

# FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

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**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

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**TIMELINE:** October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010

**PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT (Customer-Focus Direction)**

To provide opportunities to individuals who are blind or have visual impairments to achieve employability and/or function independently in society.

**VISION STATEMENT**

If a person is going to be blind, she/he could not be in a better place than Michigan.

**PROGRAM STATEMENT**

**The Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program**

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program is a partnership of the federal and state government to provide VR services to blind individuals throughout the State of Michigan. Some of the services provided are: Evaluations, counseling, job development, vocational training, college and technical training, low vision aids and follow-up services.

**Independent Living Program**

The Independent Living Program provides services to older blind individuals so they can remain independent in their own homes.

**MCB Training Center**

The Michigan Commission for the Blind Training Center is a residential facility. The primary focus for the Center is assisting blind persons in developing more positive attitudes toward blindness and to help them attain the necessary skills to function independently.

**Business Enterprise Program**

Michigan Commission for the Blind's (MCB) Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides opportunities for blind persons operating vending stands and cafeterias in federal and state buildings as well as highway rest stops and visitor centers.

**Youth Low Vision Program**

The Youth Low Vision Program provides low vision evaluations and devices to visually impaired school age children throughout the state.

**Deaf Blind Services**

The DeafBlind Unit of the Michigan Commission for the Blind provides statewide Vocational Rehabilitation services and/or Independent Living consultations to adults and high school students who are legally blind and have moderate to profound hearing loss.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

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---

**MCB Braille and Talking Book Library**

Serves blind and individually impaired individuals as well as others who are unable to read print material in the conventional manner due to a physical disability.

**FUND SOURCE:**

Federal Title I Vocational Rehabilitation (Basic Support); Federal Supported Employment; Federal Independent Living (State IL Services and Older Blind); Federal Training Grant; GF/GP including Youth Low Vision; BEP Set-Aside Funding; Local Match; Gifts and Donations; Stanley Hermann Trust Fund; additional Federal funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) are available through September 2011 to augment vocation rehabilitation and independent living services.

**LEGAL BASIS:**

Michigan Public Act 260 of 1978 (MCL393.51) and the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and the Randolph-Sheppard Act P.L. 74-732 as amended

**CUSTOMER IDENTIFICATION:**

Rehabilitation is a cooperative venture with visually impaired individuals, client families, MCB staff, community, employers, other state, local and federal government agencies, public and private rehabilitation facilities, high school, colleges and training institutions, Business Enterprise Program customers and operators

**CRITICAL GOALS/MAJOR OBJECTIVES and RESULTS**

**Program Goals:**

- 1. Continuously improve and implement customer responsive service systems to provide employment opportunities to blind individuals.**
  - Workforce
  - Entrepreneurship
  - Retain and Grow Jobs in Michigan
  
- 2. Provide premier technology, training, and equipment for MCB clients and staff.**
  - Workforce
  - Retain and Grow Jobs in Michigan

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

**3. Through collaboration, partnerships and communication make Michigan a “cool” and inclusive place for blind people to live, learn, work, raise a family and enjoy life.**

- Cool Cities

**4. Through collaboration and partnerships expand funding and resources to MCB to increase services to consumers.**

- Workforce
- Entrepreneurship
- Retain and Grow Jobs in Michigan

### **Processes/Services**

- 1.1 Develop a survey instrument to measure customer satisfaction with the instructional programs and housing accommodations at MCBTC. Identify a means whereby the survey may be administered to all consumers shortly after completion of an MCBTC program, while preserving the anonymity of survey participants and guaranteeing universal accessibility.  
**Status:** The survey has been completed and the first list of former students has been surveyed by a staff person from MCDC. The results of that survey will be reviewed and analyzed soon.
- 1.2 Work collaboratively with MI Commission on Disability Concerns (MCDC) to develop assessment and tracking tools to measure client satisfaction with MCB services and determine the extent to which clients whose cases are closed successfully remain employed and independent at 18 months or 24 months following case closure. These tools are to include an optional online survey for clients and telephone survey conducted by MCDC. The survey instrument has been completed. It is now just a need to conduct the survey.  
**Status:** A telephone survey of cases closed successfully has been completed by MCDC and the results are ready to be compiled and analyzed.
- 1.3 BEP and the Consumer Services Division will work together to promote greater participation of MCB clients to gain work experience at BEP facilities. A presentation was made at the BEP Annual Workshop in April, 2010 to outline the program objectives. Recommendations for expansion and improvement in 2011 will be made.  
**Status:** Again, BEP operators indicated a willingness to mentor blind students in the Summer Work Opportunity Program. A total of 5 VR clients were hosted in the summer of 2010 for this work experience opportunity.
- 1.4 Enhance the current BEP system to include an operator point report. This report would provide on demand information for operators' at their request. In addition, the BEP manager would provide the detailed information regarding all operator points at the annual BEP Workshop in April. Report progress to Director quarterly.  
**Status:** The BEP System 7 has had a spreadsheet summarizing Operator Selection System points. In response to the EOC's request, a Word document showing individual operator points has been created. This report has been sent to operators on a quarterly basis. In

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

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**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

addition to sending the point summaries, operators will also receive a report summarizing operator standing compared to all operators on an annual basis.

- 1.5 Work with MRS and the Dept of Corrections to develop and implement the Michigan Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative and the Veteran's MOU for MCB. Report progress to the Director quarterly.  
**Status:** The MOU with the VA is done and the training with VA and MRS counselors was conducted. Currently, the MPRI program continues. Leamon will continue to work with the coordinator for further implementation.
- 1.6 Complete three case reviews in 2010 and report progress to Director at the end of May, August, and November.  
**Status:** A review has been completed in Grand Rapids, the Flint review will be completed in November and Detroit is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.
- 1.7 Continue to work with the Futuristic Committee to develop short term and long range strategies on how to address the changing needs/demands for services as the number of blind people increases. Report progress to agency director by May, 2010.  
**Status:** Two training programs were held in summer of the 2010 to assist counselors and teachers in providing more effective services to consumers. A placement specialist has also been hired on a limited term basis for each region, a total of three.
- 1.8 Work with Civil Service classifications staff and the DELEG Office of Human Resources to amend, update, and create more appropriate job classifications to improve our ability to fill vacancies with individuals possessing the necessary qualifications.  
**Status:** We will continue to work with Civil Service to improve possibilities for staff. Civil Service has denied some of our requests but we will keep working with them to provide other opportunities for career advancement.
- 1.9 With support from the Office of the State Employer's (OSE) Safety Office, develop an agency-wide safety program to minimize workplace risks so that all employees can be safer while doing their jobs.  
**Status:** The MCB Safety Team continues to meet and make recommendations for the agency. A driver safety program is being created and other changes have been made to improve safety in the workplace for staff, consumers, and visitors.
- 1.10 To make the pay scale of rehabilitation counselors at MCB more equitable with the rehabilitation teachers as well as other state employees with comparable education and skills.  
**Status:** This issue remains "on hold" while the state deals with the current budget situation. Nothing new has happened since the meeting with OHR and Civil Service in early 2009. The recent RSA report makes mention of the pay disparity between counselors and teachers so that information will be used to support MCB's position when the time is right to pursue this matter further.
- 1.11 Assess the effectiveness and satisfaction of MCB's efforts to engage consumers and to promote consumer involvement in the Commission's Vision 2020 initiative, the Planning and Quality (PAQ) Team, the Consumer Involvement Council (CIC), the Service Delivery

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

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**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

Design Team, the Technology Team, and other opportunities.

**Status:** MCB continues to audiostream the Commission Board meetings and has expanded its outreach efforts to include the availability to listen to Commission meetings over the telephone. MCB was well represented at the two consumer conventions in the fall of 2010, where information was gathered on issues of interests to consumers. Consumer organization reports were featured at the March 19, 2010 Commission meeting and representatives of these groups were invited to the MCB all-staff meeting in June, 2010.

- 1.12 In order to meet the unique reading needs of Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) patrons in the digital age, the Library of Michigan Foundation purchased the equipment, software, and services related to converting the BTBL recording studio from analog to digital. Software is currently being installed and configured. On-site installation and training will be scheduled when the hard drives have been configured. Digital recording procedures will be established within 6 weeks of training. Processes for current narrators who record from home will be established and recruitment of volunteer narrators and monitors for the in-studio program will follow. Target for completion is September 2010.  
**Status:** Training with Mike Ellis on editing has been postponed and will be rescheduled. The hardware and software are being shipped to Arrington Group for problem analysis and repair.
- 1.13 In order to standardize service to Dept. of Corrections (DOC) inmates throughout the state, BTBL took over service at all DOC sites with the exception of those in Wayne County as of April 2009. Discussion with DOC officials continues in an effort to establish more effective guidelines for serving inmates. Needed are: procedures for responding to inmate requests for an Application for Service; a mechanism within DOC to allow BTBL equipment and books to move with inmates who transfer or are paroled; and approval by DOC of the new NLS digital machine for use by inmates.  
**Status:** Deployment of digital machines to inmates continues.
- 1.14 MCB will update the current Client Tracking System to include a tracking mechanism which will identify, track, and measure the progress and outcomes for Transition students.  
**Status:** A plan for the system will be completed by January 2011 and be reported to the Director at that time.
- 1.15 Develop and implement a program to place MCB clients who are completing their rehabilitation program and are "job ready" in paid internships with state government. With support from the Civil Service Commission and the Office of the State Employer, work with DELEG's Office of Human Resources, to place eligible clients in Student Assistant positions with their wages being paid for with ARRA funds.  
Upon approval from CSC and OSE, distribute guidelines to MCB staff, departments, and HR offices throughout state government by September 2009. Leamon Jones with assistance from VR staff and Bob Robertson, will create new positions, screen resumes, and match clients to jobs. This will commence in October 2009. After implementation in state government, the program will be promoted to local government units and the private sector by July 2010.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

**Status:** The program has been implemented and some clients have started working. Others are in process and staff continue to market the program to state managers, HR offices, and departments. We have interns in place with several state departments. Currently, there are 21 individuals in positions. Some activities are taking place to expand intern opportunities for consumers outside of state government. MCB will continue to contact local governments to obtain internship possibilities.

1.16 It has been 10 years since MCB began its Vision 2020 journey. Since then a number of new employees, commissioners, and community partners have joined in who were not part of the initial 2020 process. The objective is to re-introduce the Vision 2020 principles to everyone with special emphasis on those persons not around when the agency's Vision 2020 venture began.

**Status:** An all-staff meeting introducing some of the 2020 principles took place in June 2010. The results of the evaluation from that meeting have been collected and compiled and the results will be shared with the PAQ Team at their December 2010 meeting.

1.17 Plan and conduct up to three in-service workshops for Commissioners on issues identified and selected by the Commissioners such as budget development, transition services, agency involvement with seniors, veterans, etc. Presentations will be conducted by MCB staff with help from external partners on occasion. The workshops may be scheduled adjacent to the Commission Board Meetings in March, June, and September to reduce costs.

**Status:** Commissioners have expressed interest in learning more about the workings of BEP and the Elected Operators Committee (EOC), the Open Meetings Act, parliamentary procedures, and Public Act 260. Rather than an "in-service workshop" format, commissioners met informally, in a retreat format, with the EOC on March 20 to enhance their understanding of BEP/EOC interactions and begin their work in strengthening respective relationships. Information on the Open Meetings Act and the freedom of information act (FOIA) were presented in June as well as more information about PA 260. In August Commissioners met with DELEG Finance staff and MCB Administrative services staff to hear a presentation on State budget and the MCB budget, providing an overview of how budgets are developed, implemented and audited.

1.18 Conduct study on MCB college services to consumers, gathering statistics which could be helpful to improving overall post-secondary services and improving student outcomes. Information to be obtained may include such things as how many students are supported each year, how many drop out each year because of not being able to secure accommodations from the institution, and how many graduate with a Bachelor's Degree or graduate degree each year.

**Status:** An ad hoc committee has been established and is currently gathering input from consumers and others as to what kinds of data should be collected. Some changes have occurred already in the VR System and further steps will be taken to gather additional data.

2.1 In FY 2008 the Training Center received a grant of private funds in the amount of \$500,000 to be used in the construction of a technology center. MCB has requested capital outlay funds to add to this sum and it is permissible to spend some of the ARRA stimulus funds on renovation as well. Work with DMB to develop and obtain a comprehensive assessment of the Training Center to include HVAC systems, electrical and infrastructure capacity, and the overall condition and potential of the 43,000 square foot facility in Kalamazoo. Following the

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

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**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

assessment, develop a plan and timeline for the construction of a technology center by September 2009.

**Status:** Construction and designs for Training Center renovations and technology center development have been approved and are in process. The Training Center students left the facility on November 19 so work could begin at the Center in early December and throughout much of 2011. Students will continue to receive Training Center services at an off-campus location during 2011. The technology center as well as all Training center renovations are expected to be completed before the end of the 2011.

2.2 Partner with other agencies or groups to do technology training and encourage the community partners to do grant writing and help financially with training. Update Director by January, 2010.

**Status:** This is an ongoing objective. Some activities are being funded by ARRA money and once those funds are gone, the sites will continue to provide services. The library in the Soo provides training for AAA. We are continuing to work with them. This objective continues to be expanded throughout the state.

2.3 The BTBL deployment of NLS digital books and machines began in late September of 2009. Patrons on a waiting list will be introduced to a digital machine and a growing collection of digital books at the rate of 380 machines per month. BTBL will continue to ship to patrons throughout the state (except for Wayne County) until the waiting list is depleted. At that time, the sub-regional library will be issued an allotment for new patrons in their service area. Staff at each site will then contact patrons who are not on the list to determine their interest and encourage involvement. Quarterly progress reports will be made to the Director.

**Status:** BTBL has issued more than 2500 digital machines which is 60% of patrons residing within our service area.

2.4 Move the BTBL library circulation and catalog software from a DIT hosted server to a server that will be hosted and managed by ASRD, the company that created the CUL software. This objective will allow ASRD the access needed to effectively maintain, troubleshoot, and upgrade the software. It will also make future collaboration with other CUL members possible. This objective will be completed by July 2010.

**Status:** Sue Chinault and Constance Zanger are working on the RFP and PRF.

2.5 Use social networking systems (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to communicate service practices and train patrons in use of service related technologies.

**Status:** OPAL is being used for computer and book clubs. We had network meetings over OPAL in October, 2010 and again in November, 2010. There were some technical difficulties but overall, the group was pleased with the method. Next OPAL network meeting is scheduled for January 11, 2011.

3.1 Write and produce a DeafBlind brochure and an MCB Training Center brochure, both in print and online, by December 2008. Report progress to Director quarterly.

**Status:** The DeafBlind brochure is in layout and will be distributed in February 2011. The MCB Training Center brochure is planned for layout in December 2010 and will also be discussed at the December PAQ Team meeting to explore the feasibility of deferring finalization

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

of a Training Center brochure until after the renovations are complete at the Training Center in late 2011.

- 3.2 Produce a 2010 MCB Annual Report, including information on how the agency plans to address the changing needs of blind consumers in Michigan. Provide the report in printed and online format and report progress to Director.  
**Status:** This is in the works to be completed and distributed by January, 2011.
- 3.3 Continue collaboration with professional organizations of eye doctors through special events and distribution of MCB materials. Also, a new referral form and doctor section will be done. Report progress to Director quarterly.  
**Status:** We continue to participate in several special events. We send materials to the Michigan Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons and the Michigan Optometric Association as well as to their members directly. The new referral form and doctor section on the website have been completed.
- 3.4 MCB will work with the DELEG Office of Human Resources and the Department of Civil Service to create and establish better ways to recruit new staff (i.e., a recruitment link on the MCB website) and identify and develop training opportunities for current staff to better prepare them to become leaders and managers.  
**Status:** When available, staff are notified of available Civil Service training programs that may assist them in their efforts to become leaders and managers. Other similar training information will be shared as it becomes available. The website link titled "Careers in Blind Rehabilitation (Information on University Programs)" is online in the Resources section of the MCB website.
- 3.5 Change the name of SBPH to reflect the change in administrative oversight from Library of Michigan to Michigan Commission for the Blind and to incorporate terminology which better aligns with the service, materials, and technology provided by SBPH. Progress reports will be made quarterly.  
**Status:** The name was officially changed on October 1, 2010 to MCB Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL). A press release conveyed this to the general public. NLS and Michigan network libraries have been informed. The next newsletter will highlight the change. Publications will be updated as the need for printing arises.
- 3.6 Update the content on BTBL website and CUL intranet to reflect name change, historical events since 2005, digital talking book service, and any other informational aspects that are not current.  
**Status:** Name change and historical events have been updated on the BTBL site. We will need to reassign web responsibility as of January 1, 2011.
- 4.1 Explore further collaboration with the Office of Aging and Area Agencies on Aging to help leverage human and fiscal resources to more effectively serve older individuals with sight loss. Progress on this long range initiative will continue to be reported on quarterly to the Commissioners.  
**Status:** This is an on-going project. The most recent update appeared in the Consumer Services section of the last MCB Report.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

- 4.2 The team will create a system to streamline the purchasing process and to define, develop, and implement financial responsibility procedures and to explore ideas to determine efficiencies in client service procurement.  
**Status:** This objective is still in progress. Information has been gathered and compiled and now the committee is reviewing and finalizing the findings.
- 4.3 MCB will implement “batch processing” of all client service payments within the current client tracking system. This process will eliminate duplication of effort by support staff and expedite payments to clients and vendors.  
**Status:** In 2009 this program was tested in Lansing. The Flint office began using it in 2010 and it will be rolled out to the rest of the offices across the state in 2011.
- 4.4 Support the maintenance of sub-regional State Aide and change the boilerplate language to include BTBL by July 1, 2010.  
**Status:** The final payments to subregional libraries were made in June 2010. Libraries are currently completing and submitting applications for 2011 state aid. The line item budgeted is \$451,800 which will be split by ten sites. First half should be paid in February and final in June 2011.
- 4.5 Study potential changes in the Michigan sub-regional model for improvements in service and efficiency. Report quarterly with target date of March, 2011.  
**Status:** Conversation about the Michigan subregional model continues with the network meetings.

### **PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY (Current Year)**

#### *Program Goals/Metrics*

In FY 2010, the Michigan Commission for the Blind successfully closed 172 blind Michigan residents’ cases. Of these, 125 people found jobs in competitive employment, with an average starting wage of \$14.99 an hour. The state and federal income tax paid by these individuals is projected to be \$ 890,277 in FY 2010. The total investment made by MCB to assist these individuals with employment—\$2,643,921 —will be “repaid” in approximately 28 months.

During fiscal year 2010, the Michigan Commission for the Blind served approximately 2,730 individuals who are blind or visually impaired to assist them in becoming employed and independent. In addition to the 125 employed individuals mentioned above, nearly 1,204 older individuals facing sight loss received independent living services from the commission so they could remain in their homes and communities, and more than 375 blind youth in the K-12 system received low vision evaluations and aids to help them succeed in school and beyond.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

### ***Performance Measures***

Processes used include: accreditation reviews of regulatory programs; comply with standards and indicators defined and monitored by the federal government. Failure to comply with the mandates could result in a loss of federal funding. MCB also self monitors its effectiveness by conducting client satisfaction surveys. Several consumer groups are integrated in the strategic planning process and provide direct input to staff and administration when issues arise. In addition, MCB completes quarterly case reviews to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

Data regarding program performance is gathered regularly. Staffing and workload assignments are adjusted accordingly. The information is also used in the development of the agency strategic plan and program revision requests when necessary. The information gathered from internal and external sources is used to develop the annual Federal "State Plan". This plan requires that MCB provide action steps to address specific areas of its service delivery system.

### ***Program Improvements Made***

- MCB's Student Internship Program using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding was successfully launched in September 2009. It is currently providing opportunities for 21 consumers of MCB to gain valuable work experience in a variety of governmental agencies. Two individuals are receiving work experience through on the job training in the private sector. This is the beginning of the second year for some of the interns who are continuing to gain practical work experience that will assist them in developing current resumes with the hope of obtaining permanent positions.
- MCB's work with CVS pharmacies has generated 28 employment opportunities in the company for blind and visually impaired individuals in southeast Michigan. This initiative is on-going with CVS in finalizing employment opportunities for 15 consumers.
- MCB entered into an agreement with the Michigan Department of Community Mental Health and Michigan Rehabilitation Services to increase services for MCB consumers with mental illness and developmental disabilities. As a result of the agreement, four training sessions have occurred and several are scheduled to take place during this fiscal year. The purpose is to foster improved working relations with the CMH resulting in increased referrals and employment outcomes.
- Through continuing collaboration with the Area Agencies on Aging, MCB has established two sites to begin providing technology training for seniors through the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. This project has continued to expand to increase technology training for seniors in two additional areas with anticipation of expanding this fiscal year two-four additional sites throughout the state.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

Provided outreach to Native Americans to work to increase vocational service to improve employment outcomes. MCB has established contacts with twelve Native American tribes and health centers, as well as developed an agreement with the Hannahville Indian Community Rehabilitation Program (Project Visions) to increase rehabilitation services to eligible consumers.

### **PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR FY11**

- The College Policy has been adopted
- The Small Business Policy is in the final stages to be adopted
- The Older Blind policies and procedures are in the final stages to be adopted.
- System 7 - Client Data Tracking System is on target for revisions for early 2011 to improve data collection and improve program reporting requirements
- MCBTC Advanced Technology Training on hold due to the Centers renovation project.

## FY 2010 Annual Program Performance Measures

---

**DEPARTMENT:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH

**APPROPRIATION UNIT:** Sec 114 Boards, Authorities, and Commissions

**PROGRAM:** MICHIGAN COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

---

### **CHALLENGES FOR FY11 and BEYOND**

- MCB is faced with another early out retirement that will impact delivery of services to its consumers. As a vocational agency that utilizes field staff to provide vocational and independent living services to blind and visually impaired consumers, it will be adversely affected because of the inability to replace staff that are retiring. The lack of personnel directly affects the agencies ability to meet the Rehabilitation Services Administration standards and indicators for vocational agencies, minimizing the employment outcomes for MCB consumers. MCB seeks assistance from DELEG in obtaining additional revenue and resources to meet the demands when the services exceed the agency's ability to assist consumers in obtaining their vocational and independent living outcomes.
- MCB needs additional matching funds to fully capture all allocated federal funds and, in fact, General Fund appropriations provided by the Michigan Legislature has been consistently inadequate to match available federal funds and as a result, Michigan is last among all states when it comes to state's supporting federal rehab programs such as the Commission's.
- In recent years MCB has been innovative in finding matching sources to capitalize maximum federal dollars. However, the rising cost of rent in state owned or occupied buildings for the Business Enterprise Program food service operations in Michigan is making it nearly impossible to capture all funds to serve blind citizens in the State of Michigan. The rent for these locations was to be a pass through in MCB's budget as funding was to keep pace with expenses. MCB has not been fully funded for the rent since before FY2000 when the rent was one third of what it is today.
- Another major challenge facing MCB is its Training Center, which has several building operational health and safety issues that have the potential to create emergency situations. The first is an antiquated HVAC system that could fail at any time and parts for the system are obsolete. Hand in hand with that situation is the lack of a backup generator at the Center to provide temporary power in the case of an outage. MCBTC is a 24/7 residential school that houses 25-35 blind students. Many of these students are elderly, frail or have secondary disabilities that could be affected if power were to be interrupted during the cold of winter or the heat of the summer. As of this writing both the HVAC System and the backup generator are being addressed in the current renovations scheduled to be completed here at MCBTC by December of 2011.