

Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)

DSU Update

Michigan Council for Rehabilitation Services (MCRS)

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Administrative Services (Central Services, BEP, and Braille and Talking Book Library) – Mike Pemble

BSBP budget:

BSBP's budget is stable and BSBP anticipates being adequately matched with State funding to allow it to fully access federal vocational rehabilitation FY22 grant awards. BSBP has a high amount of Pre-employment Transition Services FY21 carryover funding available to spend in FY22 and is working with MRS to determine whether MRS can assist BSBP with meeting this statewide goal for the FY21 VR grant.

IT modernization:

BSBP continues to implement its multi-year IT Modernization Project. Presently, BSBP is working with its contractor, Libera, Inc., on an upgrade to its Business Enterprise Program Case Management System that will streamline some manual processes adding to the efficiency of the program. Data classification and system security tasks are currently in process with DTMB. Project completion date is projected to be 12/31/22.

Braille and Talking Book Library Event:

Libraries Without Walls: Freedom to Tech was held 5/10/22. Libraries Without Walls (LWW) is a one-day adaptive technology conference that was held at Lansing Community College, West Campus. The keynote speaker was Matt Ater, Freedom Scientific, who has over 25 years of experience in accessibility support services. This conference provided instruction and demonstration on how various adaptive technology meet the information needs of persons with visual or physical impairments. Pre-employment transition students had a "first ever" student track and had the opportunity to attend sessions specifically designed to address how technology can enhance employment and post-secondary education. They also learned how to network with vendors and professionals.

Field Services Division – Lisa Kiesel

Field Services report is for the period January 1 to March 31, 2022. This would be the 2nd Quarter of fiscal year (FY) 2022 or the third quarter of program year (PY) 2021.

FSD Priorities for FY22

- Customized Employment Pilots
- Individualized Plans for Employment
- Benefits Planning and Counseling
- Financial Literacy Instruction

Data

Description	2 nd Q FY 2022	1 st Q FY 2021	Change
Active VR customers	848	796	52 or 6.5% increase
Eligibility determinations	60	40	20 or 50% increase
Competitive Integrated Employment	17	14	3 or 21% increase
Benefits Planning and Counseling	45	16	29 or 181% increase
Average hourly wage	\$20.54	\$26.2	\$5.66 or 21.6% decrease

FY2022, year to date, BSBP has assisted 35 individuals in obtaining competitive integrated employment. For the same period, last fiscal year (2021), BSBP assisted 32 individuals in obtaining competitive employment.

FSD Other highlights:

- BSBP/MRS and Work force teams are presenting a webinar honoring Mental health Awareness month on May 18th where businesses will be provided with resources to support their work force managing mental illness. In early June, there will be a youth employment webinar.

- Pre-Employment Transition Services – A few notable items
 - Services to students are returning to in-person.
 - Virtual and in-person BSBP/MDE-LIO financial literacy program titled “Money, Money, Money” concluded April 30th.
 - In March there was a 3-day BSBP/MDE-LIO in-person Event featuring Karen Wolffe, an internationally known expert in the field of transition.
 - Day 1 - Training for professionals
 - Day 2 – Career Day with students and families
 - Day 3 – Demystifying the ECC with students and families
 - Upcoming events – Great Wolf Lodge Job Exploration for students in the hospitality industry / Numerous summer programs

BSBP Training Center (TC) Updates – Juan Ortiz

As a reminder the Training Center launched in-person services in March 2021. The number of participants served this fiscal year for the period October 1, 2021, through March 2022:

- In-person - 92
- Virtual - 19
- Mini-Adjustment Detroit – 47 (included in above in-person count)

Notable recent and upcoming programmatic events:

- TC held a mini-adjustment event in Detroit the week of April 24 serving 28 individuals.
- A Pre-ETS parent engagement in-person open house is taking place Saturday May 14th from 10am to 2pm.
- Summer programs are gearing up and the TC will be transitioning to serving youth enrolled in pre-ETS services over the next 3 months starting in June. There will be 7 different camps taking place in the summer.
- The TC and BTBL will be providing a presentation at “Visions 2022” on June 8 taking place in Ann Arbor District Library. BSBP will be providing information via a vendor booth.
- The TC is sponsoring a community partner day taking place on June 8-9 for CRPs to learn about services, training, adaptive techniques, and receive an overview of available services.

- The TC is hosting WD's annual Equal Opportunity Training at the TC campus in July. Speakers from BSBP and MRS will present on various services available through their respective agencies.

Other highlights:

- In January 2022, the TC launched a new and updated brochure featuring a QR code linked to the TC website landing page.
- The TC website landing page is being updated and will feature detailed information on each class and an audio recording of the participant handbook for ease of accessibility.
- Technology updates:
 - DTMB and TC are finalizing a new and improved internal training center referral form for Libera System 7.
 - TC is also exploring new software for tracking participant's progress, reports, and measurable objectives/outcomes while participants are in training.
 - TC has partnered with AIRA to provide services to BSBP customers.

Wrap-up and questions – Bill Robinson, Bureau Director