for existing centers, including any new center grants awarded in 2012. Funds requested for the State Grants program would continue the Department's support of 77 designated State units (DSUs) that use grant funds to: support Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs); provide independent living services in unserved and underserved geographic areas; promote coordination among centers for independent living; and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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support the operation of centers for independent living. These services help ensure that individuals with disabilities can live independently and participate as productive members of their communities.

In its fiscal year 2012 budget, the Administration proposed to consolidate the IL State Grants and CIL programs. The Administration has requested funding in fiscal year 2013 under current law because it no longer believes that needed reforms to the programs could be appropriately accomplished through the appropriations process. However, the Administration continues to believe that the concerns it previously identified in support of the proposed consolidation need to be addressed. They are as follows:

There is significant overlap between the two programs. A majority of IL State Grants funding is used for the same purposes as the competitive funds for the CIL program—to provide independent living services, either directly or through grants and contracts with centers for independent living and other providers. The authorized uses of funds are nearly identical for the two programs. The target population of the two programs is also identical—individuals with significant disabilities.

The usual advantages of a competitive program—a stronger focus on performance and accountability—are muted under the CIL program because the authorizing statute requires all centers funded as of fiscal year 1997 to receive noncompetitive funding as long as they continue to meet program and fiscal standards and assurances. In practice, this provision is also applied to centers established after 1997. As a result, all 356 centers in the CIL program are eligible to receive noncompetitive continuing funding in perpetuity.

The structure of the CIL program also puts the Department in the position of monitoring local centers that operate in a service system that is largely organized, planned, and in many States, primarily funded at the State level, with the Designated State Unit and the State Independent Living Council occupying central roles. Federal oversight and monitoring of individual centers is administratively inefficient and not predominantly focused on State and local needs.

These factors contribute to an independent living service system with overlapping programs, fragmented funding, tangled oversight, and service duplication among State agencies, non-profit consumer-controlled centers, and private contractors. The Administration is concerned that these structural features create inefficiencies and are not ideal for delivering services to consumers. The Administration believes these concerns should be addressed as part of the reauthorization of these programs.

The Administration also believes that reforms to these programs should maintain consumer control of centers; provide adequate representation of the centers on the SILC; ensure program funds are predominantly spent by centers; maintain State matching requirements; and realign monitoring responsibilities so that the Federal government can hold States accountable for their service systems and States can monitor, and be responsive to, the localized needs of centers and consumers.

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#### Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind

The Administration requests \$34.02 million for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind program for fiscal year 2013, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 American Community Survey, 6.9 percent of individuals 65 and older (about 2.7 million people) have a vision-related disability. The occurrence of a sensory disability was more than six times greater among older adults than working-age people, and this population is growing relatively quickly. Persons age 55 or older are projected to increase as a share of the population over the next decade and beyond. Independent living services for these individuals are predominately provided through contracts administered by State vocational rehabilitation agencies, not centers for independent living, and many of the needs of this target population are different from the population that would be served under the proposed Grants for Independent Living program. For these reasons, the Administration believes a sustained investment in this program separate from the Grants for Independent Living program is warranted. At the requested funding level, an estimated 16 States would receive the minimum award of \$225,000, and the Territories would continue to be funded at their minimum level.

#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Measures:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Centers for Independent Living:			
Number of Grantees	358	358	358
Minimum State Allocation	\$859	\$857	\$857
Average State allocation	\$1,486	\$1,482	\$1,482
Minority outreach	\$801	\$800	\$800
Training and Technical Assistance	\$1,442	\$1,454	\$1,454
Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind:			
Number of Grantees	56	56	56
Minimum State award	\$225	\$225	\$225
Average State award	\$646	\$645	\$645
Minority outreach	\$341	\$340	\$340
Independent Living State Grants:			
Number of Grantees	77	77	77
Minimum State award	\$313	\$312	\$312
Average State award	\$443	\$442	\$442
Minority outreach	\$234	\$234	\$234

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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#### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

##### **Performance Measures**

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA 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 resources provided in previous years, including funding provided under the Recovery Act, and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by the program.

The current performance measures of the Centers for Independent Living and the State Grants for Independent Living programs would continue to be used in fiscal year 2013 as part of GPRA reporting for the proposed Grants for Independent Living program. The objectives and goals of the proposed program would not change substantially from their current form shown below.

**Goal: To promote and support a philosophy of independent living (IL)—including a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy—in order to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.**

**Objective:** *Through the provision of IL services (including the four IL core services), increase the percentage of consumers who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.*

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
<b>2008</b>	67	41
<b>2009</b>	69	58
<b>2010</b>	69	60
<b>2011</b>	70	
<b>2012</b>	70	
<b>2013</b>	71	

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**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable assistive technology which results in increased independence in at least one significant life area, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2008	71	44
2009	73	62
2010	74	69
2011	76	
2012	76	
2013	76	

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers consumers who report having access to previously unavailable transportation, as a result of direct services provided by an Independent Living Center (including referral to another service provider).

Year	Target	Actual
2008	83	18
2009	84	73
2010	86	69
2011	87	
2012	87	
2013	87	

**Additional information:** For these measures, grantees in the Centers for Independent Living program are required under section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act to report annually detailed data on the services they provided and the resulting outcomes, including the percentage of their consumers who report—as result of services provided by a CIL (including referral to another service provider), designated State unit, or designated State unit’s grantee or contractor—having access to previously unavailable transportation, appropriate accommodations to receive health care services, and/or assistive technology resulting in increased independence in at least one significant life area. The denominator is determined by the grantee based on the number of consumers who have goals specified in their Independent Living Plans that require measurable progress on these intermediate outcomes (access to transportation, health care services, and/or assistive technology) for their achievement. These are not the only outcomes of interest to CIL grantees or consumers, but RSA believes that a significant portion of CIL activities are directly related to these outcomes and that improved performance on these outcomes will result in increased independence for CIL consumers overall.

Data for 2010 indicate that targets were not met in any of the outcome areas reported under these measures. However, performance on two of the measures showed progress compared to the previous year. The third measure (access to transportation) showed a small decline. RSA staff and the program’s technical assistance grantees have conducted data quality training sessions in recent years to improve the validity of the data. RSA also implemented a series of automated data checks, which have resulted in further improvements in the accuracy of the

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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data. RSA will examine whether to reset targets for these measures using the more accurate data. Data for 2011 are expected in April 2012.

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Centers' consumers who move out of institutions into a community-based setting through the provision of Independent Living services (including the four independent living core services).

Year	Target	Actual
2008	55	44
2009	56	45
2010	56	54
2011	57	
2012	57	
2013	58	

**Additional information:** Many CILs believe that one of the most important functions of the CIL program is assisting people with disabilities with moving out of institutions and living independently. Consumers counted by this measure must have set a goal to moved out of an institution or nursing home and now live in a community-based setting. This measure is calculated by dividing the number of consumers who, with the assistance of a center for independent living, moved to a community-based setting by the number of consumers who set a community living goal ( $4,507 / 8,361 = 54\%$ ). The percentage of consumers who met their community living goal in 2010 increased from the prior year, but the target was not met. RSA staff and the program's technical assistance grantees have conducted data quality trainings in recent years to improve the validity of the data. RSA also implemented a series of data checks, which have resulted in further improvements in the accuracy of the annual reports. Data for 2011 are expected in April 2012.

**Objective:** *Increase access to community life for persons with disabilities through the provision of community services.*

The Department developed new measures in order to capture CIL efforts at the community level on key outcomes that correspond to the outcome measures for services and activities provided at the individual level. Grantees have found that measuring and reporting valid and reliable data on these outcomes at the community level is much more difficult. RSA is working to develop new measures that capture community-level activities and will include these new measures in the next version of the section 704 reporting instrument.

**Objective:** *Through the provision of services (either directly or through contracts), increase the percentage of consumers receiving services funded through the Older Blind program who report having access to services needed to improve their ability to live more independently and participate fully in their communities.*

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**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Older Blind program consumers who have access to previously unavailable assistive technology aids and devices.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	52	59
2009	54	68
2010	56	57
2011	58	
2012	58	
2013	58	

**Additional information:** The performance in 2010 exceeded the target but declined from the prior year. This measure is calculated by dividing the number of consumers who received assistive technology (39,425) by the total number of Older Blind program consumers (39,425 / 69,723 = 57%). Data for 2011 are expected by April 2012.

**Measure:** The percentage of Independent Living Older Blind program consumers who report an improvement in daily living skills.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	56	49
2009	57	68
2010	58	60
2011	59	
2012	59	
2013	60	

**Additional information:** The performance for 2010 exceeded the target but declined from the prior year. This measure is calculated by dividing the number of Older Blind program consumers who reported improvement in daily living skills by the total number of Older Blind program consumers. Daily living skills include activities such as bathing, moving around the home, getting out of bed or a chair, and eating a meal. State agencies collect and provide this data in their annual program reports. Data for 2011 are expected by April 2012.

### Efficiency Measures

The Department established two efficiency measures for the CIL program: (1) the number of consumer service records closed with all goals met for every \$10,000 in net operating funds and (2) the number of consumer goals accomplished per \$10,000 in net operating funds. In fiscal year 2007, program staff began pilot testing these measures during site reviews of CIL grantees to see how grantees respond to the measures and how the data can be used to help monitor grantees. RSA commissioned a contractor to analyze the efficiency data. The results showed that CILs varied widely in their reported efficiency depending on the size, location, funding sources, intensity of services, and accuracy of records of each CIL, calling into question to utility of these measures.

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title V, Section 509)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$18,031	\$18,031	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program supports a statewide system to 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. The purpose of this program is to provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and conduct advocacy to ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law. 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.

Funds must be set aside under this program for two activities before awarding grants to eligible States and outlying areas with the remaining appropriation. If the appropriation is equal to or exceeds \$5.5 million, the Secretary must first set aside 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 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (the Act) requires that in any year in which the total appropriation exceeds \$10.5 million, the Secretary 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. The Secretary distributes the remainder of the appropriation to the eligible systems within the States and outlying areas based on population estimates and after satisfying minimum allocations. The fiscal year 2011 allotments were based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates published by the Census Bureau in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2010 population estimates released in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2011 Census data released in December 2011.

The Act also requires the Secretary to increase the minimum allotments for States and outlying areas by a percentage not greater than the percentage increase in the total amount appropriated for this program for the previous fiscal year. The Act establishes a minimum allotment of \$100,000 for States or one-third of 1 percent of funds remaining after the technical

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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assistance set-aside 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.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$16,201
2009.....	17,101
2010.....	18,101
2011.....	18,065
2012.....	18,031

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$18.031 million for the Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights (PAIR) program in fiscal year 2013, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. Federal support for PAIR enables States to provide assistance and information to eligible individuals with disabilities and thereby ensure the protection of their rights under Federal law.

During fiscal year 2010, PAIR programs reported representing 15,453 individuals and responding to 43,406 requests for information or referral. Of the cases handled by PAIR programs in that year, the greatest number of specified issues involved government benefits/services (19 percent), education (16 percent), and employment (11 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 2010, 53 out of the 57 PAIR programs (93 percent) reported that these activities resulted in changes in policies and practices benefiting individuals with disabilities. This number represents the same percentage as reported in fiscal year 2008, but a decrease from 2009 when 55 out of 57 PAIR programs (96 percent) reported systemic advocacy that resulted in change in policies and practices.

The following examples of case services provided in 2010 illustrate how PAIR programs assist individuals and bring about systemic change:

- Disability Rights New Mexico (DRNM) assisted a 13-year-old boy with a specific learning disability whose special education services were not provided as documented in his Individualized Education Program (IEP). The student was entitled to ancillary services for a speech and language impairment. A DRNM advocate attended two IEP meetings and a negotiation with the district director of special education. Compensatory services were offered to the student and accepted by his parents. The parents learned about their son's rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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- An individual enlisted the help of the Missouri Protection and Advocacy Services (MPAS) to get disability-related modifications made to the apartment in which she resided. The client had requested, but had not received, accommodations such as a railing for the front porch. An MPAS advocate helped the client to negotiate with the local property managers and the representatives of the property management company. After lengthy delays, the modifications began, but the client and advocate had to continue following up with the property manager regarding issues such as removal of debris from the building site. The case was finally closed when the modifications were complete.
- The Disability Law and Advocacy Center of Tennessee (DLAC) was contacted by the parent of an 11-year-old female because her school refused to consistently provide Diastat, an emergency anti-seizure medication. The school did not have a backup plan or trained volunteers when the nurse was unavailable to give the medication. DLAC explained State law requirements about administration of anti-seizure medication and educated the parent about advocating for her child. As a result, this parent was able to effectively advocate for the school to consistently administer Diastat during the school day. Now the student can attend school with confidence that she will receive appropriate medical intervention if she has a seizure.
- The Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA) represented a child who has a traumatic brain injury and was not receiving appropriate therapy and supports to make adequate progress in school. VOPA opened a case on two issues: (1) advocating for the school to provide an assistive technology (AT) evaluation relating to a reading device, and (2) amend the IEP to include goals, objectives, services, and/or accommodations that will assist her to read independently. The school agreed to provide an AT evaluation. In the AT evaluation, the evaluator recommended: (1) a mini laptop with a voice output system, (2) co-writing software program, and (3) a digital recorder. At the follow-up IEP meeting, the IEP team agreed to incorporate the recommendations made in the AT evaluation. Specifically, the IEP team agreed to provide all the above referenced AT accommodations to assist the client to read more independently.
- VOPA conducted a survey at a State university campus and identified numerous issues related to terrain and path of travel throughout the campus; a lack of accessible route maps; inaccessible building entrances; a lack of access to upper floors at the bookstore, cafeteria, and a large auditorium in one classroom building; and improper location of accessible parking spaces. The university has incorporated VOPA's recommendations into its campus plan and staff will be trained on accessible route maps with electronic versions more visible on their web site. The university will work to minimize blockage of accessible routes during construction projects and to ensure accessible parking spaces are near an accessible entrance. The university will develop a Campus Way-Finding Master Plan to address lack of clear marking of accessible routes and entrances to buildings, and a new ADA Executive Committee was formed to address long-term accessibility goals and concerns.

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### Protection and advocacy of individual rights

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES**

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Information inquiries/referrals	43,400	43,400	43,400
Individuals provided case services	15,400	15,400	15,400

Note: Data for fiscal years 2011 through 2013 are projected from actual data collected for fiscal year 2010 in which PAIRs responded to 43,406 requests for information or referral and represented 15,453 individuals. Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in April 2012.

#### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

##### **Performance Measures**

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this 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.*

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

Year	Target	Actual
<b>2008</b>	83	93
<b>2009</b>	83	96
<b>2010</b>	85	93
<b>2011</b>	93	
<b>2012</b>	93	
<b>2013</b>	93	

**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. Of the 57 PAIR programs, 52 (91 percent) reported success on this measure in fiscal year 2007, and 53 of the 57 (93 percent) PAIR programs

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### **Protection and advocacy of individual rights**

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reported success in fiscal year 2008. In fiscal year 2009, 55 of the 57 (96 percent) PAIR programs reported success on the measure, exceeding the target established for 2009. In fiscal year 2010, 53 of the 57 (93 percent) PAIR programs reported success on the measure, exceeding the target established for 2010. The measure for success has been raised to 93 percent for fiscal years 2011 through 2013.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

(Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0 <sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
	\$108,817	\$106,817	-\$2,000

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mission of the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) is to generate knowledge and promote its effective use to improve the abilities of people with disabilities to perform activities of their choice in the community, and also to expand society's capacity to provide full opportunities and accommodations for its citizens with disabilities. NIDRR conducts comprehensive and coordinated programs of research and related activities to maximize the full inclusion, social integration, employment, and independent living of individuals with disabilities of all ages. The purposes of NIDRR are to:

- Promote, coordinate, and provide for research, demonstration and training, and related activities with respect to individuals with disabilities;
- Widely disseminate findings, conclusions, and recommendations resulting from its activities; and
- Provide leadership in advancing the quality of life of individuals with disabilities.

NIDRR's research is conducted through a network of individual research projects and centers of excellence located throughout the Nation. Most funding is awarded through competitive grants, and most of the funds are awarded to universities or providers of rehabilitation or related services.

As required by the Rehabilitation Act in §202(h), NIDRR is working to update its Long-Range plan and is currently operating under a plan published February 15, 2006 entitled *Long-Range Plan for Fiscal Years 2005—2009*. This plan outlines three long-term performance goals and its strategies for achieving these goals. These goals are:

- Goal 1: Advancing knowledge through capacity building,
- Goal 2: Advancing knowledge through research and related activities, and
- Goal 3: Advancing knowledge through translation and dissemination.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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NIDRR funding supports a portfolio of research and development, capacity building, and knowledge translation projects that is aligned with these long-term performance goals.

Following is a description of the primary areas for which NIDRR makes awards:

*Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs).* RRTCs receive funding to conduct coordinated and advanced programs of research, training, and information dissemination in problem areas that are specified by NIDRR. More specifically, RRTCs conduct research to improve rehabilitation methodologies and service delivery systems, alleviate or stabilize disabling conditions, and promote maximum social and economic independence for persons with disabilities; provide training, including graduate, pre-service, and in-service training, to help rehabilitation personnel provide more effective rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities; and serve as centers of excellence in rehabilitation research for providers and for individuals with disabilities and their representatives. Typically, awards are for 5 years. However, NIDRR also may award grants for less than 5 years to support new or innovative research.

*Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs).* The RERCs conduct research on issues dealing with rehabilitation technology, including rehabilitation engineering and assistive technology devices and services. RERC activities include developing and disseminating innovative methods of applying advanced technology, scientific achievements, and psychological and social knowledge to rehabilitation issues such as the removal of environmental barriers; developing and disseminating technology designed to lessen the effects of sensory loss, mobility impairment, chronic pain, and communication difficulties; scientific research to assist in meeting the employment and independent living needs of individuals with severe disabilities; and stimulating the production and distribution of equipment in the private sector, as well as clinical evaluations of equipment. Each RERC must provide training opportunities to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities, to become researchers and practitioners in the field of rehabilitation technology. Awards are for 5 years, except that grants to new recipients or to support new or innovative research may be made for less than 5 years.

*Model Systems.* NIDRR funds model systems projects in three areas: spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, and burn injury. Model systems funding supports 5-year grants to establish innovative projects for the delivery, demonstration, and evaluation of comprehensive medical, vocational, and other rehabilitation services to meet the wide range of needs of individuals in these areas. Grantees in each of the three areas contribute to a national database that is supported by NIDRR funding. These model systems programs have become platforms for conducting multi-site research, including randomized controlled trials to determine the efficacy of interventions.

- *Model Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems.* The Model Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) program funds research to meet the wide range of needs of individuals with spinal cord injuries. (See <http://www.ncddr.org/rpp/hf/hfdw/mscis/>.) The projects also disseminate information to individuals with SCI and others.
- *Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems.* The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Model Systems projects are research and demonstration grants designed to advance the understanding of

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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TBI and its consequences and improve rehabilitation outcomes. Currently, the NIDRR TBI model systems is the largest nonmilitary TBI service delivery/research entity participating in various intergovernmental efforts to improve treatment and outcomes for returning veterans. (See <http://www.tbindsc.org>.)

- *Burn Model Systems.* The Burn Model Systems (BMS) projects are research and demonstration grants designed to establish, demonstrate, and evaluate a model system of care for burn injury survivors. The goal of the projects is to reduce disability by improving treatment and rehabilitation. (See <http://mama.uchsc.edu/pub/NIDRR/index.html>.)

*Field-Initiated Projects (FIPs).* Field-Initiated Projects supplement NIDRR's directed research and address a wide range of topics identified by investigators, including research, demonstrations, development, and knowledge translation. These projects allow NIDRR to address emerging developments in the field beyond the scope of announced priorities. Most of these awards are made for 3 years.

*Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects (DRRPs).* Grantees under this program focus on discrete research topics identified by NIDRR and address problems encountered by people with disabilities through a variety of methods that may include research, demonstrations, training, dissemination, utilization, technical assistance, or combinations of these activities.

*Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers (DBTAC).* The DBTAC grants support a network of 10 regional centers that provide detailed technical assistance, disseminate information, and provide training related to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and promote awareness of the ADA. Typically, these awards are for 5 years.

*Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training (ARRT).* The ARRT program supports grants to institutions to provide advanced postdoctoral training in areas that are directly related to NIDRR's research portfolio, such as medical rehabilitation, engineering, technology, community integration, and employment. Grants are made to institutions to recruit qualified persons with doctoral or similar advanced degrees and prepare them to conduct independent research in areas related to disability and rehabilitation. These training programs must operate in interdisciplinary environments and provide training in rigorous scientific methods.

*Small Business Innovation Research projects (SBIR).* SBIR awards support the development of new rehabilitation technologies that are useful to persons with disabilities by inviting the participation of small business firms with strong research capabilities in science, engineering, or educational technology. This 2-phase program takes a product from development to market readiness. During Phase I, firms conduct feasibility studies to evaluate the scientific and technical merit of an idea. During Phase II, they expand on the results and pursue further development. In order to be eligible, small businesses must be American-owned and independently operated and be for-profit with no more than 500 employees. The principal researcher must be employed by the business.

*Switzer Research Fellowships.* Switzer research fellows receive 1-year fellowships to carry out discrete research activities that are related to NIDRR's research priorities or to pursue studies in areas of importance to the rehabilitation community.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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*Outreach to Minority Institutions.* The Rehabilitation Act (§21) requires that 1 percent of funds appropriated for programs authorized under certain titles be reserved for awards to minority entities and Indian tribes, or to provide outreach and assistance to minority entities and Indian tribes.

*Other Activities:* NIDRR funding also supports a variety of other activities, including knowledge translation; collaborative projects with other agencies; development and maintenance of grantee reporting systems; program review; and reporting, evaluation, long-range planning, and the *Interagency Committee on Disability Research* (ICDR). The primary purpose of the ICDR is to promote cooperation across various Federal agencies in the development and execution of disability and rehabilitation research activities. (See <http://www.icdr.us/>.)

NIDRR funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$105,741
2009.....	107,741
2010.....	109,241
2011.....	109,023
2012.....	108,817

### FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST

The Administration requests \$106.817 million for the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, \$2 million less than the fiscal year 2012 level. The request would enable NIDRR to cover the costs of grants that began in previous fiscal years (\$69.6 million) and provide \$26.2 million for new grant awards.

Approximately half of the funds for new awards would be used in two of NIDRR's grant programs—the Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTCs) programs and the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers (RERCs) programs. Priorities for the RRTCs have not yet been established, but topics of interest for fiscal year 2013 include RRTCs on:

- Disability Statistics and Demographics;
- Individuals with Disabilities Living in Rural Areas;
- Community Living for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities;
- Community Living for Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities;
- Health and Function for Individuals with Intellectual and Development Disabilities; and
- Aging with a Physical Disability.

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Priorities for the RERCs have not yet been established, but topics of interest for fiscal year 2013 include RERCs on:

- Universal Interface/Information Technology Access
- Aging with Technology
- Rehabilitation Strategies, Techniques and Interventions;
- Information and Communication Technologies;
- Individual Mobility and Manipulation; and
- Physical Access and Transportation.

In addition, other new awards in fiscal year 2013 will be made under the Disability and Rehabilitation Research, the Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems, the Minority Institutions Capacity Building, and the Knowledge Translation programs.

NIDRR also is in the process of establishing, through rule-making, a new process and framework that is intended to strengthen its overall research portfolio by expanding opportunities for field-initiated work within a clear framework that is designed to both encourage innovation and promote rigorous research and by allowing for a regular schedule of competitions in pre-established topical areas. To establish clear and consistent requirements for similar types of projects, NIDRR would issue regulations that define the types of projects to be supported and specify the application requirements for each of them. Under the proposed framework, NIDRR would support four types of projects. They are:

- **Exploration:** Generate new and refined analyses, findings, hypotheses, and theories that enhance knowledge of the barriers to and facilitators of improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities. This research can also be used to identify existing practices, programs, or policies that are associated with better outcomes for individuals with disabilities. The results from this work may either inform the development of interventions or lead to evaluations of interventions.
- **Intervention development:** Generate and test interventions—such as research tools, products, programs, practices, and policies—that have potential to improve outcomes for individuals with disabilities. NIDRR supports grants to develop innovative interventions or to improve existing interventions.
- **Efficacy and replication:** Evaluate the efficacy of interventions—such as research tools, products, programs, practices, and policies—to determine whether they are feasible and practical and can have a positive impact on outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Efficacy studies can be used to assess the strength of an intervention's impact on a desired outcome. Efficacy studies often apply experimental or quasi-experimental research methods.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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- **Scale-up evaluations:** Conduct evaluations to determine whether interventions—such as research tools, products, programs, practices, and policies—are effective in producing improved outcomes for individuals with disabilities when implemented in real-world settings.

NIDRR's regulations would also specify the content areas in which NIDRR plans to support new research. The broad content areas, which would be based on the domains in NIDRR's current Long-Range Plan, would be employment, participation and community living, and health and function. In each domain area, NIDRR would specify broadly-framed topical priority areas, in which applicants would have flexibility to determine the specific topics and methodologies to be proposed in response to the needs of persons with disabilities, families, and service providers. These priorities would remain in place for up to five years. Having the topical areas in place for a prolonged period of time would provide the field with stable opportunities for funding. Applicants who are not successful in one competition would be able to revise and improve their applications knowing that there will soon be another opportunity to have their proposal funded. Using recurring topical priorities would also simplify the management of NIDRR's competitions by reducing the need for annual rule-making.

During fiscal year 2012, NIDRR plans to request applications for projects in the employment domain under this program of research. Possible topics may include:

- Policy incentives / disincentives;
- Employer / employment practices;
- Transition of young people with disabilities to postsecondary education and/or employment;
- Individual preparedness for the current and future workforce;
- Vocational rehabilitation; and
- Technology to support employment.

In concert with the development of the new framework for conducting research grant competitions, NIDRR is revising its Long-Range Plan (LRP) for fiscal years 2013 through 2017. The LRP, which will include priorities, goals, and objectives, will be published in the Federal Register during fiscal year 2012 to allow stakeholders to comment on the direction NIDRR is proposing to take over the next five years.

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

Project Type	Amount of Funding			Number of Awards		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
<i>Research Portfolio-Employment</i>						
Continuations	0	0	TBD	0	0	TBD
New awards	<u>0</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	0	TBD	TBD	0	TBD	TBD
<i>Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers</i>						
Continuations	\$25,744 <sup>1</sup>	\$21,730	TBD	26	26	TBD
New awards	<u>700</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Subtotal	26,444	TBD	TBD	27	TBD	TBD
<i>Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centers</i>						
Continuations	13,091	8,010	TBD	16	14	TBD
New awards	<u>1,900</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Subtotal	14,991	TBD	TBD	18	TBD	TBD
<i>Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	0	7,117	\$8,075	0	15	16
New awards	<u>7,275</u>	<u>900</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	7,275	8,017	8,075	15	16	16
<i>Traumatic Brain Injury Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	8,565	2,334	8,134	18	3	17
New awards	<u>625</u>	<u>7,500</u>	<u>1,700</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>2</u>
Subtotal	9,190	9,834	9,834	19	19	19
<i>Burn Model Systems</i>						
Continuations	1,750	0	1,850	5	0	5
New	<u>0</u>	<u>1,850</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	1,750	1,850	1,850	5	5	5
<i>Field Initiated Projects</i>						
Continuations	7,958	7,853	TBD	43	43	TBD
New awards	<u>5,539</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Subtotal	13,497	TBD	TBD	66	TBD	TBD

<sup>1</sup> FY 2011 funds were used to cover \$4,087,000 in FY 2012 continuation costs.

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

Project Type	Funding Amount			Number of Awards		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
<i>Disability and Rehabilitation Research Projects</i>						
Continuations	\$4,496	\$4,999	\$4,955	9	11	8
New awards	<u>500</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Subtotal	4,996	4,999	TBD	10	11	TBD
<i>Advanced Rehabilitation Research and Training</i>						
Continuations	2,236	2,392	2,247	15	16	16
New awards	<u>600</u>	<u>450</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Subtotal	2,836	2,842	TBD	19	19	TBD
<i>Minority Outreach</i>						
Continuations	1,098	1,101	0	3	3	0
New	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,088</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>
Subtotal	1,098	1,101	1,088	3	3	3
<i>Small Business Innovation Research</i>						
Continuations	1,250	1,250	1,270	5	5	5
New	<u>2,449</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>2,375</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>20</u>
Subtotal	3,699	3,625	3,645	26	25	25
<i>Switzer Research Fellowships</i>						
Continuations	0	0	0	0	0	0
New	<u>605</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>430</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
Subtotal	605	430	430	9	6	6
<i>Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers</i>						
Continuations	0	11,925	12,540	0	11	12
New	<u>11,925</u>	<u>615</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	11,925	12,540	12,540	11	12	12
<i>Knowledge Translation</i>						
Continuations	2,050	2,850	2,650	3	4	4
New awards	<u>850</u>	<u>750</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Subtotal	2,900	3,600	3,650	4	5	5

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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#### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

Project Type	Funding Amount			Number of Awards		
	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Subtotal, continuation grants	\$68,238	\$71,561	\$69,586	143	158	TBD
Subtotal new grants	<u>32,968</u>	<u>24,720</u>	<u>26,200</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>TBD</u>	<u>TBD</u>
Total grants	101,206	96,281	95,786	232	TBD	TBD
Other Activities (Contracts)	7,056	11,886	10,531			
Peer review of new grant applications	<u>761</u>	<u>650</u>	<u>500</u>			
Subtotal	7,817	12,536	11,031			
Total, NIDRR	109,023	108,817	106,817			

NOTE: Amounts shown as "TBD" are still to be determined.

#### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

##### **Performance Measures**

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**Goal:** To conduct high-quality research and related activities that lead to high-quality products.

**Objective:** *Advance knowledge through capacity building: Increase capacity to conduct and use high-quality and relevant disability and rehabilitation research and related activities designed to guide decision-making, change practice, and improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.*

**Measure:** The percentage of NIDRR-supported fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students who publish results of NIDRR-sponsored research in refereed journals.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		12.2
2009		11.3
2010		8.9
2011		
2012		
2013	TBD	

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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**Additional information:** For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information. See: <http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>. Due to the large differences among the first 3 years of data, NIDRR intends to collect at least 1 more year of data before establishing targets for this measure. A single author is counted only once if he or she produces multiple peer-reviewed publications, and fellows or graduate students who co-authored a publication are counted individually for their contributions to one publication.

In 2010, there were a total of 700 currently supported NIDRR fellows, post-doc trainees and doctoral students. Sixty-two or 8.9 percent of the 700 fellows, post-doctoral trainees, and doctoral students produced publications that appeared in refereed journals. This statistic requires some qualification because of the lag time it takes to have publications appear. Some of the publications produced by the 2010 students will not appear until 2011 or later. In addition publishing in refereed journals only allow for the calculation of a rough estimate using currently funded students in the denominator.

Therefore, using available data, we derive the following rough estimate for the measure above. The following funding mechanisms support researchers who publish and who were counted in this measure: Rehabilitation Research and Training Centers (RRTC), Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center (RERC), Advanced Rehabilitation Research Training Grant (ARRT), Model Systems (MS), Disability Rehabilitation Research Project, (DRRP) and Field Initiated Projects (FIP) grants. These data do not include those funded by Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR). Data for fiscal year 2011 will be available in December 2012.

**Measure:** Percentage of NIDRR-funded grant applications that receive an average peer review score of 85 or higher.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	99	84
2009	96	94
2010	96	94
2011	96	93
2012	96	
2013	96	

**Additional information:** This measure assesses the extent to which NIDRR-funded grant applications are judged by expert review panels to be of high quality. Data for the measure include all grant awards made within a given fiscal year. Fiscal year 2012 data will be available in December 2012.

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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**Measure:** Percentage of new grants that assess the effectiveness of interventions, programs, and devices using rigorous methods.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	49	63
2009	35	46
2010	60	32
2011	56	
2012	61	
2013	62	

**Additional information:** This measure provides information on the proportion of NIDRR grantees that are engaged in experimental, quasi-experimental, or single subject research to determine whether interventions, programs, and devices are effective. The percentage of NIDRR grants that include tightly controlled research methods, such as true experimental, quasi-experimental, or single-subject methodologies, began high and then declined over a period of years from 65 percent in fiscal year 2002 to 35 percent in fiscal year 2006. The percentage increased significantly in 2008, only to decline again in 2010. The variation across years is affected by the mix of grants funded in a particular funding cycle. Fiscal year 2011 data will be available in December 2012.

**Objective:** *Advance knowledge through translation and dissemination: Promote the effective use of scientific-based knowledge, technologies, and applications to inform policy, improve practice, and enhance the lives of individuals with disabilities.*

**Measure:** The number of new or improved NIDRR-funded assistive and universally designed technologies, products, and devices transferred to industry for potential commercialization.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	27	23
2009	24	30
2010	27	15
2011	15	16
2012	16	
2013	29	

**Additional information:** In fiscal year 2010, NIDRR's Annual Performance Report asked grantees implementing development projects to identify: "What stage of the development process are you in during this reporting period?" Those selecting choice "(f) commercialization" are included in this measure.

In 2011, NIDRR grantees reported 145 development projects, of these 16 were reported as technology products and devices that were transferred to industry. We expect that that this

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### National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

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number will remain relatively small because of the length of time it takes to develop new technologies.

Development projects funded by NIDRR through three funding mechanisms are included in this measure. These include Small Business Innovative Research Phase II (SBIRs), Rehabilitation Engineering and Research Centers (RERCs), and Field Initiated Programs (FIPs).

**Measure:** The average number of publications per award based on NIDRR-funded research and development activities in refereed journals.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	3.0	1.28
2009	2.0	1.37
2010	3.0	1.54
2011	1.4	
2012	1.4	
2013	1.5	

**Additional information:** For this measure, refereed journals are those journals that are recognized by the Thompson Institute for Scientific Information journal selection process (<http://www.thompsonscientific.com/cgi-bin/jrnlst/jloptions.cgi?PC=master>). The methodology for determining performance under this measure was changed in 2007 to include only NIDRR projects that are expected to produce publications as part of their specified tasks. This measure is now limited to NIDRR research grantees funded under the RRTC, RERC, ARRT, MS, DRRP, and FIP programs. In addition, the methodology was changed to ensure that publications related to a grant were counted only once, regardless of the number of authors under the grant that participated in the publication. In fiscal year 2010-11, 382 NIDRR grantees published an average of 1.54 publications per grant in referred journals. This rate was up slightly from the previous year. The 2013 target was increased slightly based upon actual data. Fiscal year 2011 data for this measure will be available by December 2012.

**Objective:** Enhance the efficiency of the NIDRR grant award process.

### Efficiency Measures

**Measure:** The percentage of grant competitions for a given fiscal year that are announced by the beginning of that fiscal year (October 1).

Year	Target	Actual
2008	90	75
2009	70	21
2010	75	0
2011	50	0
2012	30	
2013	40	

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**Measure:** The percentage of grant awards issued within 6 months of the competition closing date.

Year	Target	Actual
2008	90	90
2009	80	84
2010	85	94
2011	85	40
2012	50	
2013	60	

**Additional information:** NIDRR has established efficiency measures that assess its performance in announcing grant competitions on a regular schedule and awarding grants in a timely manner. A regular announcement schedule will allow potential applicants to better schedule their workload. NIDRR's goal is to announce all grant competitions for each fiscal year by the beginning of the fiscal year (October 1) and to notify applicants whether they have received an award within 6 months of application closing dates. However, there are numerous factors and levels of review that can affect the schedule, not all of which are under the NIDRR's control. As shown, in fiscal year 2011 NIDRR did not have any competitions announced by October 1, and made 6 of its 15 (40%) grant competition awards within 6 months of the closing date. Fiscal year 2012 data for these measures will be available in October 2012.

#### Other Performance Information

In 2009, NIDRR contracted with the National Academy of Science (NAS) to study the processes NIDRR uses to establish priorities, conduct peer reviews of applications, and to manage NIDRR grants. The study consists of two components, a process study and a summative review. During the summative review, NAS developed a sampling procedure for selecting 30 grantees to be reviewed each year. The review covers all products produced by these grantees. Because grantees have multiple projects and each project will report on its two most important outcomes, this will extend the scope of the review to many more products. The report and data from the summative review was released in draft on November 2, 2011 and will be made final on February 29<sup>th</sup> 2012. NIDRR has the option to extend this contract to review two additional cycles of NIDRR's priority development, grant-making, and product evaluations.

The Department plans to use the results of this study to improve the priority setting and grants making process at NIDRR. The study will also provide data that can be used to assess the performance of grantees, to develop a new ongoing review process, and to supply data for use with the Government Performance and Results Act measures.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Helen Keller National Center

(Helen Keller National Center Act)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$9,145	\$9,145	0

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2004; continued funding is proposed for this program in FY 2013 through appropriations language.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths and Adults (HKNC) was created by Congress in 1969, and operates under the auspices of Helen Keller Services for the Blind, Inc. The Center provides services on a national basis to adults who are deaf-blind, their families, and service providers through two component programs: a national headquarters center located just outside New York City, in Sands Point, New York, with a residential training and rehabilitation facility where deaf-blind individuals receive intensive specialized services; and a network of 10 regional field offices that provide referral, counseling, and transition assistance to deaf-blind individuals and technical assistance to service providers.

The purpose of the program at the national headquarters center is to provide direct services for individuals with deaf-blindness in order to enhance their potential for employment and to live independently in their home communities. The program strives to provide clients with enhanced mobility, improved means of communication, constructive participation in the home and community, increased employability, and other services and training pertinent to their personal development. The headquarters program also offers training and consultation to other programs serving individuals who are deaf-blind through a technical assistance center and a national training team. The national training team provides training nationwide on a request basis, with the requesting agency covering the travel costs for the team. The national training team also coordinates onsite conferences and workshops across the country to train professionals working with individuals who are deaf-blind.

The Center employs 11 regional representatives to serve individuals who are deaf-blind in their home communities. These representatives provide a variety of services, including training for State and local service agency staff, general technical assistance, program assessment, community advocacy, and help in developing individualized service plans for deaf-blind clients of State vocational rehabilitation counselors, mental health workers, and special education programs. In addition, the regional offices provide counseling, information, and referral services for individuals who are deaf-blind and their families to assist them to live and work independently. The regional representatives also assist clients who have received training at headquarters with making the transition back to their home community.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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HKNC also operates a number of special projects related to deaf-blindness. These include a service project for deaf-blind individuals who are elderly, a national parent and family services project, and a small but expanding research portfolio focused on areas such as assistive technology and diseases that cause deaf-blindness. In addition, the Center operates an internship program for undergraduate and graduate students in the field of deaf-blindness. These interns are financially supported by their sponsoring institutions or colleges during their stay and are expected to initiate and complete at least one project while at HKNC.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$8,326
2009.....	8,326
2010.....	9,181
2011.....	9,163
2012.....	9,145

### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Administration's request for the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) is \$9.145 million, which would maintain funding at the fiscal year 2012 level. The request is sufficient to support the Center's range of educational and training programs that expand independent living and employment opportunities for individuals who are deaf-blind.

The Federal appropriation for HKNC represented about 61 percent of HKNC's total budget in fiscal year 2010, the most recent year for which this information is available. Most of the Center's total budget supports operations and programs associated with serving clients in the headquarters program. In fiscal year 2011, the Center served 64 adult clients 15 short-term clients at headquarters. HKNC also served 1,478 clients through its regional offices.

Other Sources of Funding: In addition to funds provided through the appropriation, the Center receives funding from a variety of State, private, and other Federal sources. For example, as a member on the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness, HKNC received \$880,760 in fiscal year 2011 through a grant from the Department's Office of Special Education Programs to provide technical assistance to State and local educational agencies. In recent years, the Center has also received a number of non-Federal grants. This includes a 5-year grant from the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities for \$1.1 million per year to operate housing and provide supported employment services for individuals who are deaf-blind with intellectual disabilities who were former participants in HKNC's training program. HKNC also has a contract with the New York State Commission for Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVH) to operate a Community Services Program (CSP) that provides rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, case work, and job placement to deaf-blind individuals in the New York metropolitan area who do not require the comprehensive services offered at the headquarters training program.

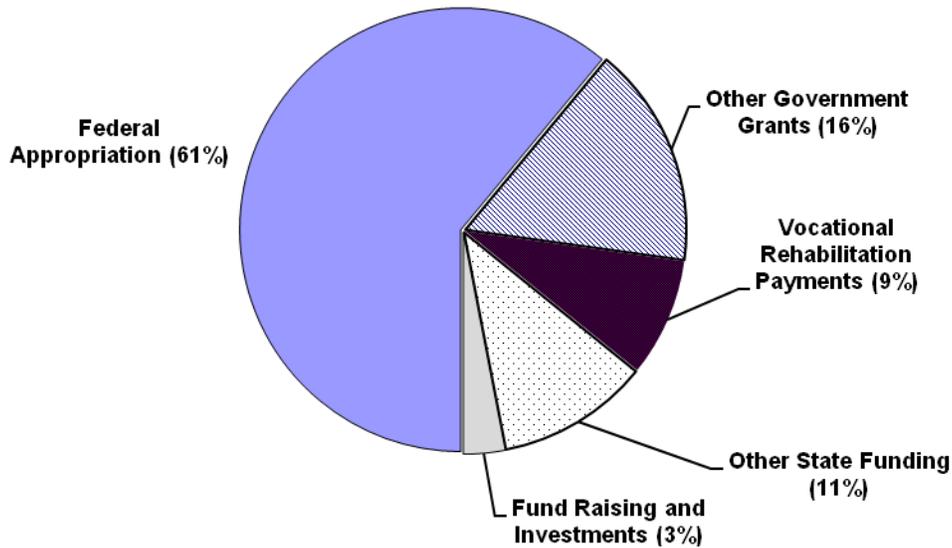
## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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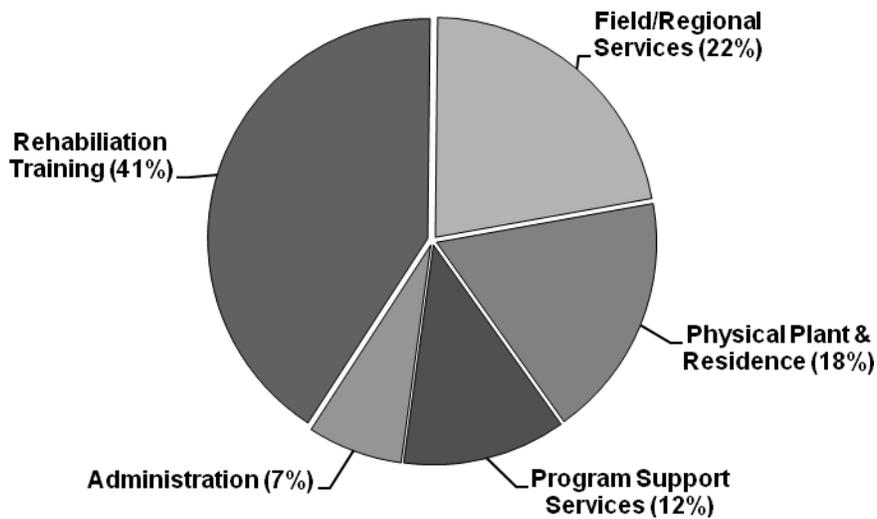
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In recent years, HKNC has also actively expanded its efforts to raise funds from private sources, including charitable foundations. The Center's largest private grant is a 3-year, \$2 million dollar award from the Helmsley Foundation. The following chart shows the sources and percentages of the Center's program year 2009-2010 total operating budget of approximately \$13.95 million.

2009-2010 Program Year Sources of Funds (\$13.95 million)



2009-2010 Program Year Expenditures (\$13.95 million)  
(all funds)



## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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In fiscal year 2013, HKNC would use an estimated 78 percent of the amount requested, or \$7.13 million, to support client training and program support activities, consumer housing and residence life expenses, maintenance and plant operations, and administrative functions at the Center's headquarters facility. The Center would use these funds to support 11 direct services departments: audiology; case management; communications; independent living; low vision; medical; orientation and mobility; vocational services; adaptive technology; clinical social work services; and staff functions such as payroll and benefits. At the request level, the Center estimates that it would serve approximately 80 adult clients with deaf-blindness at its headquarters and provide specialized short-term training for approximately 12 high school students, 5 senior citizens, and 2 individuals who need training in the use of technology or other targeted skills.

HKNC would devote an estimated 22 percent of the amount requested, or \$2.02 million, to its field services and community education programs, including the activities of HKNC's 10 regional offices and its national training team for other service providers. These programs help State agencies and other programs to serve or acquire the capacity to serve individuals who are deaf-blind through training, community education, and technical assistance.

### PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

<u>Measures</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
Number of individuals served at headquarters: <sup>1</sup>			
Adult training program clients	64	80	80
Specialized training services:			
Transition for high school students	9	12	12
Senior citizens	5	5	5
Targeted skills training	1	2	2
Number of individuals served through regional representatives: <sup>2</sup>			
Consumers	1,478	1,500	1,500
Families	441	500	500
Agencies/organizations	881	900	900
HKNC FTE staff	139	140	140

<sup>1</sup> Output data are provided according to fiscal year, not HKNC's program year of July to June. Prior to FY 2011, data had been reported by program year. Fiscal year 2011 data presented in the table do not include the 27 adult consumers served at headquarters during the transition quarter of July 1- Sept 30, 2010 that occurred as a result of the switch from program year reporting to fiscal year reporting. The figures for fiscal years 2012 and 2013 are estimates based on projections from HKNC and expected funding levels.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals served by the regional representatives include individuals attending workshops or conferences in which HKNC participates, who receive materials from the Center, or who receive assessment, advocacy, counseling, training, or referral services from regional staff.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

Helen Keller National Center

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### PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA 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 resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

**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 training goals set and achieved by adult consumers, of adult consumers seeking employment who are placed in employment, and of adult consumers seeking to maintain their ability to live independently or move to less restrictive settings who achieve their goals.

Year	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
	# of Adult Consumers	# of Adult Consumers	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% in Less Restrictive Settings	% of Training goals met	% of Training goals met	% Placed in Employment	% Placed in Employment
2008	95	84	75	83	90	88	45	48
2009	95	74	75	75	90	90	45	47
2010	95	72	75	93	90	92	45	43
2011	90	64	75	81	90	94	45	43
2012	90		75		90		45	
2013	90		75		90		45	

**Additional information:** The number of adult clients attending the HKNC rehabilitation training center in fiscal year 2011 (64) decreased from the prior year and was below the target of 90. HKNC points out that the number of consumers served may fluctuate from year to year due to factors beyond the control of the Center, such as changes in State vocational rehabilitation agencies' funding or policy. HKNC also suspended the Person Centered Approach to Habilitation and Training (PATH) program for individuals with multiple disabilities due to financial reasons in 2008, which may have reduced the number of individuals coming to the Center. We anticipate that the fiscal year 2012 data will be available in January 2013.

In addition to traditional adult consumers, HKNC also provided short-term training for nine high school students, five senior citizens, and one individual seeking assessment or training in skill acquisition in specific activities, such as independent living, adaptive technology or work experience. The high school students participate in career exploration, college preparation, and

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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other services offered by the Center and return to high school after their training. The high school students and senior citizens receiving short-term training are not included in the counts of adult consumers, consumers placed in employment or less restrictive settings, or consumers who meet their individualized training goals. Adult clients who participate in short-term targeted skills training are included in the measure on training goals set and achieved, but not included in count of adult consumers or the measures of consumers placed in employment or less restrictive settings.

The Center evaluates the progress of clients in achieving the goals stated in their individualized training plans (ITPs). This measure represents the percent of adult consumers served by Helen Keller National Center headquarters who successfully achieved identified training goals during the program year. The consumers and their instructors mutually develop these instructional objectives. To ensure that the measure is an accurate reflection of the Center's performance, the Department and HKNC have agreed that it should only include the outcomes for adult clients enrolled in the long-term formal program and the targeted skills training program. Clients in the short-term programs for high school students and senior citizens are not included in the calculation. In 2011, 94 percent of adult consumers achieved their training goals, which exceeded the target set for this measure and was an increase from the previous year.

The less restrictive settings measure refers to clients 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. The percentage is taken only of those consumers with a specific goal to move to a less restrictive living situation. This measure includes participants in the independent living program whose goal is to maintain their ability to live independently in their current living situation. The Center believes that it is as important to help consumers who need assistance in maintaining their ability to live independently as those seeking to move to less restrictive settings. In 2011, 81 percent of clients moved into, or remained in, less restrictive settings, which exceeded the target set for this measure.

The percent placed in employment measure refers to outcomes for those individuals who came to the Center with a specific vocational objective. In 2011, 30 of the 58 individuals who terminated training had a desire to achieve a vocational outcome. Of the 30 who had a vocational objective, 13 (43 percent) achieved this goal, which did not meet the target for this measure and is the same percentage as the prior year. Another 17 individuals are at home and seeking competitive or supported employment. Among the 28 individuals not seeking a vocational outcome, 4 were homemakers and 4 are continuing in postsecondary education. Five consumers did not complete the program and/or took a leave of absence. One consumer received short term training, 5 were senior adults, and 9 were in high school.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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**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
2008		
2009		303
2010		272
2011		239
2012		
2013		

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

Year	Target	Actual
2008		
2009		65
2010		63
2011		63
2012		
2013		

These measures provide information on the activities of the field services programs, including the 11 regional representatives and the national training team, which consume a significant portion of the Center's resources. Regional representatives serve individuals with deaf-blindness in their home communities, which often lack other service providers that are trained and equipped to the unique and multi-faceted needs of these consumers. The referrals provided by regional representatives often are the gateway to finding appropriate and individualized supports from various agencies and organizations. The intensity of consumers' interactions with HKNC field staff varies significantly. Some consumers interact with staff only once over the phone, while others benefit from repeated in-person visits for a variety of services, such as skills assessments, counseling, and advocacy. No data are shown for 2008 because 2009 was the first year that data were collected for these measures. By August 2012, the Department will establish targets for these measures based on the first three years of data. Data for 2012 is expected in January 2013.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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

**Measure:** The number of referrals by HKNC's regional offices to vocational rehabilitation or related employment programs.

Year	Target	Actual
2009		90
2010		131
2011		32
2012		
2013		

**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
2009		32
2010		24
2011		28
2012		
2013		

HKNC plays an important role in connecting individuals who are deaf-blind to vocational rehabilitation agencies. Many vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies lack sufficient numbers of personnel trained in providing services to consumers who are deaf-blind. HKNC field staff frequently facilitate interactions between consumers and VR agencies, train VR agency staff about the specialized needs of these clients, and assist consumers who are returning to their State's VR system after attending intensive training at HKNC headquarters. The steep decrease in the number of consumers who received referrals to State VR agencies in 2011 may reflect the lower number of all types of referrals and funding constraints on VR agencies in recent years. The number of referrals to VR agencies is also limited by the fact that not all consumers served by HKNC field staff have vocational goals. No data are shown for 2008 because 2009 was the first year that data were collected for these measures. By August 2012, the Department will establish targets for these measures based on the first three years of data. Data for 2012 is expected in January 2013.

In addition to these measures, the Department may adopt new measures proposed by the recently completed study of HKNC. Possible measures may address the cost efficiency and cost effectiveness of the Center's services, however, it is unclear whether the Center currently has the data management capacity needed to ensure that consistent, reliable, timely information is collected, particularly for measures that require follow up with clients who have left the Center or detailed information about the cost of specific services.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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#### Other Performance Information

In fiscal year 2009, the Department initiated an independent, comprehensive study of HKNC to examine the alignment of the Center's programs with the needs of the various populations served by HKNC and its regional offices; the Center's interactions with vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies; and the outreach that HKNC provides to other service providers and to the family members of deaf-blind individuals who, in turn, support those individuals. The research team's data sources included: detailed in-person interviews with HKNC staff and deaf-blind former HKNC consumers; telephone interviews with family members of deaf-blind individuals, VR agency staff, service providers, and representatives of stakeholder organizations; HKNC administrative records; an email survey of VR agencies; and site visits to HKNC headquarters and regional offices. The study contractor, Westat, delivered the final report in July, 2011.

Notable findings include:

- Many stakeholders familiar with HKNC's work consider HKNC to be the "gold standard" for the provision of services to deaf-blind individuals.
- VR agency respondents indicated that HKNC is offering an appropriate array of services, but more of the same services are needed to meet their needs. Specifically, the demand for training from the National Training Team and technical assistance from the regional representatives far outstrips the available supply of these services.
- Service providers generally reported that HKNC training led to enhanced capacity to serve deaf-blind populations. About two-thirds of service providers said there were no local training alternatives available for learning how to serve deaf-blind individuals.
- Some State VR staff, regional representatives, and family members expressed concerns that resources for post-training follow-up were often insufficient, citing the elimination of job development and community placement positions at HKNC headquarters and the already overloaded schedules of the regional representative.
- HKNC is filling a gap in services in many communities. VR agencies and former consumers reported that their States and local communities generally lack services and resources for deaf-blind individuals who do not attend programs at HKNC's headquarters. The survey of VR agencies revealed that only six States believe that they offer all of the services available from HKNC and that their services were as or more effective.
- Deaf-blind individuals who had participated in HKNC headquarters programs were generally satisfied with the training they received. Among the 13 studied service areas, orientation and mobility received the highest helpfulness rating (85%) and audiology received the lowest helpfulness rating (50%).
- Overall, the study found that HKNC is meeting its legislative mandate of providing specialized intensive services to maximize personal development of deaf-blind consumers. Data indicate that HKNC, in accordance with its mandate, also provides

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Helen Keller National Center

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services to family members and allied service providers, and participates in applied research and development projects with respect to deaf-blind issues.

In addition, the study drew on these findings to make several recommendations focused on improving HKNC's services and the outcomes of deaf blind persons served by the Center:

- Regional representatives could provide more extensive outreach to the relatively large population of deaf-blind individuals who do not attend HKNC headquarters programs. These individuals are often underserved in their local communities.
- The study found no evidence to indicate that the performance measures included in the fiscal year 2011 program performance plan are insufficient for the level of monitoring needed for a small Federal direct grant program. However, several additional measures could provide useful information to the Rehabilitation Services Administration and HKNC. These measures include cost efficiency data to capture the cost per consumer served and a cost-effectiveness measure for achieving consumers' training, independent living, and employment goals.
- Consumers returning from HKNC headquarters programs could benefit from better coordination and follow-up from HKNC staff and State VR agency staff. In particular, HKNC and VR staff could clarify and communicate their respective post-training responsibilities, especially for follow-up employment services.
- Within applicable resource constraints, HKNC should consider expanding the National Training Team to meet the needs for additional training of service provider personnel in specialized deaf blind services. HKNC and RSA should investigate other cost-efficient service models, such as recorded webinars and train-the-trainer resources, that could provide assistance to States with deaf blind services.
- HKNC should examine the length and cost of consumer assessment and training programs to address the perception of some State VR agency representatives that HKNC HQ assessment and training is not as efficient as it could be. The Center should take appropriate action to ensure that adequate instructors are available to prevent reported delays during training programs at headquarters.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

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### Assistive technology

(Assistive Technology Act of 1998)

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2013 Authorization: 0<sup>1</sup>

Budget Authority:

<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>Change</u>
\$32,836	\$30,840	-\$1,996

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<sup>1</sup> The GEPA extension expired September 30, 2011; this program is proposed for authorization in FY 2013 through appropriations language. Up to \$1,235 thousand may be used for National Activities, unless the amount available for AT State grants exceeds \$20,953,534, in which case up to \$1,900 thousand may be used for National Activities.

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### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Assistive Technology (AT) Act is to provide States with financial assistance that supports programs designed to maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages and their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives to obtain AT devices and AT services. AT devices are defined as any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. A few examples of such devices are computer or technology aids, modified driving controls, and durable medical equipment such as wheelchairs or walkers. Grants support comprehensive statewide programs that are designed to increase the:

- availability of, funding for, access to, provision of, and training about AT devices and services;
- ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to secure and maintain possession of AT during periods of transition, such as transition between school or home and home and work;
- capacity of public and private entities to provide and pay for AT devices and services;
- involvement of individuals with disabilities in decisions about AT devices and services;
- coordination of AT-related activities among State and local agencies and other private entities;
- awareness of and facilitate changes in law, regulations, procedures, policies, practices, and organizational structures, in order to improve access to AT; and
- awareness of the benefits of AT among targeted individuals and entities in the general population.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Assistive technology

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#### *Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program*

The AT State grant program is a population-based formula grant program to support comprehensive statewide programs that maximize the ability of individuals with disabilities of all ages to access and acquire AT. States must establish consumer-responsive advisory councils with a majority membership of individuals with disabilities who use AT to advise on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these statewide programs.

Under the formula, States and outlying areas are initially allocated a base amount equal to the amount of funds they received under the AT program in fiscal year 2004 (totaling \$20,288,534). Any funds appropriated in excess of the fiscal year 2004 appropriation are initially distributed among the eligible entities with 50 percent of available funds distributed equally amongst them and 50 percent distributed according to the population of the State until each entity receives at least \$410,000. If any appropriated funds remain after each State receives this minimum, they are distributed with 20 percent divided equally amongst the States and 80 percent distributed according to their populations. To date, appropriated funds under this program have not been sufficient to necessitate this second round of distribution. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions were based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2010 population estimates released in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2011 Census data released in December 2011.

Each State must set measurable goals, with timelines, that address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities related to: education (including goals related to the delivery of AT devices and services to students receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)); employment (including goals related to the Rehabilitation Act's Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program); telecommunications and information technology; and community living. The State must determine whether it has met its goals each year, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) has the authority to hold States accountable for a lack of progress toward these goals through technical assistance, corrective actions and/or sanctions if States are determined to be in noncompliance with the applicable requirements of the AT Act or have not made substantial progress toward achieving the measureable goals.

The State must implement each of the activities required under the program, which include State-level activities and State leadership activities. States must spend a minimum of 60 percent (unless the State elects to comply with the State flexibility provision in section 4(e)(6) of the AT Act, as described below) of their formula grant funds on four State-level activities: State financing programs, device reutilization programs, device loan programs, and device demonstrations. States may, however, direct their funds towards these activities in varying amounts if they use other State or non-Federal funds to support these activities at a comparable or greater level.

States may use up to 40 percent of their AT State grant program funding on State leadership activities, with at least 5 percent of that amount devoted to technical assistance and training related to transition for students exiting school or adults entering community living. The State leadership activities include the provision of technical assistance and training to targeted individuals and entities focused on promoting the general awareness of the benefits of AT; skills

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### **Assistive technology**

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development for persons involved in the assessment of the need for AT; the appropriate application of AT; and the integration of AT devices and services in plans required to be developed under other Federal laws, such as the IDEA's Individualized Education Program and the Rehabilitation Act's Individualized Plan for Employment. In addition, States must use a portion of their grant funds on public awareness activities, including the continuation and maintenance of a statewide system of information and referral, and coordination and collaboration activities amongst entities in the States that are responsible for the provision of AT.

The law provides States with flexibility to decide to carry out only two or three State-level activities, rather than all four. If a State elects to carry out two or three State-level activities, it must spend a minimum of 70 percent of its funds on those activities, while spending not more than 30 percent on the State leadership activities.

The AT Act specifies what a State must include in its annual progress report to RSA, including data on: the State's financing program, device loan program activities, device reutilization programs, and device demonstrations, including an analysis of those individuals who benefited from each of these programs; training activities; the statewide system of information and referral; and the outcomes of any improvement initiatives carried out by the State. The report must also provide data on the use of resources, including any contributed to the program by other public and private entities, and the level of customer satisfaction.

### ***Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology***

Formula grants for protection and advocacy (P&A) systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act support protection and advocacy services to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices. Funds are distributed on a State population basis, with a minimum annual grant of \$50,000. Outlying areas must receive not less than \$30,000 annually. Also, the Act requires a minimum award of \$30,000 to the P&A system serving the American Indian consortium. The fiscal year 2011 State distributions were based on the July 1, 2009 population estimates released in December 2009. The fiscal year 2012 State distributions are based on the July 1, 2010 population estimates released in December 2010. The fiscal year 2013 State distributions are based on the April 1, 2011 Census data released in December 2011.

### **National Activities**

The AT Act provides authority for the provision of technical assistance—through grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements awarded on a competitive basis—to individuals with disabilities of all ages, to AT State grant program grantees, and to protection and advocacy systems. The AT Act also requires the Secretary to make an award to renovate, update, and maintain a national public Internet site (<http://www.assistivetech.net>). In addition, the AT Act includes authority for grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements to assist grantees in developing and implementing effective data collection and reporting systems.

In designing its technical assistance activities, RSA must consider the input of directors of AT State grant programs and Alternative Financing programs, individuals with disabilities who use

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Assistive technology

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AT, family members, and protection and advocacy service providers, among others. The technical assistance must respond to specific requests for information and disseminate information to States, entities funded under the AT Act, and any other public entities that seek information about AT. The technical assistance must provide model approaches for the removal of barriers to accessing AT, examples of effective program coordination, and practices that increase funding for AT devices.

### *Alternative Financing Program*

The fiscal year 2012 appropriations bill provided \$1,966,220 for an alternative financing program authorized under appropriations language. Competitive grants will support alternative financing programs that provide for the purchase of assistive technology devices, such as a low-interest loan fund; an interest buy-down program; a revolving loan fund; a loan guarantee; or insurance program. Applicants must assure that the alternative financing program will expand and emphasize consumer choice and control. State agencies and community-based disability organizations that are directed by and operated for individuals with disabilities are eligible to compete.

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

	(dollars in thousands)
2008.....	\$29,920
2009.....	30,960
2010.....	30,960
2011.....	30,898
2012.....	32,836 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Includes \$1,966,220 for Alternative Financing Programs authorized in the FY12 appropriations bill.

### **FY 2013 BUDGET REQUEST**

The Administration requests \$30.84 million in fiscal year 2013 for Assistive Technology (AT), approximately \$2 million less than the fiscal year 2012 level. The request includes funding for the AT State grant program, the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology program, and National Activities. These programs enable individuals with disabilities to acquire technology they might not otherwise be able to obtain—technology that improves their quality of life, and in many cases, enables them to work or participate in other productive endeavors.

No funds are requested for the alternative financing program that was authorized in the fiscal year 2012 appropriations act. These funds will support 1-year grants to States and community-based organizations for alternative financing programs that will provide for the purchase of assistive technology devices. Because funds will largely be used for loans that can be expected to be repaid, one-time grants enable the recipients to continue to support loans in perpetuity. In addition, the majority of States support loan financing under the AT State grant program.

## REHABILITATION SERVICES AND DISABILITY RESEARCH

### Assistive technology

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#### *Assistive Technology (AT) State grant program*

The request includes \$25.56 million for the AT State grant program, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. These funds will be used by States to carry out the second year of their 3-year State plan. State plans must describe how the State intends to carry out its AT State grant program to meet the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State, achieve the measurable goals required by the AT Act, and comply with all applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

#### *Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology*

The fiscal year 2013 request includes \$4.3 million for the Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program, the same as the 2012 level. At this level, 29 States would receive \$50,000, the minimum amount allowed under the AT Act for the protection and advocacy systems established under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act to carry out this program. Outlying areas each would receive \$30,000. Funds would be used to assist individuals with disabilities of all ages in the acquisition, utilization, or maintenance of AT services or devices.

#### *National Activities*

The fiscal year 2013 request also includes approximately \$1 million for National Activities, the same as the fiscal year 2012 level. In fiscal year 2013, funds would be used to continue support for grants that began in previous fiscal years. The Act requires support for a national information internet system, and authorizes State training, technical assistance, data collection, and reporting assistance.

### **PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES** (dollars in thousands)

<u>Program Funding</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>
AT State grant program	\$25,609	\$25,561	\$25,561
Protection and advocacy program	4,291	4,283	4,283
National activities	998	996	996
Alternative financing program	<u>0</u>	<u>1,996</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	30,898	32,836	30,840

### **PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

#### **Performance Measures**

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data, and an assessment of the progress made toward achieving program results. Achievement of results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years and those requested in fiscal

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year 2013 and future years, and the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program.

Under the AT Act, each State is required to establish measurable goals for access to and acquisition of AT, with timelines for meeting those goals. These goals must address the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the State in the domains of education, employment, community living, and telecommunications and information technology (IT).

**Acquisition of AT:** In order to measure the increase in the acquisition of AT, the following three measures have been established for the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to survey individuals served under this program to determine whether those who obtained AT (for **education, employment, or community living** purposes) believe they would not have otherwise obtained the AT device or service.

**Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

**Objective:** *To increase **acquisition** of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.*

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **educational purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		68
2009		75
2010	75	79
2011	69	
2012	69	
2013	75	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **employment purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		66
2009		61
2010	75	79
2011	64	
2012	64	
2013	70	

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**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who obtained assistive technology devices or services for **community living purposes** through State financing activities or reutilization programs, who would not have obtained the device or service.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		89
2009		73
2010	90	79
2011	81	
2012	81	
2013	81	

**Additional information:** Fiscal year 2008 was the first year for which RSA had uniform data from all States, but the States were reporting on targets they established before they had baseline data. States used the 2008 data to set targets for 2009. The 2009 data show how States performed relative to these newly established targets. RSA used the performance data for 2008 to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. The targets set for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 were established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. During fiscal year 2011 RSA worked with States on new targets for these measures to be included in their new State plans for fiscal years 2012 – 2014.

**Access to AT:** In order to measure the increase in access to AT, the following four measures have been established under the AT State grant program. The Department is requiring States to collect information from individuals served under this program to determine whether access to device demonstration or loan programs has enabled them to make informed decisions about AT devices or services (for **education, employment, community living, and telecommunications** purposes).

**Goal: To increase access to and acquisition of assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

**Objective: To increase access to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.**

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**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **educational purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		84
2009		73
2010	90	71
2011	79	
2012	79	
2013	79	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **employment purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		80
2009		71
2010	85	84
2011	75	
2012	75	
2013	78	

**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **community living purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		86
2009		71
2010	90	71
2011	79	
2012	79	
2013	79	

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**Measure:** The percentage of States meeting or exceeding their target percentage of targeted individuals and entities who have accessed assistive technology device demonstrations and/or device loan programs, and made a decision about the assistive technology device or services for **technology/telecommunications purposes** as a result of the assistance they received from the Assistive Technology Program.

Year	Target	Actual
2008		70
2009		68
2010	80	68
2011	69	
2012	69	
2013	69	

**Additional information:** Fiscal year 2008 was the first year for which RSA had uniform data from all States, but the States were reporting on targets they established before they had baseline data. States used the 2008 data to set targets for 2009. The 2009 data show how States performed relative to these newly established targets. RSA used the performance data for 2008 to establish the national targets for fiscal year 2010. The targets set for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 were established by taking the average of actual performance from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. During fiscal year 2011 RSA worked with States on new targets for these measures to be included in their new State plans for fiscal years 2012 – 2014.