

Archived Information

STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES (INCLUDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT)

Goal: Individuals with disabilities served by the Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant program will achieve high quality employment.	Funding History (\$ in millions)			
	Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Fiscal Year	Appropriation
Legislation: Title I, sections 100-111 and Title VI, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720-731, 795), as amended by the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 (P.L. 105-220), as further amended by technical amendments in the Reading Excellence Act (P.L. 105-277) and the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1998 (P.L. 105-332).	1985	\$1,100	2000	\$2,316
	1990	\$1,552	2001	\$2,376
	1995	\$2,080	2002 (Requested)	\$2,455

Program Description

Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants: The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants program authorizes formula grants to assist states in providing VR services to individuals with disabilities so that they may prepare for and engage in gainful employment consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

The Supported Employment State Grants Program supplements the VR State Grants Program by authorizing formula grants to assist states in developing and implementing collaborative programs with appropriate public agencies and private nonprofit organizations to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who require these services to achieve or retain competitive employment outcomes.

The VR State Grants program provides financial assistance to states to cover the cost of direct services and program administration. The authorizing legislation requires an increase in funding equal to the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Consumers (CPIU) over the past year. An allotment formula that takes into account population and per capita income is used to distribute funds among the states. 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. States 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.

The VR State Grants program provides a wide range of services, vocational evaluation, counseling, mental and physical restoration, education, vocational training, job placement, rehabilitation technology, and supported employment 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. Individuals who have a disability or are blind as determined pursuant to title II or title XVI of the Social Security Act are presumed to be eligible for VR services unless the designated state unit involved can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that such individual is incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from VR services due to the severity of the disability of the individual.

The requirements pertaining to individuals with an employment goal of supported employment are the same in both the Title I and Title VI-B program. Individuals with the most significant disabilities can receive supported employment services under either Title I or Title VI-B. However, Title VI-B funds can only be used to provide supported employment services and are essentially used to supplement Title I funds.

Program Performance

OBJECTIVE 1: ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ARE SERVED BY THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) STATE GRANT PROGRAM ACHIEVE EMPLOYMENT CONSISTENT WITH THEIR PARTICULAR STRENGTHS, RESOURCES, ABILITIES, CAPABILITIES, AND INTERESTS.

Indicator 1.1 Number achieving employment: The number of individuals with disabilities who achieve employment will increase by at least 1 percent annually.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>The number of individuals who achieved an employment outcome</i>		<p>Status: The 2000 data are expected to be available by April 2001. We expect the data to show that we have achieved our target.</p> <p>Explanation: FY 1999 target was surpassed in FY 1998. There was a significant increase in the number of individuals who achieved employment outcomes in FYs 1998 and 1999. We have revised the targets for 2000 and 2001 based on the performance in 1998 and 1999.</p>	<p>Source: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) state data from the R-113. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> December 2000. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Summer 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u>.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Appropriate crosschecks and edits to verify and validate the quality of these data are in place but are not well documented. Written procedures will be developed for the collection, cleaning, and analysis of data.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1997:	211,503			
1998:	223,668 (5.8%)*			
1999:	231,714 (3.6%)*			215,770
2000:	Data Available Summer 2001			234,030
2001:				236,370
2002:				238,730
*Note: The number in parentheses indicates the percent change in the number of individuals achieving an employment outcome from the previous year.				
Indicator 1.2 Percentage of individuals obtaining employment: The percentage of all persons served who obtain employment will increase.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage obtaining employment</i>		<p>Status: The 2000 data are expected to be available by April 2001, and are expected to show that the target has been achieved.</p> <p>Explanation: From fiscal years 1994 – 1997, the percentage of individuals receiving services who obtained employment remained steady at around 61 percent. In FYs 1998 and 1999, the percentage of individuals who obtained an employment outcome increased to 62 percent, exceeding our 1999 and 2000 targets for this indicator. In 1999, we established new 2000 and 2001 targets for this indicator based on performance in 1998.</p>	<p>Source: RSA state data from the R-113. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> December 2000. <i>Date to be reported:</i> Summer 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u>.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Same as discussed under Indicator 1.1.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1997:	61.2%			
1998:	62.2%			
1999:	62.5%			61%
2000:	Data Available Summer 2001			62.7%
2001:				63%
2002:				63.2%

Indicator 1.3 Percentage of individuals obtaining competitive employment: Of individuals obtaining employment, the percentage who obtain competitive employment will increase. Among individuals with significant disabilities obtaining employment, the percentage obtaining competitive employment will increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Percentage of all individuals with disabilities who obtained competitive employment</i>			<p>Status: The 2000 data are expected to be available by June 2001. We expect the data to show the target has been met.</p> <p>Explanation: In September 1997, the Federal minimum wage increased from \$4.75 to \$5.15. Because, under this program, individuals must be earning at least the minimum wage to meet, in part, the criteria for competitive employment, the change in the minimum wage has affected performance on this indicator. In FY 1999 the minimum wage remained constant, thus allowing time for the wages of VR consumers (with or without significant disabilities) to increase to minimum wage levels. Despite the marked increase in performance in 1999, we have not adjusted targets to this high level because we do not know if the program will be able to sustain this high level of performance.</p>	<p>Source: RSA state data from the R-911. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> January 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> June 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u>.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Accuracy/consistency of reporting is contingent upon counselors' interpretations of definitions. Timeliness is dependent upon submittal of clean data from 80 grantees (respondents). Limited staff resources affect ability to check data for reasonableness and publish data quickly.</p> <p>Written procedures will be developed for the collection, cleaning, and analysis of data. Publication of final regulations implementing the Standards and Indicators under section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act in June of 2000 provided a method to ensure timeliness of data reporting on the part of 80 grantees. Steps will also be taken to improve reasonableness checks of data.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1997:	81.2% (171,755)*			
1998:	80.0% (179,027)*			
1999:	83.1% (192,595)*	82.3%		
2000:	Data Available 6/01	82.5%		
2001:		82.7%		
2002:		82.9%		
<i>Percentage of individuals with significant disabilities who obtained competitive employment</i>				
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1997:	79.1% (134,685)*			
1998:	78.7% (145,244)*			
1999:	82.1% (161,268)*	80.0%		
2000:	Data Available 6/01	80.5%		
2001:		80.7%		
2002:		80.9%		
*Note: The number in parentheses indicates the actual number of competitive employment outcomes.				

Indicator 1.4 Improved earnings: Among individuals exiting the program in competitive employment, the median ratio of their average hourly wage to the state's average hourly wage for all individuals in the state who are employed will increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Median ratio for general and combined agencies</i>			Status: The 1999 target was not met.	Source: RSA state data from the R-911. Department of Labor data on state average hourly wage. Frequency: Annually. Next collection update: January 2001. Date to be reported: June 2001. Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u> . Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Same limitations and planned improvements reported under 1.3 apply to this indicator. In addition, the data for this indicator are limited by the fact that the required comparison involves numbers reported from two different sets of state-reported data.	
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Explanation: The 2000 data are expected to be available by June 2001. Data on actual performance for fiscal years 1997 and 1998 were corrected to include data from both agencies for the blind and general/combined agencies. Targets for 2000 and 2001 have been adjusted accordingly.		
1997:	0.56	0.57			
1998:	0.56				
1999:	0.56				
2000:	Data Available June 2001				0.57
2001:					0.57
2002:		0.58			

Indicator 1.5 Own income as primary support: The percentage of individuals who report upon obtaining employment that their own income is their primary source of support will increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of individuals who report upon obtaining employment that their own income is their primary source of support</i>			Status: The 2000 data are expected to be available by June 2001. We expect the data to show that the target has been achieved.	Source: RSA state data from the R-911. Frequency: Annually. Next collection update: January 2001. Date to be reported: June 2001. Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u> . Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Same as discussed under Indicator 1.3.	
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets	Explanation: The 1999 data show a decline from 75.8 percent, in 1998, to 74.5 percent. The 1999 figure met the target for 2000. The target for 2001 has been adjusted based on performance in 1999. In addition, data for actual performance for 1997 and 1998 have been changed to reflect updated databases for those years.		
1997:	74.6% (157,705)*	74.5%			
1998:	75.8% (169,162)*				
1999:	74.5% (172,628)*				
2000:	Data Available 6/01				75%
2001:					75%
2002:		75.2%			

*Note: The number in parentheses indicates the actual number of individuals whose own income is their primary source of support.

Indicator 1.6 Employment retention: Eighty-five percent of individuals obtaining competitive employment will maintain employment and earnings 12 months after closure.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of consumers in the VR longitudinal study sample obtaining competitive employment who maintain employment and earnings 12 months after closure</i>		<p>Status: FY 1999 target was exceeded.</p> <p>Explanation: Actual performance data cover an 18-24-month period. We expect future performance to be at the 85 percent level. However, the Longitudinal Study of the VR Program is ending and we will not have a new data source until FY 2002.</p>	<p>Source: VR Longitudinal Study for 1996-1999. The Department is in the process of developing a standard annual data collection mechanism for this indicator that will include data from all state VR agencies. Future data will be available in 2002.</p> <p><i>Frequency:</i> Future data will be provided annually.</p> <p><i>Next collection update:</i> December 2002.</p> <p><i>Date to be reported:</i> February 2003.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Rigorous data collection design was developed by contractor and approved by OMB. Several quality control mechanisms are in place.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: The longitudinal study sample is nationally representative, but it does not include all VR consumers. The Longitudinal study was not designed to provide fiscal year cohorts.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1996-1997:	85%			
1998-1999:	86%			85%
1999-2000:	Data Available 2/03			85%
2000-2001:				85%
2001-2002:		85%		

Indicator 1.7 Satisfaction with employment: At least 75 percent of VR consumers will report they are satisfied with their employment outcome.				
Targets and Performance Data		Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality	
<i>Percentage of consumers in the VR longitudinal study sample who reported they were very or mostly satisfied with their employment outcome</i>		<p>Status: No 1999 data, but FY 1997-1998 performance exceeded the 1999 target.</p> <p>Explanation: Actual performance data cover an 18-24-month period. We expect future performance to be at least at the 75 percent level. However, the Longitudinal Study of the VR Program is ending and we do not as yet have a new system in place to collect this data on a routine basis.</p>	<p>Source: VR Longitudinal Study for 1995-1998. The Department is in the process of developing a standard data collection mechanism for this indicator.</p> <p><i>Frequency:</i> Future data will be provided as needed.</p> <p><i>Next collection update:</i> To be determined.</p> <p><i>Date to be reported:</i> To be determined.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Rigorous data collection design was developed by contractor and approved by OMB. Several quality control mechanisms are in place.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: The longitudinal study sample is nationally representative, but it does not include all VR consumers. The Longitudinal study was not designed to provide fiscal year cohorts.</p>	
Year	Actual Performance			Performance Targets
1996:	72%			
1998:	76%			
1999:	No data available			At least 75%
2000:	No Data Available			At least 75%
2001:		At least 75%		
2002:				

OBJECTIVE 2: RSA WILL HELP STATES IMPROVE SERVICES AND OUTCOMES FOR CONSUMERS.

Indicator 2.1 Availability and use of data: The time required by RSA to produce an accessible national database will decrease until it reaches 6 months after the close of the fiscal year.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Number of months after the close of the fiscal year at which time the database was available</i>			<p>Status: Positive movement toward target.</p> <p>Explanation: Implementation of the VR standards and indicators required by Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act will provide an incentive for states to report data in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Source: RSA Central Office records, 1998. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> September 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> September 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Reviewed by Department staff. No formal verification procedure applied.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: None.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1997:	14.5			
1998:	14			
1999:	13	No target set		
2000:	Data Available 8/01	9 months		
2001:		6 months		
2002:		6 months		

OBJECTIVE 3: INCREASE THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WITH THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES WHO HAVE RECEIVED SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES BUT ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES.

Indicator 3.1 Percentage of individuals with a supported employment goal achieving competitive employment: The percentage of individuals with a supported employment goal who achieve a competitive employment outcome (including supported employment outcomes in which the individual receives the minimum wage or better) will continue to increase.

Targets and Performance Data			Assessment of Progress	Sources and Data Quality
<i>Percentage of individuals with a supported employment goal who achieved a competitive employment outcome</i>			<p>Status: The 2000 data are expected to be available by June 2001. We expect the data to show that the target has been met.</p> <p>Explanation: In September 1997, the Federal minimum wage increased from \$4.75 to \$5.15. Because, under this program, individuals must be earning at least the minimum wage to meet, in part, the criteria for competitive employment, the change in the minimum wage has affected performance on this indicator. In FY 1999 the minimum wage remained constant, thus allowing time for the wages of VR consumers to increase to minimum wage levels. Despite the marked increase in performance in 1999, we have not adjusted targets to this high level because we do not know if the program will be able to sustain this high level of performance.</p>	<p>Source: Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) state data from the R-911. <i>Frequency:</i> Annually. <i>Next collection update:</i> January 2001. <i>Date to be reported:</i> June 2001.</p> <p>Validation Procedure: Verified by ED attestation process and ED <u>Standards for Evaluating Program Performance Data</u>.</p> <p>Limitations of Data and Planned Improvements: Same as discussed under Indicator 1.3.</p>
Year	Actual Performance	Performance Targets		
1997:	69.6% (14,605)*			
1998:	69.1% (16,107)*			
1999:	73.3% (17,229)*	71.0%		
2000:	Data Available 6/01	71.5%		
2001:		71.7%		
2002:		71.9%		
<p>*Note: The number in parenthesis indicates the actual number of individuals with a supported employment goal who achieved a competitive employment outcome.</p>				