



2014  
two thousand fourteen



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF  
REHABILITATION SERVICES

# State Rehabilitation Council Annual Report

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## MISSION STATEMENT

It is the express mission of the State of Mississippi Rehabilitation Council to ensure that Mississippians with disabilities have a strong role in shaping the vocational rehabilitation programs of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services.

## VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the State of Mississippi Rehabilitation Council is to ensure that the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services provides Mississippians with disabilities empowerment through informed choice, inclusion through equal access and full participation, independence through employment opportunities, and integration through advocacy.



**H.S. McMillan**  
*Executive Director*

## DEAR GOVERNOR BRYANT

and members of the Mississippi Legislature:

Thank you for the opportunity to share a few of the many accomplishments of the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services and the State Rehabilitation Council in 2014. Our partnership is vital to carrying out our mission of providing quality services to individuals with disabilities in a timely and effective manner. I would like to thank the members for their service, guidance, and valuable input in the agency's work to provide quality vocational rehabilitation services to Mississippians with disabilities.

At MDRS we continue to strive to meet the needs of Mississippians with disabilities who rely on our services to become successfully employed. In 2014, the Offices of Vocational Rehabilitation and Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind have served 20,706 job seekers with significant disabilities and achieved outstanding ratings in client satisfaction surveys. This year, we have achieved our goal of assisting over 4,569 people enter into the workforce and become successfully employed leading to economic independence.

Our successes could not be achieved without the dedication and hard work by the staff of MDRS in consultation with the members of the State Rehabilitation Council and the consumers we serve. We look forward to this continued partnership and another year of successful outcomes.

H.S. McMillan, Executive Director  
Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In, 2014 Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) **assisted 20,706** eligible Mississippians with disabilities to receive services including, but not limited to, counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, physical and mental restoration, job training, assistive technology, and job placement.

Individuals served by VR have a wide array of disabilities including:

Hearing Loss or deafness • Amputations • Mental and emotional disorders • Epilepsy • Developmental disease and disorders • Traumatic brain injuries • Orthopedic impairments • Residuals from cancer • Speech impairments • Etc.

**4,569 SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES**

## ABILITYWORKS

AbilityWorks is a network of 17 community rehabilitation programs that provides vocational assessment, job training, and actual work experience for individuals with disabilities. This is possible through a wide array of contract and subcontract services provided to local business and industry. AbilityWork's mission to clients is "to improve the quality of life, employment opportunities, and integration of people with disabilities into the community."

Its mission to business and industry through its subcontracting program is to provide fast turnaround times, high-quality workmanship, competitive rates, credit rates, credit terms and speedy delivery. Some of the services and products AbilityWorks offer includes collating and sorting, packaging and handling, assembly work, product reworking, product reclamation, grounds maintenance, housekeeping and quality reviews.

During FFY 2014, **AbilityWorks served a total of 2,756 MDRS clients**, resulting in **697 successful employment outcomes**.

## DEAF SERVICES

The MDRS Deaf Services Program continues to promote excellence by striving to assist new RCD's (Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf) to reach the required communications skills level on the Signed Communication Proficiency Interview (SCPI), an American Sign Language assessment developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology. Adequate communication skills are a pre-requisite to meaningful counseling and guidance with people who are Deaf and use manual communication.

This skill, along with other specialized training, has been a vital factor in the successful rehabilitation of individuals with deafness or significant hearing loss. In FFY 2014, **Deaf Services were provided to 3,403 Mississippians**, resulting in **980 successful rehabilitations**.

# TRANSITION SERVICES

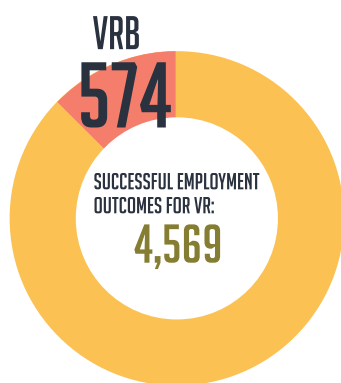
Through the Transition Services Program, the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services assists eligible secondary school students with disabilities to enable them to make the difficult transition from school to subsequent work environments. Working cooperatively with the Mississippi Department of Education and local school districts, MDRS counselors plan and implement programs designed to provide this training and assistance. Examples of transition services are vocational-technical training, vocational evaluation, work adjustment training, on the job training, job search skills, and work experience programs. In FFY 2014, the **Transition Program served approximately 3,040 students** and placed **432 in successful employment outcomes**.

## SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT

The Supported Employment Program is a specialized placement and training program to assist those individuals with severe disabilities in finding and maintaining employment. Choice of employment is based on such things as the individual's: Unique strengths • Interests • Resources • Capabilities • Abilities • Priorities • Concerns • Informed Choice.

Working together, trained vocational counselors and job placement specialists provide support needed for the individual to prepare for and secure an appropriate job match, as well as to retain or regain employment. During FFY 2014, **925 individuals received Supported Employment services**, and **105 resulted in successful employment outcomes**.

## VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FOR THE BLIND



Of the 4,569 successful employment outcomes by VR, 574 were achieved through Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (VRB). VRB consumers received services such as counseling and guidance in adjustment to disability, vocational exploration, orientation and mobility training, job training, and assistive technology.

Itinerant teachers work closely with VRB counselors to coordinate services, evaluate client needs, develop living-needs plans and instructional materials, and provide onsite training for consumers who are blind or visually impaired. In 2014, the **Itinerant Teacher Program provided 53 services** for VRB consumers.

*The Addie McBryde Rehabilitation Center for the Blind* provides traditional intensive evaluation, training, and adjustment services on the campus of the University of Mississippi Medical Center. In 2014, the Addie McBryde Center provided training to **178 consumers**.

*Independent Living Services for the Blind (ILB)* enables eligible consumers to receive peer group counseling, assistive technology evaluation, adjustment services, orientation and mobility training, personal adjustment instruction and training in techniques for daily living. In 2014, ILB served over 4,000 consumers through indirect services such as health fairs, vision screening, peer groups, and outreach. Furthermore, **ILB provided direct services to 556 consumers** who are legally blind and either over the age of 55 or have a significant secondary disability by providing a variety of independent living services.

The *Business Enterprise Program (BEP)* provides support for self-employment opportunities in the food service industry for Mississippians who are legally blind. These BEP entrepreneurs operate a variety of businesses including vending machine routes, snack bars and military base cafeterias. In 2014, **forty (40) individuals operated successful businesses** as BEP vendors.

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

- ONE** ➤ **Referral**  
I provide contact information to VR to arrange a meeting.
- TWO** ➤ **Orientation**  
I learn what VR is about and if it is right for me.
- THREE** ➤ **Application**  
I declare that I intend to work and need assistance in getting or keeping a job.
- FOUR** ➤ **Assessment & Evaluation**  
My counselor collects information about how my disability affects work, including medical information from my doctors, to determine my strengths and limitations.
- FIVE** ➤ **Determine Eligibility**  
The counselor reviews all the information to decide if I am eligible for VR services.
- SIX** ➤ **Individualized Plan for Employment (IEP)**  
Together, my counselor and I design the road map to help me go to work - a plan to reach a job goal that is right for me.
- SEVEN** ➤ **Action**  
Along with my counselor and other VR staff, I work my plan to reach my job goal.
- EIGHT** ➤ **Employment**  
I've reached my job goal!
- NINE** ➤ **Case Closure**  
I am employed for at least 90 days.
- TEN** ➤ **Post Employment Services**  
If i have problems at my job, I can contact my VR counselor to help me stay employed.

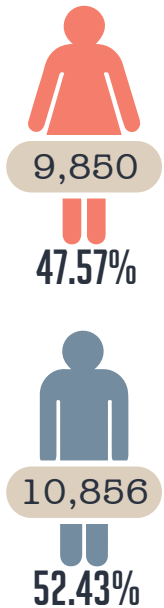
## Program Funding: Title One Section 110 Match Funding

	2014
Section 110 Grant	\$44,576,629 (78.7%)
State Match	\$12,064,577 (21.3%)
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$56,641,206 (100.0%)</b>

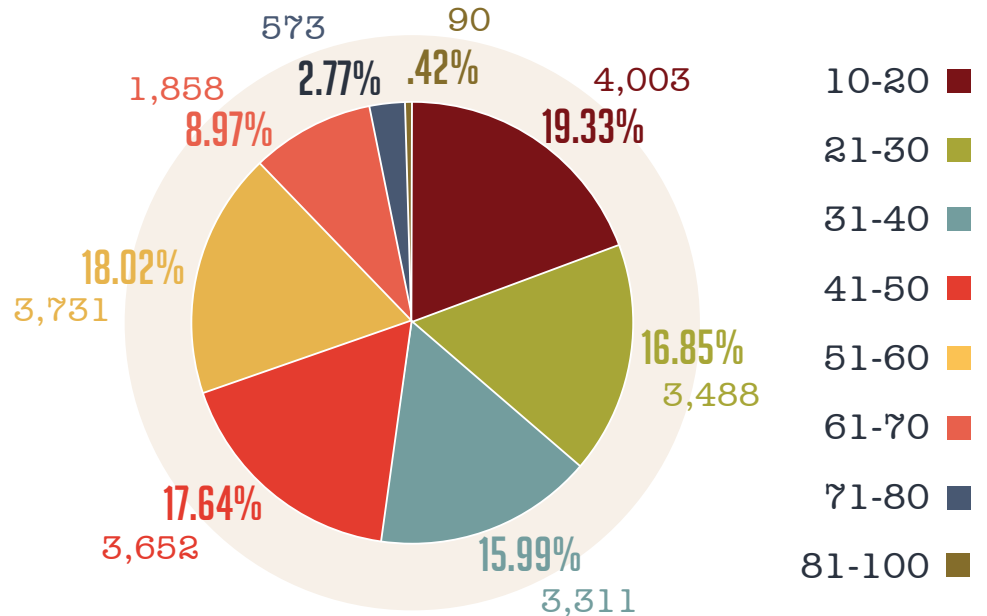
# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Demographics of Persons Served

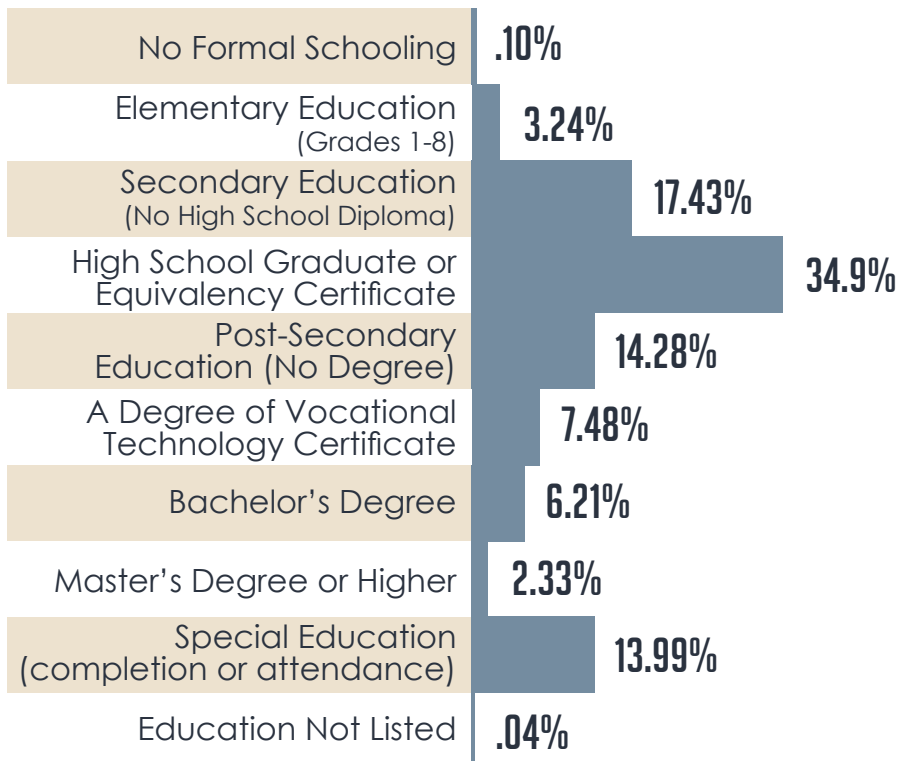
### Gender



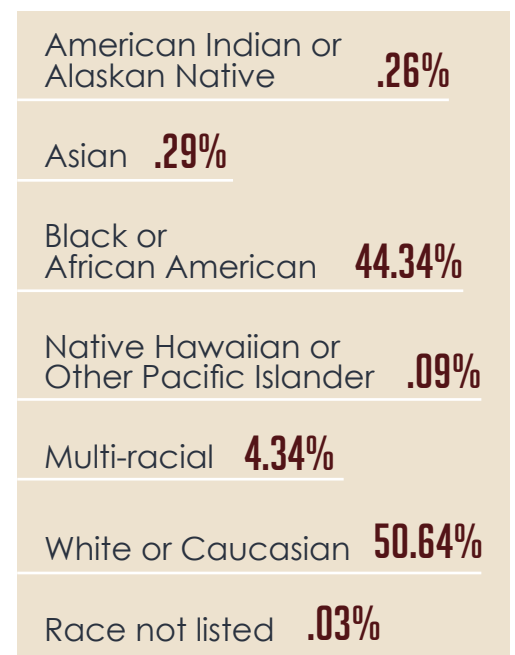
### Age at Application



### Education Level at Application



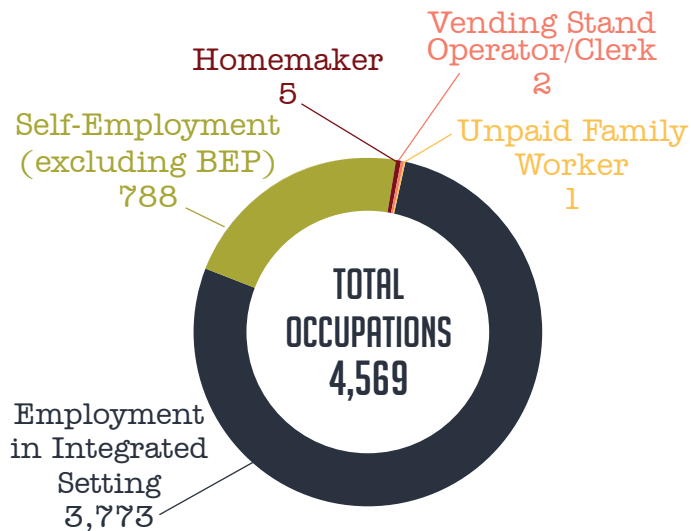
### Race



# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Status of Persons Rehabilitated

### Employment Status of Persons Rehabilitated

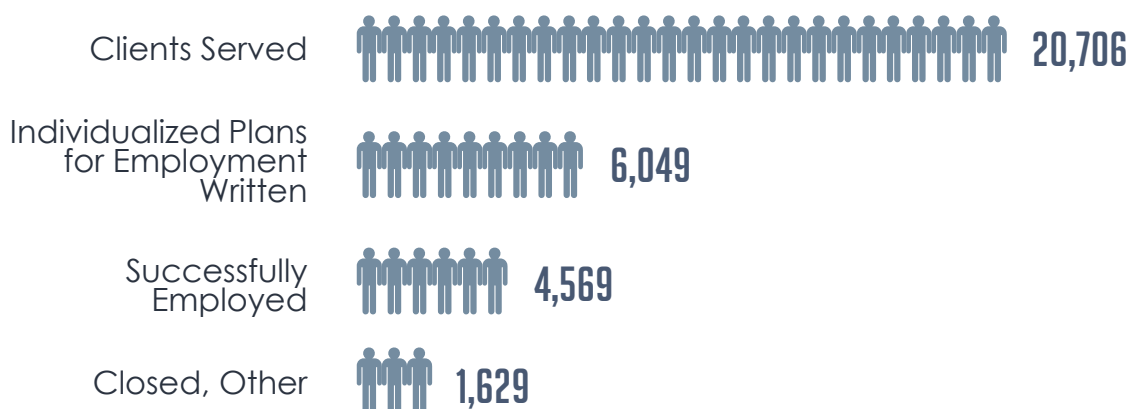


### Employment in Integrated Settings

Service Worker	1,062
Sales	464
Skilled Craft	519
Secretarial/Office/Clerical	466
Laborer	391
Professional	347
Operative	234
Executive/Managerial	157
Technical/Paraprofessional	85
Production Occupations	1
Community & Social Service	8
Clerical & Administrative Support	8
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	7
Healthcare Support	7
Computer & Mathematical	7
Education, Training, & Library	5
Protective Service	4
Personal Care	1

**3,773**

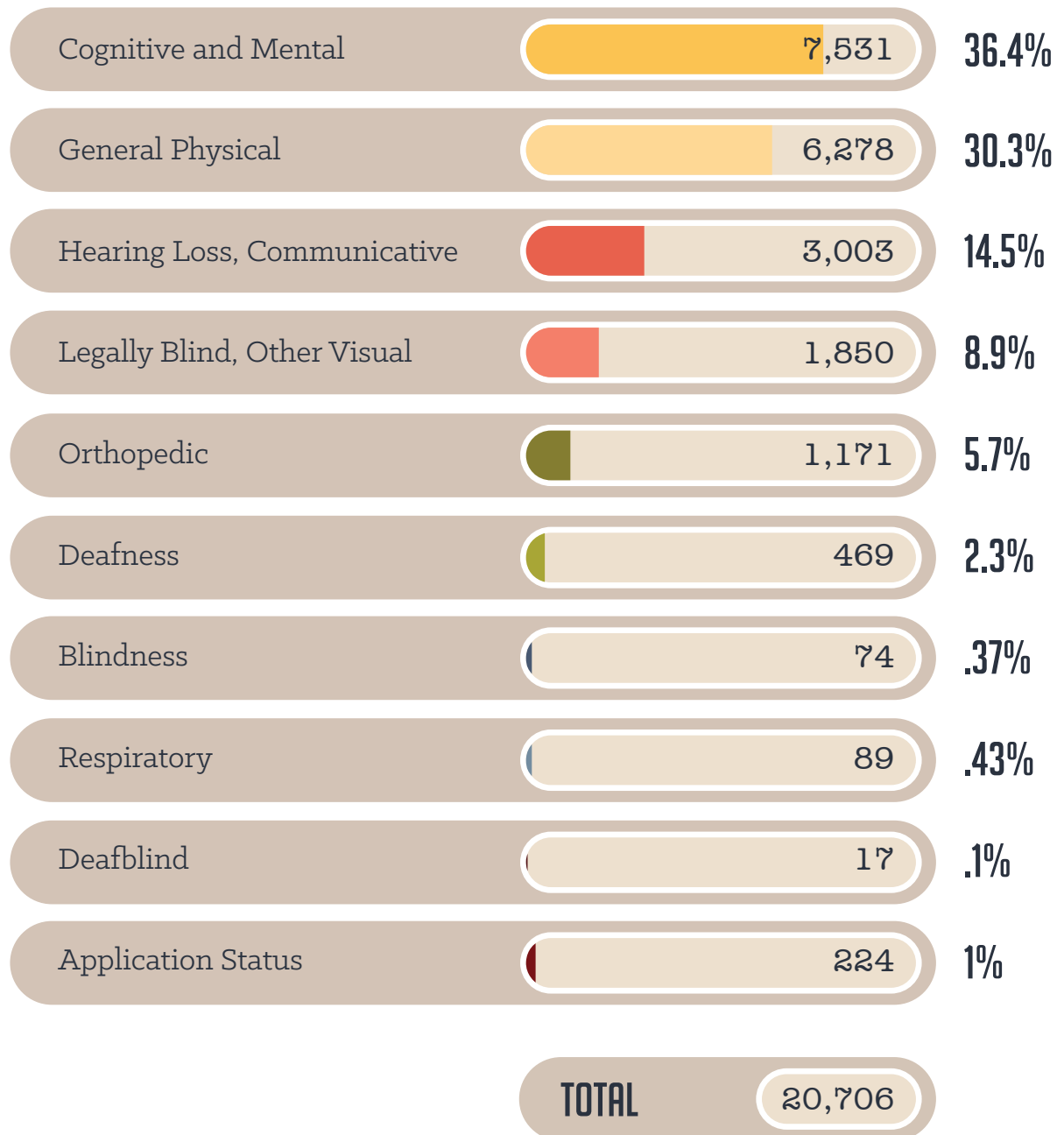
### Clients Served and Closed for 2014





# IN DEPTH LOOK AT VR & VRB

## Persons served by Primary Disability



# CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

## Annual 2013-14 Results for the Closed Ended Questions

The ratings for the various services consumers received are presented below using the average (mean) score given to each item by all respondents interviewed. If an item did not apply to a particular respondent or if the consumer did not know or refused to rate an item he/she is not included in calculating the average score for that item. The seven items rated are in Table 1 (to get an exact wording, see the questionnaire.) Chart 1 is included for an easy visual comparison. The respondents were asked to rate the items (Questions 1-9) on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very bad and 5 being very good. Thus, a high score indicates that the service was good and a low score that it was bad.

**Table 1**  
**Service ratings by consumer**

*Rate the following items on a scale of 1 to 5,  
with 1 being very bad and 5 being very good.*

The help provided by the VR staff at the time you applied for VR services.

The help provided by the VR staff during the planning of your services.

The help provided by the VR staff when you were receiving your VR services.

The help you received from other agencies or service providers.

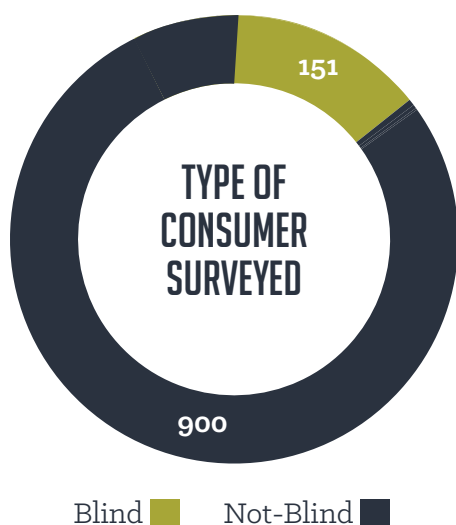
Your employment outcome.

Employment benefits provided by your new employer.

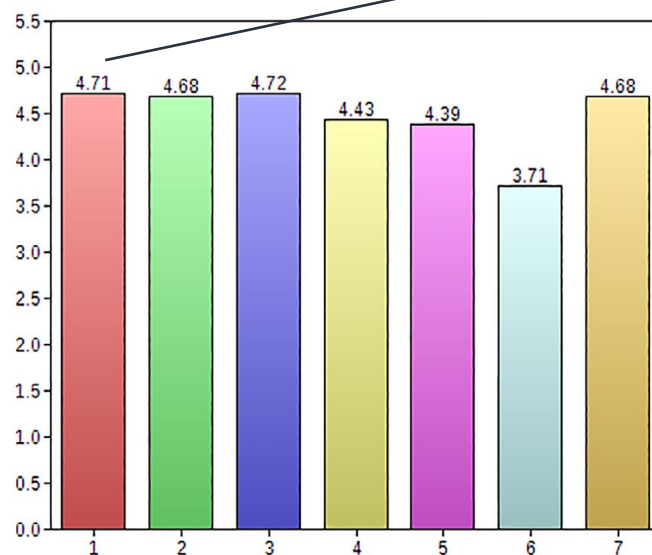
Overall, how do you rate the services you received?

Number of Consumers	Average Rating (mean)
1,049	4.71
1,048	4.68
1,044	4.72
215	4.43
513	4.39
369	3.71
1039	4.68

**Type of Consumer Surveyed**



**Chart 1**  
**Average Consumer Ratings**



# SRC COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## **SRC comments and/or recommendations for input into the Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or Vocational Rehabilitation for the Blind (OVR/OVRB) service delivery system:**

- Statistics indicate that the service delivery system is successful.
- Based on employment outcomes and consumer satisfaction surveys, service delivery practices are working.
- I like the automatic e-mail (if client has Internet access) sent out to follow up with client to make sure they understand everything that was talked about. If client doesn't have Internet, please have counselor put in notes to call client back and set time that is best for both.
- Consider the customer follow-up and Satisfaction Survey after each session.
- I think that a great deal of consideration is being given to evolving toward a more diverse scope of service delivery. That is great.
- We should keep trying to improve and examine what our consumers need.

## **SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning the results of consumer satisfaction surveys:**

- Consumer satisfaction is very high as indicated by the external evaluator indicating that consumers' needs are being met by services.
- I strongly suggest that a client satisfaction survey should be taken at the point of entry into the service delivery process to determine what the client is expecting to receive from the service.
- Midway through the service delivery process a progress survey should be taken to determine whether the client is on track with their expectations.
- At the end of the service delivery, a client survey should be taken. This process will give the program staff a better overview of program processes and program satisfaction.
- If there are certain types of services that you want to evaluate, ask these specific questions...for example, "did AbilityWorks help you learn good work behaviors?"
- Consumer satisfaction is high. We should continue to listen to consumers' input.
- Attempt to determine which factors affect the lower (but still satisfactory) rates for service providers and employment benefits.

## **SRC comments and/or recommendations for input in terms of potential service providers or discussions on the performance of service providers currently being used by OVR/OVRB:**

- Consumers are reporting a high level of satisfaction with service providers.
- Based on what appears in the client satisfaction survey, a review of service provider's performance should be reported on a quarterly basis for input into the service delivery process.
- Try to utilize local small businesses in the communities. They may become employers for clients.
- Utilizing service providers with specialty areas is important.
- A question might be added relative to service providers on the client satisfaction questionnaire. Or leave off the "such as" and let clients list who they used to find out which agencies cause the lower ratings.
- We should continue to do outreach to find the best service providers in each area.

## **SRC comments and/or recommendations concerning VR Policy, State Plan Development, and SRC business:**

- Very encouraging to see direct examples (i.e. MS chosen as one of four states to participate in the effective VR service delivery practices) of the impact this has had, is having and will continue to have for those in the State in need of the support! It is great to look at the Nation's history of identifying gaps and citizens in need and the progression of assessing these needs and then to fast forward to now and see that Mississippi is a benchmark of Best Practices of Support.
- The changes [in the State Plan] seem necessary and positive for the agency.
- The ODHH is very useful and necessary – It is impressive that nearly one-fourth of the closures come from the Deaf Program.

# AGENCY RESPONSE

## **Agency Response to the comments and recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council:**

The Rehabilitation Act, as amended, empowers individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, inclusion and integration into society. Ensuring consumer satisfaction with VR services is one method of implementing both the spirit and letter of the Act.

VR and VRB continually strive to improve our relationship with consumers and their overall satisfaction with VR services. As suggested, a great deal of consideration is being given to consumer satisfaction surveys being completed while the consumer is receiving VR services. It is believed that this will give us the opportunity to increase consumer engagement and provide for more efficiency in the VR process. Asking the consumer for feedback while they are in the process of receiving services will increase our contact with the consumer and bring focus on how we facilitate that communication.

Our current consumer satisfaction survey indicates that a high percentage of our consumers are satisfied with VR services. By considering additional ways to assess consumer satisfaction, we will be able to continue providing evidence that VR/VRB is providing appropriate services and consumer needs are being met.

VR/VRB maintains high standards for the service providers who work with our consumers. We will continue to, and must give full consideration to, any service available that can provide for the needs of our consumers.

VR/VRB continues to collaborate and have memoranda of understanding with various organizations interested in the competitive employment of individuals with disabilities. We will keep enhancing our business relationships with employers in our local communities with the goal of increasing employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

# CLIENTS SERVED

## Per County

Adams	317
Alcorn	330
Amite	123
Attala	248
Benton	65
Bolivar	193
Calhoun	106
Carroll	76
Chickasaw	112
Choctaw	99
Claiborne	49
Clarke	132
Clay	187
Coahoma	210
Copiah	182
Covington	150
DeSoto	479
Forrest	796
Franklin	101
George	88
Greene	85
Grenada	211
Hancock	163
Harrison	929
Hinds	1457
Holmes	152
Humphreys	79
Issaquena	10
Itawamba	167
Jackson	549
Jasper	129
Jefferson	75
Jefferson Davis	65
Jones	662
Kemper	66
Lafayette	321
Lamar	423
Lauderdale	675
Lawrence	108
Leake	105
Lee	686
Leflore	545
Lincoln	233



Lowndes	491
Madison	536
Marion	218
Marshall	141
Monroe	233
Montgomery	129
Neshoba	176
Newton	162
Noxubee	74
Otibbeha	488
Panola	397
Pearl River	218
Perry	103
Pike	363
Pontotoc	304
Prentiss	238
Quitman	74
Rankin	910
Scott	130
Sharkey	47
Simpson	165

Smith	92
Stone	64
Sunflower	144
Tallahatchie	165
Tate	96
Tippah	152
Tishomingo	166
Tunica	51
Union	246
Walthall	102
Warren	378
Washington	501
Wayne	172
Webster	152
Wilkinson	88
Winston	179
Yalobusha	163
Yazoo	201
Out of State	59

## DISTRICT I

*(Calhoun, Coahoma, Desoto, Lafayette, Marshall, Panola, Tate, Tunica, Quitman, Yalobusha)*

51 County Road 166

Oxford, MS 38655

(662) 234-3171 **OVR** (662) 234-6092 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT II

*(Alcorn, Benton, Itawamba, Lee, Pontotoc, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, Union)*

2620 Traceland Drive

Tupelo, MS 38801

(662) 842-1010 **OVR**

615-A Pelham Dr.

Tupelo, MS 38801

(662) 844-5830 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT III

*(Bolivar, Carroll, Grenada, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Washington, Yazoo)*

201 Hwy 7 South

Greenwood, MS 38930

(662) 453-6172 **OVR** (662) 455-1432 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT IV

*(Clay, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Lowndes, Monroe, Montgomery, Oktibbeha, Webster)*

207 Industrial Park Road

Starkville, MS 39759

(662) 323-9594 **OVR**

48 Datco Industrial Dr.

Columbus, MS 39704

(662) 328-8807 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT V

*(Hinds, Warren)*

3895 Beasley Road

Jackson, MS 39213

(601) 898-7004 **OVR**

2550 Peachtree St.

Jackson, MS 39296

(662) 987-7403 **OVRB**

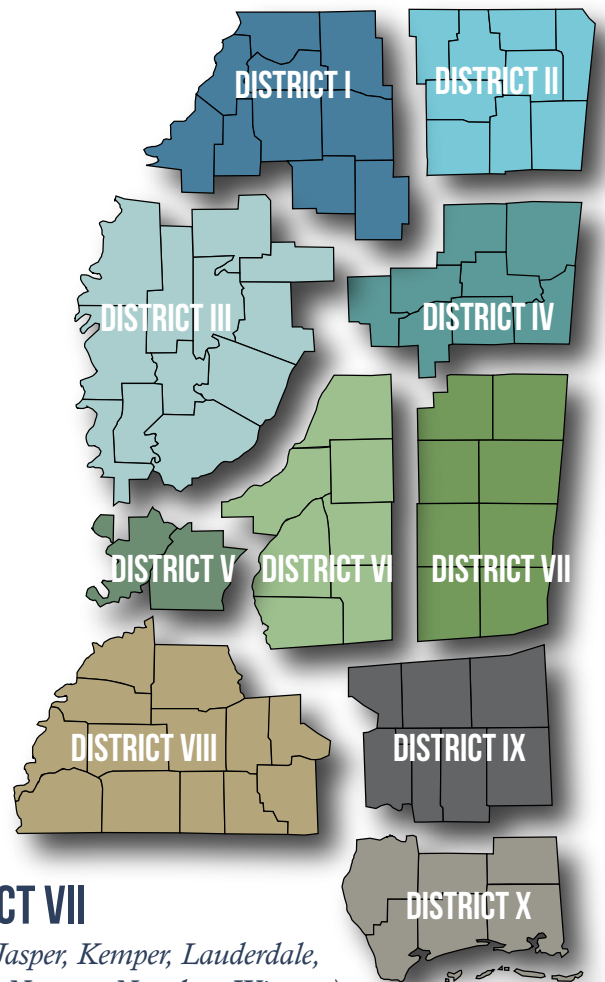
## DISTRICT VI

*(Attala, Leake, Madison, Rankin, Scott, Simpson, Smith)*

1032 Center Pointe Blvd.

Pearl, MS 39208

(601) 709-5601 **OVR** (662) 709-5625 **OVRB**



## DISTRICT VII

*(Clarke, Jasper, Kemper, Lauderdale, Neshoba, Newton, Noxubee, Winston)*

1003 College Drive

Meridian, MS 39304

(601) 483-3881 **OVR** (662) 483-5391 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT VIII

*(Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Copiah, Franklin, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lincoln, Lawrence, Marion, Pike, Walthall, Wilkinson)*

1400-A Harrison Drive

McComb, MS 39649

(601) 249-2498 **OVR** (662) 684-3392 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT IX

*(Covington, Forrest, Greene, Jones, Lamar, Perry, Wayne)*

17 J.M. Tatum Industrial Drive

Hattiesburg, MS 39404

(601) 545-5619 **OVR** (662) 545-5613 **OVRB**

## DISTRICT X

*(George, Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone)*

13486 Fastway Lane

Gulfport, MS 39503

(228) 575-3789 **OVR** (662) 575-3788 **OVRB**

Your perspective is extremely valuable,  
and we greatly appreciate any and all feedback!

*Please send any comments or questions to:*

Mississippi Department of Rehabilitation Services  
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Post Office Box 1698  
Jackson, Mississippi 39215-1698

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