

# 2024-27 STRATEGIC PLAN



**COMMISSION  
FOR THE  
BLIND**



**BLINDNESS WITHOUT BARRIERS**

## Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S MESSAGE .....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	6
INTRODUCTION.....	9
KEY GOALS .....	11
AGENCY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES .....	13
Focus Area 1: Workforce Participation.....	13
Focus Area 2: Aging in Oregon .....	15
Focus Area 3: Succession Planning.....	17
Focus Area 4: Business and Community.....	20
Focus Area 5: Customer Service.....	22
DELIVERING OUTCOMES .....	24
APPENDICES.....	25
Organizational Chart .....	25
Performance Measures: Operating Processes.....	26
Performance Measures: Supporting Processes .....	27
Mission Statement.....	28
Vision Statement.....	28
Key Goals .....	28
Core Values .....	28
Outcome Measures.....	28

### Contact:

**Dacia Johnson, MS (CRC)**

Executive Director

[Dacia.johnson@ocb.oregon.gov](mailto:Dacia.johnson@ocb.oregon.gov)

[www.oregon.gov/blind](http://www.oregon.gov/blind)

Commission for the Blind

535 SE 12th Avenue

Portland, OR 97214

971-673-1588

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**

Governor Kotek has asked all Oregonians to believe in our state and a future where all of our people can thrive, enjoy financial stability and pathways to greater opportunity, and feel safe in their homes and communities.

For Oregonians who are blind, these goals begin by building confidence in their own future, through understanding what is possible after vision loss. Only through access to training, resources and support can they believe in the core principle of blindness rehabilitation: That blindness does not pose a barrier to living a fully independent, safe, and meaningful life.

As the only statewide organization that provides specialized services to adults who experience vision loss, the Commission for the Blind plays a critical role in building an Oregon that ensures that the pathways to greater opportunity are accessible to all Oregonians who are blind. As we consider ensuring all of us have safe homes and communities, for individuals who experience vision loss, feeling safe includes having access to the resources and skills necessary to live independent and productive lives.

Oregon is faced with some fundamental questions as we secure a future that is inclusive of our citizens who are blind. Questions such as:

- What are the basic training and resources we want to make available to any Oregonian who is blind to support their employment and independent living goals?
- How accessible, in time and distance, should these services be to truly meet the Governor's vision?
- How do we ensure the quality and relevance of the training available—and to meet the changes and advances in technology and evolving needs of the workforce and aging population?

The answers to these and other related questions begin with understanding the value proposition for the Oregon Commission for the Blind:

### **The OCB Value Proposition**

Rehabilitation is not only the right thing to do to align with Oregon's values for all of our citizens, but there is also inherent value in providing tools, training and

opportunities to Oregonians who are blind that allow them to lead their best lives. When someone travels independently for the first time, is able to read a story in braille to their young child, is able to hold a job, or live on their own and support themselves and save for retirement, their outlook on what is possible is permanently changed. They expand what is possible and engage in their work and community in meaningful ways. Rehabilitation is also cost effective. When someone is able to hold a job and live independently, they are less likely to require public assistance and other social supports such as Social Security Disability, Oregon Health Plan and nursing/in home care.

### **Returning to Work after Vision Loss**

Investments that yield these outcomes hold significant economic value for our state. Successfully employed Oregonians who are blind access fewer public assistance benefits, pay more taxes, and contribute to the overall economy. Within a short period of time, consumers repay the public investment of the cost of their rehabilitation through the taxes they pay. When individuals secure employment that offers health benefits, the potential savings to other public programs are even greater.

### **Recruiting and Retaining Talent for Oregon's Businesses**

Our work holds a value-proposition for Oregon's businesses as well. When a skilled, experienced employee experiences vision loss, we can support the employee and the employer with training and accessibility consultation to help them remain on the job. For businesses who are challenged to recruit and retain talent to fill positions, expanding their pool of candidates to include job seekers who are blind not only strengthens and diversifies their workforce, but also expands their capacity to fill vacant positions. Oregon businesses have been able to understand the benefits of hiring candidates that reflect the communities in which they serve and recognize that doing so positively affects their bottom line.

### **Supporting Seniors in their Home and Community**

Among those Oregonians entering retirement, there are a growing number of seniors experiencing age-related vision loss that affects their ability to perform everyday tasks safely and independently. With the independent spirit of Oregon guiding them, our seniors want to live in their homes and remain active in their communities. With the right training and tools provided by the Commission for

the Blind's specialized staff, a senior's loss of vision need not prevent them from living independently and remaining active in the community.

## **Preparing for the Future**

The Commission for the Blind will face critical challenges that will require an investment of resources to meet the needs of Oregonians who are blind now and in the future. These challenges include:

- As Oregon's aging population increases, so does the demand for age-related vision loss services to support people living safely and independently in their homes and communities.
- Society increasingly relies on technology to perform daily activities. Available adaptive solutions exist for many activities that improve safety and quality of life. Individuals who are blind require training and support to ensure that they can access and operate these technologies and remain independent.
- There is a national shortage of professionals qualified in specialized disciplines of blindness rehabilitation, particularly Orientation and Mobility instructors who are certified to teach cane travel to individuals who are blind. These highly skilled providers are essential to the Agency being able to serve Oregonians who are blind.
- The shift of the workforce from public buildings to hybrid/remote work has changed the food service/vending opportunities that exist for entrepreneurs who are blind in the Business Enterprise Program.
- Early intervention services to support in-school youth with pre-employment transition services, combined with the expectation that all individuals with disabilities should exit high school with a path toward a career and employment, will require continued collaborations with our education and business partners.

Governor Kotek's leadership and commitment is to build a better Oregon where for all to live, work and thrive, which aligns with our vision statement: *Blindness without Barriers: A state of inclusion for Oregonians with vision loss*. I am proud to lead our efforts to ensure every citizen is afforded the same opportunities of creating a better life for themselves and their families.

Under the guidance and leadership of our Commission, this strategic plan provides the framework to address challenges and opportunities through targeted resource allocation and informed decision-making to achieve Governor Kotek’s vision for Oregon where everyone can thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dacia Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dacia" and last name "Johnson" clearly legible.

Dacia Johnson  
Executive Director

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the focus areas and priorities for the Oregon Commission for the Blind in 2024 – 2027.

### Focus Areas

<b>Workforce Participation</b>	
Strategic Priority	Increase the workforce participation rate and job retention of job seekers who experience vision loss.
Progress Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase the job retention in the 2nd and 4th quarters post exit.</li><li>• Maximize opportunities to provide information and referral for behavioral/mental health supports.</li><li>• Ensure all students exit high school with a plan for employment.</li></ul>
Principle	Oregon’s workforce is stronger when it reflects the entire community, inclusive of citizens with disability.

<b>Aging in Oregon</b>	
Strategic Priority	Improve access and timeliness of independent living services throughout Oregon.
Progress Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduce wait time for services.</li><li>• Increase statewide community engagement and outreach.</li><li>• Provide tools and resources to increase independence and improve quality of life.</li></ul>
Principle	Aging Oregonians deserve to remain in their home and communities where they can continue to remain connected and engaged.

<b>Succession Planning</b>	
Strategic Priority	Recruit and retain specialized staff who deliver exemplary services to our clients.
Progress Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce employee turnover rate.</li> <li>• Increase the percentage of successful recruitments.</li> <li>• Increase professional development for staff.</li> </ul>
Principle	Exemplary services require the recruitment and retention of specialized staff who are committed to the work.

<b>Business and Community</b>	
Strategic Priority	Agency partnerships strengthen and improve access and opportunities for all Oregonians who experience vision loss.
Progress Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase repeat customers among businesses in Oregon that are recruiting and hiring job seekers who are blind.</li> <li>• Support Business Enterprise Program entrepreneurs to operate profitable, thriving businesses in public locations.</li> <li>• Collaborate with communities to prioritize accessibility as a key element of inclusion for everyone.</li> </ul>
Principle	Business engagement and successful entrepreneurs who are blind increase the diversity of our workforce and are good for the economy.



<b>Customer Service</b>	
Strategic Priority	Agency business processes, resources and infrastructure are responsive to the needs of our customers.
Progress Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize technology and tools to optimize performance and boost efficiencies.</li> <li>• Engage with statewide systems and information technology resources.</li> <li>• Engage stakeholders with timely communication and responsive service delivery.</li> </ul>
Principle	Business efficiencies and performance optimization increase the capacity to deliver timely and accurate services.

## INTRODUCTION

Oregon's Commission for the Blind was established in 1937 as a state agency and has evolved over time to be a consumer-focused organization with a citizen governing body appointed by the Governor. The Agency receives policy direction and oversight from a seven-member Commission representing consumer organizations, educational institutions, ophthalmology and optometry professionals, business leaders, and individual citizens. It is required that the majority of the seven members of the Commission are persons who are blind.

The Agency operates under ORS 346.110 through 346.570 and through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, which designated the US Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration as the principal federal agency to oversee the public vocational rehabilitation system throughout the nation, in collaboration with the US Department of Labor and other workforce entities.

The mission of the Commission for the Blind is to *empower Oregonians who are blind to fully engage in life*. We fulfill this mission by administering federally- and state-funded vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs that support Oregonians who are blind so they can go to work and live independently in their homes and communities.

Our vision statement is *Blindness without barriers: A state of inclusion for Oregonians with vision loss*. Simply put, we believe in an Oregon where blindness does not pose a barrier to an individual's ability to live the life they choose.

Equity is at the center of the Agency's core values. We are committed to ensuring that all Oregonians can access individualized, culturally responsive services they need to reach their employment and independent living goals. We believe that all people should have access to options and opportunities equipped with the tools and resources they need to make meaningful choices for their lives.

The Agency's core values include the following:

- Customer Service – Dedication to meeting the needs of our clients and customers and to honoring our commitments.
- Leadership – Being open, authentic, and lifting others up while building consensus towards a common goal.

- Integrity – Meeting commitments, acting responsibly with public and personal trust, and being accountable for words and actions.
- Professionalism – Embodying a commitment to quality and pride in our work.
- Operational Excellence – Striving for the highest quality and for continuous improvement.
- Innovation – Developing creative solutions and putting them into action.
- Collaboration – Demonstrating an ability to facilitate, negotiate, build consensus, develop strong teams, and empower others.

The Commission for the Blind has six major program objectives in support of our mission:

1. Help Oregonians who are blind get and keep jobs that allow them to support themselves and their families.
2. Train Oregonians in skills related to dealing with blindness such as adaptive technology, white cane travel, braille, and activities of daily living.
3. Support in-school youth who are blind as they transition from high school to further education, training, and employment through the provision of pre-employment transition services.
4. Help senior citizens and individuals who experience vision loss acquire essential adaptive skills so that they may remain independent in their homes and active in their communities.
5. License and support business owners who are blind to operate food service and vending operations in public buildings throughout the state.
6. Assist Oregon businesses so they may attract and retain qualified job seekers who are blind as part of their overall hiring and diversity initiatives.

## **KEY GOALS**

The Agency has a team of 67 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions that include specialized rehabilitation and administrative staff who work toward achieving the following key goals:

### **Engaged & Proficient Team**

Staff are open, accessible, and accountable for the outcomes on behalf of the citizens of Oregon. We employ specialized professionals trained in blindness rehabilitation who understand their critical role and contribute toward our goals and mission. We seek to innovate whenever possible and utilize evidence-based practices to deliver services. We believe professional development training and continuing education for our staff is critical to our outcomes.

### **Effective Education and Outreach**

As a specialized agency, we are diligent in our efforts to ensure that Oregonians know who we are and what we do. Anyone who needs to access our services may reach us in a manner convenient for them. Business and community partners understand that Oregonians who are blind are capable and competent members of the community and want the same things as their neighbors: a good job, a safe home and thriving community, access to healthcare and resources, and freedom to pursue the life of their choosing.

The following core elements are integral to our success:

- Vision care and medical professionals appropriately refer qualifying patients to our services.
- Employers and hiring managers embrace job candidates who are blind and contact us to provide adaptive technology to enable the individual to perform their role, reducing stigma and bias in the workplace and public.
- Governmental and nonprofit social and service agencies are familiar with our services so they may engage with and rely on us when needed.

### **Operational Excellence**

We are intentional in our efforts to perform at the highest level to ensure optimal results on behalf of Oregonians who are blind. We map our workflow and processes and look for ways to measure and evaluate our work to ensure we are achieving the expected and desired outcomes. We identify collaborative

opportunities and solutions to help us meet outcome-based performance measures, as well as meeting Agency, legislative, and funding requirements and reporting.

### **Exemplary Service**

As the only specialized agency in Oregon that provides rehabilitation services to adults who experience vision loss, we set the bar high for service standards across programs. We care about understanding our performance in delivering the right services in a timely manner, while maintaining a focus on resource utilization to ensure services are being delivered in effective and efficient ways.

### **Successful Client Outcomes**

Our team of professionals develop customized plans for each individual to support their employment and independent living goals. Agency staff work to ensure clients are successful, which ensures that the Agency is successful in meeting and exceeding the expectations placed upon us by the Governor, legislative leadership, our federal partners, and Congress.

### **PESTLE**

The Commission Board completed a PESTLE analysis to examine the environment in which the Agency operates from a multitude of factors that included Political, Economic, Social, Technology, Legal, and Environmental that affect the work of the Agency. The PESTLE analysis helped to ensure that the strategic priorities contain a multi-dimensional perspective of the agency's work and operational context.

To prepare for Oregon's future and respond to the evolution and demands of Oregon's changing demographics, shifts in the economy and the needs of Oregonians who are blind, the Agency has developed the following focus areas and strategic priorities to prioritize our resources and establish direction for our work as an agency.

## AGENCY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### Focus Area 1: Workforce Participation

---

Our Strategic Priority: Increase the workforce participation rate and job retention of job seekers who experience vision loss.

Progress Objectives:

- Increase job retention in the 2nd and 4th quarters post-exit.
- Maximize opportunities to provide information and referral for behavioral/mental health supports.
- Ensure all students exit high school with a plan for employment.

Principle: Oregon’s workforce is stronger when it reflects the entire community, inclusive of citizens with disabilities.

Why this work is important:

#### **Working Age Adults**

Oregonians who are blind should expect that their career opportunities should in no way be limited by their vision loss. With the right training and tools, blindness is not a barrier to working in a job of their choosing. While Oregon’s economic conditions are rich with opportunities for both workers and businesses, there is still work to do to ensure that those opportunities are available to Oregonians who are blind. Public education and outreach are needed to allow Oregonians who are blind to fully participate in the workforce and benefit from the strong economy in our state.

When one experiences vision loss as an adult, the first focus is the adjustment process and to provide skills training in areas of cane travel, braille, technology, techniques of daily living, and other areas as needed to be independent. Once an individual has acquired skills related to blindness, services shift to developing a plan for returning to the workforce. This path may include on-the-job training, 2- or 4-year college degrees, apprenticeships, or support in returning to the occupation previously held prior to vision loss. Nearly every occupation can be adapted with technological solutions, facilitated by the Agency through consultation and training with the business. Following placement, the focus shifts to job retention, supporting the individual with long-term success and career advancement whenever possible.

The challenges Oregonians face regarding housing and homelessness, access to behavioral health services and support are also critical to Oregonians who are blind. If one doesn't have stable housing, being able to find and keep a job can be nearly impossible. If one experiences challenges with mental health, being able to focus on training and acquiring new skills is not always feasible. Our Agency provides wrap around supports to help Oregonians who are blind connect to the community resources to help ensure they can get the help they need in order to fully engage in the rehabilitation services they need to reach their goals.

### **Transition Youth**

Developing an expectation for employment is a learned experience. The experience of holding a summer job and learning what it is like to work is a rite of passage that we all deserve to know. Thanks to changes in public policy, there is a general expectation that all youth, with or without disability, should prepare for a life of employment post high school.

Developing early expectations that a student with a disability will be offered the same opportunities after high school is at the core of why the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires the Agency to provide *pre-employment transition services* (pre-ETS). These services are targeted and designed to improve the transition from school to postsecondary education or to an employment outcome. Students with disabilities benefit from practicing workplace readiness skills and exploring post-secondary training options, leading to meaningful post-secondary employment.

In close partnership with schools and regional programs for the visually impaired, the Agency strives to identify students as early as age 14 to support the preparation of the plan that will lead to a career of their choosing.

## **Focus Area 2: Aging in Oregon**

---

Our Strategic Priority: Improve access and timeliness of independent living services throughout Oregon.

Progress Objectives:

- Reducing wait time for services.
- Increasing statewide community engagement and outreach.
- Providing tools and resources to increase independence and improve quality of life.

Principle: Aging Oregonians deserve to remain in their home and communities where they can continue to remain connected and engaged.

**Why this work is important:**

Oregon's citizens value independence. Oregonians want to live in a residence of their own choosing for as long as they are able. By having access to specialized education, training and support, seniors who experience vision loss may live safely and independently. The Agency has seen record numbers of seniors who are blind who wish to increase their independence and remain living on their own. As Oregon's population continues to increase, the number of seniors who will experience age-related vision loss will also increase.

Seniors, after experiencing vision loss, who are able to acquire the skills they need to remain safe, independent, and in their homes can delay or avoid higher levels of assisted living and nursing care that would otherwise be paid for at the expense of taxpayers. Maximizing independence and self-reliance are two core values that are deeply meaningful to Oregonians. The Commission for the Blind assists those who are blind in personally exercising those values and principles in their everyday lives.

The Agency strives to provide statewide services, applying an equity lens to ensure that we are making services available to Oregon citizens who could benefit from our specialized services. As a small, mission-driven organization with a specific target population, outreach and public education is a constant challenge and opportunity. The bottom line is that we want all Oregonians who could benefit from our services to know we are here and how to access services when the need arises.



## Outcomes Measures:

- Number of Clients Served
- Timely Service Delivery
- Client Independence
- Client Satisfaction

### **Focus Area 3: Succession Planning**

---

Our Strategic Priority: Recruit and retain specialized staff who deliver exemplary services to our clients.

Progress Objectives:

- Reduce employee turnover rate.
- Increase the percentage of successful recruitments.
- Increase professional development opportunities for staff.

Principle: Exemplary services require the recruitment and retention of specialized staff who are committed to the work.

**Why this work is important:**

As a small Agency, every position is critical to agency operations. This is true for two key reasons.

1. Each position at all levels of the organization performs specific business functions required to meet federal and state requirements.
2. Because of our size, there are several instances where an individual contributor performs a business function and there is limited duplication/cross training across the functional area. Each of the competencies required is specific to the roles and functions of the position.

Due to the nature of the Agency's work, the Agency has two classifications that are considered highly critical: Rehabilitation Instructors for the Blind and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. As a specialized agency that delivers vocational rehabilitation and independent living services to Oregonians who are blind, we simply cannot accomplish our mission without these positions. The Commission for the Blind is committed to continue to seek creative, innovative strategies to recruit, develop, and retain staff to perform the mission-critical work that is essential to help Oregonians who are blind meet their employment and independence goals.

Recruitment: With low unemployment and the shifts in the economy and workforce, it can be a challenge to fill many positions. While we continue to experience difficulties filling specialized teaching positions, all positions now take longer to fill. As the labor market improves and the unemployment rate hovers at

record lows, we have seen an increase in the percentage of recruitments for which no viable candidates applied and must be extended or altogether reinitiated. Some positions remain vacant longer than we would expect, and it causes strain on the service delivery system overall.

Retention: As the nation's workforce has evolved, we can no longer expect to have employees who choose to work in the same job for their entire career. These trends are not unique to our Agency or to state government. The impact that these labor challenges have on a small, specialized agency such as OCB is unique. Every position, and employee, is a key contributor to the overall mission of the Agency to ensure that Oregonians who are blind have timely access to vocational rehabilitation and independent living services.

To retain our skilled workforce, we have to be creative in offering compelling reasons for employees to consider long-term employment with our Agency. In addition, we need to be able to optimize our onboarding processes to prepare for the shift in the workforce where we can expect employees to turn over at a higher rate than what we have previously seen.

Qualified Rehabilitation Professionals: The work of the Agency requires a team of rehabilitation professionals to do specialized work with individuals who are blind. Blindness is a low incidence disability and requires specialized fields of training in areas such as braille, orientation, and mobility (white cane travel), adaptive technology and devices, adjustment to blindness, career development and career transition counseling, etc. There are limited university programs that offer graduate programs in specialized fields of study in the areas of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation instruction to prepare professionals to enter into this important work.

Collaboration with Education Partners: Due to the national shortage of vision rehabilitation professionals, we are steadily building partnerships with the accrediting bodies and university programs that provide training in these fields. To know firsthand who and where job-seeking specialists are located improves our recruitment efforts. This is particularly beneficial among the Orientation and Mobility Specialists. Additionally, we offer internships and other experiential opportunities for many graduate students preparing to enter the field which has led to several key hires in the past.

Staff Development: We support our specialized staff's need to obtain continuing education in their fields of expertise. This investment ensures that Agency staff remain aware of the latest research and advancements in their field, optimizing the Agency's ability to train and prepare clients for work and full independence. Investing in the opportunity to engage with other professionals in their field while maintaining their professional credentials is crucial to this effort. Opportunities for professional development and growth and our engaging mission are compelling reasons for today's staff members to remain, fueling their passion for the work. We recognize that by retaining valuable staff, and engaging them in their jobs, we are able to complete the critical work of the Agency.

Outcomes Measures Aligned with Priority:

- Engaged Staff
- Team Member Proficiency
- Team Utilization

## **Focus Area 4: Business and Community**

---

Our Strategic Priority: Agency partnerships strengthen and improve access and opportunities for all Oregonians who experience vision loss.

### Progress Objectives:

- Increase repeat customers among businesses in Oregon that recruit and hire job seekers who are blind.
- Support Business Enterprise Program entrepreneurs to operate profitable, thriving businesses in public locations.
- Collaborate with communities to prioritize accessibility as a key element of inclusion for everyone.

Principle: Business engagement and successful entrepreneurs who are blind increase the diversity of our workforce and is good for the economy.

### **Why this work is important:**

Our vision for Oregon is that blindness does not pose a barrier for Oregonians who are blind to lead their best lives. This includes being able to fully participate in the community through employment, civic engagement, volunteerism, and recreation. The Agency's role in this work is to increase public education and enhance opportunities throughout the community for Oregonians who are blind in the following ways.

Businesses Partnerships: We believe that building a more equitable Oregon begins with government leading the way through hiring practices that promote an inclusive and diverse workforce. Our experience is that businesses that understand the capabilities of individuals who are blind are best positioned to hire the most qualified candidates for the job, irrespective of whether those candidates are blind. Hiring individuals who are blind is, quite simply, good for business.

State Government: Through the State of Oregon's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Action Plan, state government has a unique opportunity to lead by example in hiring qualified job seekers who are blind into positions throughout state government. Our work as an agency provides education and support to hiring managers and expands opportunities and eliminates perceived barriers to employment within state agencies. With the advancement of technology, there

are very few positions that, with the right training, technology, and opportunities, individuals who are blind cannot master.

Opportunities for Entrepreneurs: The Business Enterprise Program is the most visible aspect of the work of the Agency. Each day, Vending Facility Managers demonstrate the capabilities of individuals who are blind in their food service and vending operations. Partnering with public agencies, Vending Facility Managers in the Business Enterprise Program operate food service and vending businesses in public buildings around the state. These opportunities are in a state of evolution in response to the shifts to the workplace that have taken place because of the pandemic. We will need to remain alert and responsive to ways we can evolve business models to provide viable business opportunities for entrepreneurs who are blind while meeting the needs of the customers in public buildings and locations statewide.

Community Outreach and Public Education: Anyone who needs access to services should know about our agency and the services we provide. As the only agency that provides rehabilitation and independent living services for individuals who are blind in Oregon, it is essential that all Oregonians who could benefit from our services know who we are and the services that are available. We seek out opportunities and venues in which to communicate the wide variety of occupations and roles that Oregonians who are blind perform, breaking through social stereotypes and misconceptions about vision loss.

Outcomes Measures Aligned with Priority:

- Business Partnerships
- Accessibility Compliance
- BE Client Performance
- Client Employment

## Focus Area 5: Customer Service

---

Our Strategic Priority: Agency business processes, resources, and infrastructure are responsive to the needs of our customers.

### Progress Objectives:

- Maximize technology and tools to optimize performance and boost efficiencies.
- Engage with statewide systems and information technology resources.
- Engage stakeholders with timely communication and responsive service delivery.

Principle: Business efficiencies and performance optimization increase the capacity to deliver timely and accurate services.

Why this work is important:

Governor Kotek has challenged state government to focus on customer service. This is accomplished through understanding who our customers are, what they need from the Agency, and how we know when we are meeting those customers' needs. At the center of the Agency's core values, we place high value on meeting the needs of both external and internal customers through the following strategies.

Performance Optimization: We are committed to "doing the right things and doing things right" for both our external and internal customers. We have a robust internal performance management system that helps us monitor all aspects of the organization to ensure our programs and services are operating as effectively and efficiently as possible in meeting our customer service objectives and that there are sufficient internal controls in place to protect the public investment. As the responsibilities and duties of state agencies evolve, our capabilities and staff need to reflect the needs of the Agency.

Information Technology: Our information technology infrastructure is centered around our core business and its customers. Under the guidance of our IT Strategic Plan, we are committed to technology solutions that optimize secure and effective reporting and tracking capabilities, while protecting and securing the private information of Oregonians who are blind. We do this by ensuring that the Agency IT systems align with statewide IT standards. We are also exploring

technology tools that expand our capacity and allow our staff to spend more time engaged with our customers delivering services and less time on the computer tracking the services being delivered.

Collaboration and Transparency: Our engagement with our stakeholders ensures that we remain focused on customer service. Stakeholders inform the work of the Agency and optimize the use of Agency resources to meet the needs of Oregonians who are blind, resulting in improved employment and independent living outcomes. The work of the Agency is conducted in an open way. Policy decisions are made in public meetings where stakeholders have the opportunity to provide their input and stay informed.

#### Outcomes Measures Aligned with Priority:

- Team Member Proficiency
- Team Utilization
- Spending to Budget
- Strong Internal Controls
- Client Satisfaction



## **DELIVERING OUTCOMES**

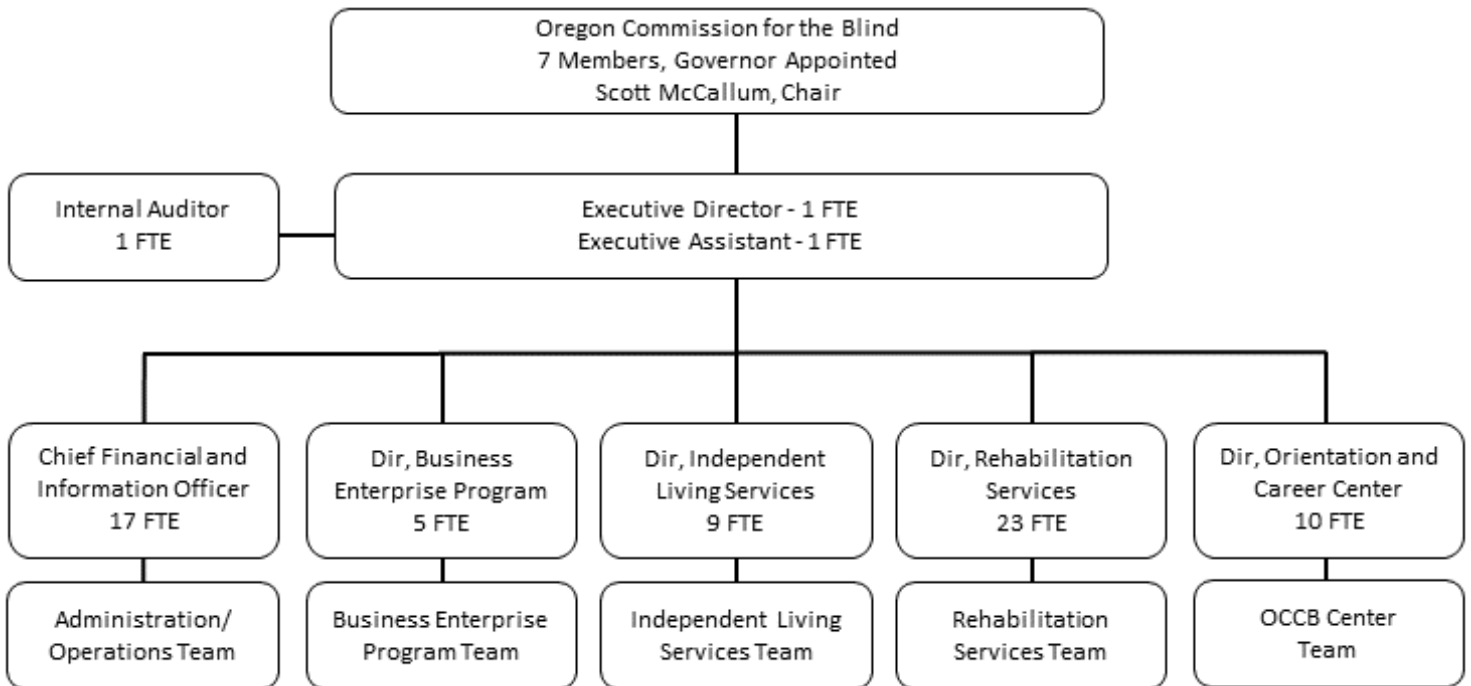
The Commission for the Blind's ability to deliver results on these strategic priorities will require the following:

- Dedicated resources for outreach to improve equity and access for unserved and underserved communities around the state.
- The ability to recruit and retain specialized staff trained in the latest advancements in the field of blindness rehabilitation who have a strong commitment and passion for serving Oregonians who are blind.
- Staffing capacity necessary to be responsive to individuals at the time they receive the diagnosis of blindness so that they may understand their options to learning skills and resuming full independence.
- Leveraging the full amount of federal dollars available to Oregon.
- Strategic enhancements of Agency services over time to build capacity and Agency responsiveness to emerging needs.
- The opportunity to partner and collaborate with the education system to provide for a seamless transition from school services to post-secondary training and employment for transition-aged youth.
- The capacity to actively engage in the workforce system to assist businesses in recruiting and retaining qualified workers who are blind.

## APPENDICES

### Organizational Chart

**Oregon Commission for the Blind**  
Organization Chart  
2023-25 (67.0 FTE, 67 Positions)



## APPENDICES

### Performance Measures: Operating Processes

#### OPERATING PROCESSES

CORE PROCESSES	Conducting Public Education and Outreach	Determining Client Eligibility	Assessing Needs and Developing Plans	Delivering Independent Living Services	Delivering Employment Services		
	OP1	OP2	OP3	OP4	OP5		
SUB PROCESSES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Representing the Governor's policies.</li> <li>2. Taking strategic direction from the Commission.</li> <li>3. Educating the legislature.</li> <li>4. Engaging stakeholders and staff.</li> <li>5. Facilitating and participating in community events.</li> <li>6. Soliciting program referrals.</li> <li>7. Collaborating with consumer groups.</li> <li>8. Partnering with businesses, agencies, organizations.</li> <li>9. Advocating for accessibility and inclusion.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying client interests and needs.</li> <li>2. Explaining agency services &amp; processes.</li> <li>3. Matching client to correct program.</li> <li>4. Obtaining required eye/diagnostics &amp; application signature.</li> <li>5. Confirming referral meets program requirements.</li> <li>6. Identifying client functional limitations &amp; appropriate agency services.</li> <li>7. Determining eligibility</li> <li>8. Notifying client of eligibility status &amp; resources.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessing client needs, abilities, &amp; strengths.</li> <li>2. Identifying appropriate equipment and services.</li> <li>3. Developing services plan.</li> <li>4. Obtaining client agreement.</li> <li>5. Initiating service delivery.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Authorizing equipment purchase.</li> <li>2. Teaching in-home techniques of daily living.</li> <li>3. Teaching community access skills.</li> <li>4. Connecting to appropriate resources.</li> <li>5. Monitoring progress.</li> <li>6. Adjusting plan as needed.</li> <li>7. Verifying goals are met.</li> <li>8. Closing cases.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identifying services and equipment providers.</li> <li>2. Authorizing services and equipment purchases.</li> <li>3. Initiating training referrals.</li> <li>4. Delivering training and equipment.</li> <li>5. Monitoring progress</li> <li>6. Amending plan as needed.</li> <li>7. Obtaining client approval.</li> <li>8. Verifying goals are met.</li> <li>9. Closing vocational rehabilitation cases.</li> <li>10. Supporting BE client success.</li> </ol>		
PROCESS OWNERS	Jonathan	Jim	Ron	Malinda	Angel		
PROCESS MEASURES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OP1a. Urban outreach and education activities – all programs</li> <li>2. OP1b. Rural outreach and education activities – all programs</li> <li>3. OP1c. Client referrals.</li> <li>4. OP1d. Successful client referrals</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OP2a. Number of applicants determined eligible for VR</li> <li>2. OP2a(1). Number of Part B referrals to application</li> <li>3. OP2b. Time from referral to application, all programs</li> <li>4. OP2c. VR application to eligibility</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OP3a. Signed VR plans</li> <li>2. OP3b. Timely assessments</li> <li>3. OP3c. VR eligibility to plan</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OP4b(1). OB any increase in IL skills.</li> <li>2. OP4b(2). Part B any increase in IL skills.</li> <li>3. OP4c. OB/Part B successful closures.</li> <li>4. OP4d. Increase VR Client independent living skills</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. OP5a. Signed VR plan amendments.</li> <li>2. OP5b. VR Internal training request to service delivery.</li> <li>3. OP5c. Number of successful VR closures.</li> </ol>		
OUTCOME MEASURES AND OWNER	<b>OM 1</b> Staff Engagement Dacia	<b>OM 2</b> Team Member Proficiency Ron	<b>OM 3</b> Number of Clients Served Malinda	<b>OM 4</b> Business Partnerships Jonathan	<b>OM 5</b> Team Utilization Jim	<b>OM 6</b> Accessibility Compliance Jim	<b>OM 7</b> Spending to Budget Kat

## APPENDICES

### Performance Measures: Supporting Processes

CORE PROCESSES	Developing and Supporting Staff	Managing Finances and Physical Assets	Managing Information Technology	Managing Compliance and Risk	Managing Agency Performance	
	<b>SP1</b>	<b>SP2</b>	<b>SP3</b>	<b>SP4</b>	<b>SP5</b>	
SUB PROCESSES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating and identifying staffing needs.</li> <li>Recruiting for vacant positions.</li> <li>Hiring qualified applicants.</li> <li>Orienting new employees.</li> <li>Training and developing staff.</li> <li>Managing employee performance.</li> <li>Recognizing performance.</li> <li>Retaining quality staff.</li> <li>Maintaining a positive and professional work-place.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing agency budget.</li> <li>Managing revenue.</li> <li>Managing payroll.</li> <li>Paying invoices.</li> <li>Managing receivables.</li> <li>Purchasing goods and services.</li> <li>Compiling and submitting reports.</li> <li>Managing office facilities.</li> <li>Managing assets.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring Systems. Performance.</li> <li>Enhancing Performance.</li> <li>Responding to Help Desk Tickets.</li> <li>Ensuring System Uptime.</li> <li>Managing Resources &amp; Licenses.</li> <li>Ensuring System Security.</li> <li>Planning for Future Needs.</li> <li>Coordinating IT Disaster Recovery.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring employee safety.</li> <li>Developing policies and procedures.</li> <li>Monitoring policy and procedure compliance.</li> <li>Assessing risk.</li> <li>Conducting audits.</li> <li>Evaluating audit findings.</li> <li>Taking corrective action.</li> <li>Monitoring effectiveness.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing strategic plan.</li> <li>Implementing strategic initiatives.</li> <li>Creating measures.</li> <li>Measuring agency progress.</li> <li>Evaluating agency performance.</li> <li>Prioritizing improvement opportunities.</li> <li>Identifying constraints.</li> <li>Making program improvements.</li> </ol>	
PROCESS OWNERS	<b>Dacia/Kat</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Kat</b>	<b>Michael</b>	<b>Dacia</b>	
PROCESS MEASURES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP1a. Performance recognition.</li> <li>SP1b(1). Days to hire.</li> <li>Sp1b(2). Number of failed recruitments.</li> <li>Sp1c. Staff engagement.</li> <li>SP1d. Staff orientation.</li> <li>SP1d. Timely performance check-ins.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP2a. Revenue plan to actual.</li> <li>SP2b. Timely federal reports.</li> <li>SP2c. Monthly Cascading Measure performance.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP3a. Customer satisfaction.</li> <li>SP3b. System uptime.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP4a. Business practice reviews.</li> <li>SP4b. Client safety incidents.</li> <li>SP4c. Staff safety incidents.</li> <li>SP4d. Material findings.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP5a. Measures improvement.</li> <li>SP5b. Outcome performance.</li> <li>SP5c. Active problem-solving teams.</li> <li>SP5d. Process performance.</li> <li>SP5e. QTR Timeliness.</li> </ol>	
OUTCOME MEASURES AND OWNER	<b>OM 8</b> Strong Internal Controls Clay	<b>OM 9</b> Timely Service Delivery Angel	<b>OM 10</b> Client Satisfaction Angel	<b>OM 11</b> BE Client Performance Ron	<b>OM 12</b> Client Employment Angel	<b>OM 13</b> Client Independence Malinda

## **APPENDICES**

### **Mission Statement**

Empower Oregonians who are blind to fully engage in life.

### **Vision Statement**

Blindness without Barriers: A state of inclusion for Oregonians with vision loss.

### **Key Goals**

- Engaged and proficient team
- Effective education and outreach
- Operational excellence
- Exemplary service
- Successful client outcomes

### **Core Values**

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

### **Outcome Measures**

- Conducting Public Education and Outreach
- Determining Client Eligibility
- Assessing Needs and Developing Plans
- Delivering Independent Living Services
- Delivering Employment Services
- Developing and Supporting Staff
- Managing Finances and Physical Assets
- Managing Information Technology
- Managing Compliance and Risk
- Managing Agency Performance