

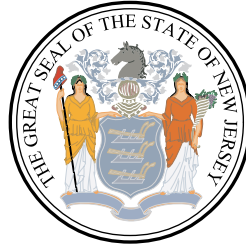
2016

State Rehabilitation Council

Annual Report



**New Jersey Department of Human Services
Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**



New Jersey Department of Human Services Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

2016 Annual Report - State Rehabilitation Council

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) promotes and provides services in the areas of education, employment, independence, and eye health for people who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind, their families, and the community.

The Commission adopts four major strategies in carrying out its mission, which are:

- (1) Providing specialized services to people with limited vision;
- (2) Educating and working in the community to reduce the incidence of vision loss;
- (3) Improving social attitudes about blindness, vision-impairment and deaf-blindness; and
- (4) Increasing employment outcomes for individuals who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind.

Detailed information about services can be found at: <http://www.cbvi.nj.gov>.

Any questions regarding this report, or to request it in alternate formats, should be directed to Amanda Gerson at 973-648-3660 or via e-mail at amanda.gerson@dhs.state.nj.us.

Table of Contents

Greetings from SRC Chairperson	3
CBVI Executive Director’s Report	4
Overview of the CBVI	5
Major Service Programs Provided by CBVI	8
SRC Working Principles and Responsibilities	9
SRC Board Members	10
SRC Accomplishments in FFY 2016	12
SRC Subcommittees	13
Statewide Impact of CBVI Services	14
Vocational Rehabilitation Services	15
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA).....	17
Transition Programs.....	20
Student Hands-on Alternatives Reinforcement Project (SHARP).....	21
Life 101 Program.....	22
Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement (EDGE) Program	23
College Prep Experience (CPE).....	24
Work Skills Prep Program (WSP).....	25
Youth Employment Solutions (YES).....	26
Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC)	27
Business Enterprises New Jersey (BENJ).....	29
Technological Support Services	30
Deaf-Blind Services.....	32
iCanConnect/NJ	34
Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment)	35
Assistive Support Programs for Independence, Renewal & Education (ASPIRE).....	36
Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE)	37
Library Equal Access Program (LEAP).....	38
Success Stories	39
SRC Goals for FFY 2017	42
Did you know?.....	43
SRC Meeting Dates for 2017.....	44
Service Centers and Facilities	44

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) - Chairperson

Dear Governor Christie:

It is with pleasure that we present the 2016 Annual Report of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

This year has been marked by the revitalization of the SRC subcommittees and the reorganization and refocusing in important areas of the Commission's provision of services. The innovations in the youth oriented programs to focus on readiness for work and collaboration with workplace partners, and the intense work around reorientation to the new federal regulations and guidelines are only a few of the accomplishments of the Commission this year, in close collaboration with the SRC.

We continue to look forward to advancing in the service of blind and vision-impaired consumers.



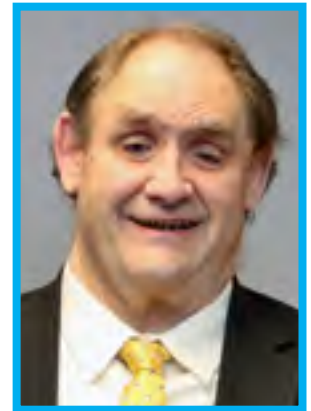
Respectfully,

The Rev. James W. Warnke, MA, MSW, LCSW
State Rehabilitation Council Chairperson



Executive Director's Report

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) are pleased to submit the Annual Report for Federal Fiscal Year 2016 (FFY 2016). We welcome this opportunity to update you regarding our programs, achievements, and accomplishments. This Annual Report is required under Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and represents the ongoing teamwork and collaborative effort of the Commission and the SRC. The SRC's support for, and contribution to, the planning and execution of Commission programs has resulted in innovative initiatives, yielding yet another productive year for CBVI's mission on behalf of blind, deaf-blind, and vision-impaired residents of New Jersey.



In the following pages, you will see detailed the work of the Commission through a full array of programs, servicing the needs of consumers from childhood to seniors. While the Commission offers a wide menu of programs, catering to the needs of the full life span of blind, deaf-blind, and vision-impaired residents of New Jersey, we exist to support and promote two primary objectives: the provision of education and blindness skills training to qualified consumers, and the support of these same consumers to find integrated, competitive employment in society.



Each program that is described in this report contributes, in some fashion, to the accomplishment of these two primary objectives.

Respectfully submitted by,

Daniel B. Frye, J.D.
Executive Director

Overview of the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

In April of 1909, the New Jersey State Legislature directed that a state agency be established “to provide any and all means which shall be deemed feasible for ameliorating the condition of the blind.” Over 105 years later, the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI), continues to fulfill the mandate.

The Commission was established as a state agency in 1910 under the direction of Lydia Young Hayes, a blind teacher of the blind. One of the initial tasks of the Commission was to compile a registry of the state’s blind residents. During that first year, 750 people were registered. The formation of a single agency to administer to the needs of New Jersey’s blind population emerged from a wave of social consciousness that swept the country in the late 1800s and early 1900s. As a result of increased awareness, significant strides were made toward equalizing opportunities for people who were blind.

During that first year, Miss Hayes and another teacher, established the state’s first integrated classes for blind and sighted students within the Newark school system.



These classes were based on the belief that integrated classes provided blind students with the educational tools, and exposure necessary for a smooth assimilation into society. The integrative educational philosophy and policy was recognized throughout the country, as an innovative model in the field of education of the blind. From the early 1940’s to the late 1960’s, and under the supervision of Josephine Taylor, the Commission’s evolving educational programs, known as the New Jersey Plan, gained world-wide recognition.



The educational initiative of supporting blind and vision-impaired students in public schools, and sending teachers to assist them through lessons in braille, low-vision aids and special classes, has grown over the years into an even more comprehensive educational service program that supported 1,956 students last year. A Home Teaching Service Program was also installed during the first years of the Commission. Teachers went into consumers’ homes to help them discover ways to efficiently use new techniques, and their own talents to achieve self-sufficient lifestyles. This program offered instruction in communication skills such as braille and typing, and included guidance in exploring the world of work.



In 1915, the Commission began a program to place blind workers in the work industry at large, capitalizing on employment opportunities resulting from World War I Armed Services recruitments. Federal and state legislation offered additional support to the Commission's early employment and social service programs, which were designed to provide legal and economic leverage to agencies that served people with disabilities. Basic legislative mandates and their various amendments allowed the Commission to vastly enhance its services

during the middle period of its growth 1936-1964. Major legislative amendments, such as the Barden LaFollete Act in 1943, and earlier federal rehabilitation legislation like the Smith-Fess Act of 1920, provided funds and authorized state agencies to help blind and vision-impaired people obtain meaningful employment through vocational training, counseling, physical restoration and placement service. Federal and state funding for medical, surgical and other physical restoration services also helped to augment the Commission's rehabilitative programs.



The Randolph-Sheppard Act of 1936 authorized the Commission to license qualified blind people to operate vending stands in federal and federally-sponsored buildings, which later was broadened to include state, municipi-

pal and private buildings. There are presently 53 Commission-sponsored newsstands, snack bars, coffee shops and full-service cafeterias in facilities throughout the state, with several more planned.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services were formally organized in 1941. Vocational Rehabilitation Services provided a wider range of training, placement, counseling and guidance to prepare blind people for employment, and to further immerse them into the business arena. This comprehensive service area also incorporated diagnostic and restorative procedures to minimize visual limitations affecting employability.

From 1911 to 1918, the Commission, concerned citizens and private organizations, such as the New Jersey Association for the Blind, pooled their resources to secure legislation to promote research into blindness prevention.



Eye Health Services were formally established in 1943, which included the nation's first traveling eye unit and a glaucoma registry.

These Com-

mission services have continued to grow over the years with the Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment (Project BEST) program, which provides services in the areas of eye health and eye safety by offering free vision screenings for adults and children with a concerted effort to provide these services to historically underserved sectors of the population

(low income, elderly, minorities, people with diabetes and individuals with special needs).

Under the direction of Joseph Kohn, (1964-1976), the size and scope of the Commission's staff and service programs more than doubled. Significant expansions occurred in many departments: social services, rehabilitation teaching, eye health nursing, the home industries program, vocational rehabilitation, an expanded contract workshop program, the opening of the George Meyer Textbook and Materials Center, preschool eye screening programs and many more.

With the establishment of the first Consumer Forum in 1964, consumers and other interested individuals began to take active participation in the Commission's decision and policy-making procedures. Now the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, advises and works in partnership with CBVI administration and staff.

CBVI, known as the Commission for the Blind until 1982, was at the forefront of that movement and still works diligently toward the realization of new levels of achievement in the quest for equal opportunity in education, employment and community integration.

Although the Commission's scope of services has significantly expanded since 1910, the established direction is still an integral part of today's programs and policies as well as tomorrow's goals and aspirations.

Major Service Programs Provided By CBVI

Educational Services

Certified Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) work closely with the child, family members, and local school personnel to provide Blindness Education Services that make it possible for students who are blind, vision-impaired, or deaf-blind to participate equally with other students in general education classroom activities. These services are provided for eligible children (from birth through high school years) and their families.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Vocational Rehabilitation provides a full range of services to assist persons who are blind, vision-impaired, or deaf-blind with the development, acquisition, or strengthening of skills to enable them to secure and maintain employment. This can include working in the labor force or operating a business. This program is a federal-state partnership funded by the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Independent Living Services

Independent living services are designed to help people of any age who are blind, vision-impaired or deaf-blind gain and adapt the skills needed to lead a full and productive life. CBVI provides assistance/instruction in the areas of: daily living, communication, orientation and mobility, Braille instruction, eye health education and low vision services.

Eye Health Services

Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment) conducts a variety of educational programs and eye health screenings in communities throughout the state to help detect vision problems and to assist residents of New Jersey with restorative treatment. This, often helps save sight and restore vision whenever it is medically possible. Annually, Project BEST screens more than 37,000 New Jersey residents.



SRC Working Principles and Responsibilities



The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. It gives advice to, and works in partnership with, the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency. The members of the State Rehabilitation Council are appointed by the Governor and convene at least five meetings a year. All meetings and public forums are announced, and are open and accessible to the general public. The meetings are held in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act, NJSA 10:4-6.

The Functions of the SRC

- ◆ Review, analyze, and advise CBVI regarding performance of its responsibilities of the Agency under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- ◆ Assist CBVI with the development of State goals and priorities, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation program;
- ◆ Advise and assist CBVI with the preparation of the State Plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required under the Rehabilitation Act amendments of 2014;
- ◆ Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, Vocational Rehabilitation services;
- ◆ Prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on the status of Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and to make the report available to the public;
- ◆ Coordinate with other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC);
- ◆ Establish successful working relationships between CBVI, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and Centers for Independent Living within the State; and
- ◆ Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of this title, as the SRC determines appropriate.

SRC Board Members

James W. Warnke, Chair

(201) 835-8223

jwarnke@optonline.net

**Public Member-Disability Advocacy Group
Representative*

Rick Fox, Vice Chair

(973) 743-6107

richardfox1@comcast.net

National Federation of the Blind-NJ Chapter
**Advocacy Blind/Disabled Representative*

Fran Leibner

(609) 984-4955

fran.leibner@doe.state.nj.us

New Jersey Department of Education
**State Education Agency Representative*

Jonathan Goodman

(856) 296-7468

J.Goodman82@comcast.net

TD Bank
** Business & Industry Representative*

Lillie Lowe-Reid

(609) 292-9742

advocate@drnj.org

Disability Rights New Jersey
**Client Assistance Program (CAP)
Representative*

Jennifer Armstrong

732-616-2153

Jennifer.Armstrong@sodexo.com

Food Services Operations Manager Sodexo -
The College of New Jersey
**Business, Industry and Labor Sector
Representative*

Dawn Monaco

(201) 394-6898

dmonaco@spannj.org

Project Co-Director/Coordinator
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
**Parent Training & Information Center
Representative*

Alwyn "Al" Glasgow

(201) 568-2452

alwyn.bg@gmail.com

Commercial photographer
**Business and Industry Representative*

Otilie Lucas

(609) 882-2446

ottilie@verizon.net

New Jersey Council of the Blind
**Advocacy Blind/Disabled Representative*

Kris Tucker

(973) 491-7653

ktucker@njtransit.com

New Jersey Transit
**Business and Industry Representative*

Kelly Anne Reymann

(609) 947-0086

reymann@tcnj.edu

Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities -
The College of New Jersey
**Community Rehabilitation Program
Representative*

SRC Board Members

Kirk A. Lew

(609) 633-0605

kirk.lew@dol.state.nj.us

State Employment and Training Commission

**State Workforce Investment Board*

Representative

Zoraida Krell

(201) 439-0120

krellbz@gmail.com

**Current/Former VR Applicant or Recipient*

Representative

Jamie Hilton

(908) 490-1142

jc.hilton@comcast.net

**Current/Former VR Applicant or Recipient*

Representative.

Danielle Licari-Scorzelli

(973) 648-3330

danielle.licari@dhs.state.nj.us

NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

**Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor*

Representative (Ex-Officio)

Daniel B. Frye

(973) 648-2324

daniel.frye@dhs.state.nj.us

NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

**Executive Director of CBVI (Ex-Officio)*

Amanda Gerson

(973)648-3660

amanda.gerson@dhs.state.nj.us

NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

**Liaison to the SRC (Ex-Officio)*



SRC Accomplishments in FFY 2016



The SRC met five times in FFY 2016 to foster a collaborative working relationship among members, assist with identifying strategies for improving service delivery to CBVI consumers, advise on the development and implementation of new innovative programs, and provide training opportunities.

- ◆ The SRC was instrumental in recruiting qualified representatives to expand the expertise and scope of its membership.
- ◆ SRC membership assumed an active role to increase awareness throughout the community about the unique needs and capabilities of individuals served by the Commission.
- ◆ The SRC established the following subcommittees to further the work of the Council: Evaluation, Business Relations, Resource, and Annual Report.
- ◆ The SRC members worked collaboratively in the creation and implementation of the

new resource list to foster awareness of the various resources available to individuals who are blind and vision-impaired. Independence and life enrichment resources have been increased. This is a working document and will be updated periodically.

- ◆ The SRC assisted the agency in the development of the Combined State Plan for New Jersey.
- ◆ The SRCs for CBVI as well as the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVRS), will serve as the disability issues subcommittee for the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), which functions as the New Jersey's State Workforce Investment Board.
- ◆ The SRC assisted the agency in reviewing the proposed new federal regulations for implementation of key components of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014.

SRC Subcommittees

Evaluation Subcommittee

On June 5, 2015, the SRC formed an Evaluation Subcommittee. Its purpose is to help the CBVI implement components of the agency wide strategic plan concerning service delivery improvements. Specifically, it helps to develop systemic mechanisms that are embedded into the service provision system, for on-going surveying of stakeholders on the level of satisfaction and effectiveness of service provision.



On April 15, 2016, Executive Director Daniel Frye asked the committee to assist the agency with a consumer survey of the assistive technology training performed by Advancing Opportunities, the agency's primary technology contractor. The agency has contracted with a university-based program to develop and implement a scientifically valid survey. The Evaluation Subcommittee is working with CBVI staff to ensure the survey is not only valid, but consumer-friendly, concise, and informative.

Resource Committee

The SRC members worked collaboratively in the creation and implementation of the new resource list to foster awareness of the various community resources available to individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision-impaired. Independence and life enrichment resources have been increased. This is a working document and will be updated periodically.

Annual Report Subcommittee

The Annual Report Subcommittee is charged with the development of the State Rehabilitation Council's annual report. Members of the subcommittee assist with the creation, recommendations, compilation and editing of the report.

Business Relations Subcommittee

The SRC established a subcommittee to meet the needs of businesses in New Jersey, and to work in collaboration with the Business Relations Team, one of CBVI's new initiatives to serve the business community. Members of the subcommittee met with CBVI administrators to begin drafting an agency portfolio that would appeal to employers, and will continue to provide feedback on this initiative throughout its process. Additionally, members will continue to network, and to refer business connections so that CBVI can deepen relationships with the business community.

Statewide Impact of CBVI Services

Numbers indicate total residents served by CBVI. (Please note that individuals may be served in multiple programs):

	COUNTY	ED	IL	IL-OB	VR	PB*
1	Atlantic	73	93	139	101	30
2	Bergen	171	128	267	253	6
3	Burlington	132	69	131	213	11
4	Camden	194	138	159	243	25
5	Cape May	19	29	51	40	7
6	Cumberland	57	68	58	63	6
7	Essex	201	226	314	293	39
8	Gloucester	95	67	83	110	8
9	Hudson	87	114	144	177	20
10	Hunterdon	26	4	18	30	1
11	Mercer	93	60	80	138	25
12	Middlesex	231	143	207	295	34
13	Monmouth	172	97	198	215	8
14	Morris	110	66	91	127	19
15	Ocean	183	99	382	181	17
16	Passaic	131	105	164	163	41
17	Salem	16	16	32	21	2
18	Somerset	86	35	72	96	10
19	Sussex	34	23	25	31	3
20	Union	144	84	166	208	17
21	Warren	14	14	23	19	3

* Explanation of Abbreviations

ED-Education (Ages: 0-21 years)

IL-Independent Living (Ages: 54 years and younger)

IL-OB – Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind (Ages: 55 years +)

VR – Vocational Rehabilitation (Ages: 14 years and older)

PB – Project BEST (Serving all age groups)

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The SRC is pleased to acknowledge the contributions of the Commission's staff in assisting our consumers to achieve increased levels of independence and to obtain employment.

VR services provided by the Commission under this program are designed to assist individuals who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind to prepare for, to secure, to retain, or to regain employment that is consistent with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, interests, and informed choice.

The scope of Vocational Rehabilitation Services includes:

- ◆ Assessment for determining eligibility and VR needs by qualified personnel;
- ◆ VR counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice, including referral and services from other agencies;
- ◆ Physical and mental restoration services;
- ◆ Vocational and other training services;
- ◆ Maintenance and transportation related to the rendering of any VR services;
- ◆ Vocational rehabilitation services to family members to assist in achieving the employment goal for an individual with a disability, e.g., family counseling;
- ◆ Interpreter services, including sign language and oral interpreter services, for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and tactile interpreting services for individuals who are deaf-blind;
- ◆ Independent living skills instruction including personal and home management;
- ◆ Orientation and mobility services to instruct in methods of independent, safe community travel;
- ◆ Services to assist students to transition from school to work;
- ◆ Job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
- ◆ Supported employment services;
- ◆ Personal assistance services, including reader services;
- ◆ Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, initial stocks, and supplies;
- ◆ Technical assistance to individuals who are pursuing self-employment;
- ◆ Rehabilitation technology services and devices; and
- ◆ Post-employment services, i.e., short term services required to keep a job.

Participants in the Vocational Rehabilitation program attained employment in the following fields in FFY 2016:

11.8%	Office and Administrative Support
8.1%	Education, Training, and Library
7.6%	Management
6.6%	Food Preparation and Serving
6.2%	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance
5.7%	Production
5.7%	Sales
5.2%	Transportation and Material Moving
4.7%	Construction and Extraction
4.7%	Homemaker
4.3%	Community and Social Services
3.8%	Computer and Mathematical
3.8%	Healthcare Support
3.8%	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair
3.3%	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media
3.3%	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
3.3%	Personal Care and Service
2.4%	Business and Financial
2.4%	Business Enterprises – NJ (Manager)
0.9%	Architecture and Engineering
0.9%	Life, Physical, and Social Science
0.5%	Legal
0.5%	Protective Service
0.5%	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA)

On July 22, 2014, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed and authorized the six core programs that comprise America's Workforce Development System. These programs include:

WIOA Title I (administered by the US Department of Labor)

1. Adult
2. Dislocated Worker
3. Youth

WIOA Title II (administered by the US Department of Education)

4. Adult Education and Literacy

WIOA Title III (administered by the US Department of Labor)

5. Wagner-Peyser Act employment services

WIOA Title IV (administered by the US Department of Education)

6. Vocational Rehabilitation

The passage of WIOA supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), and with its signing, this new law requires all core programs in the Workforce Development System to implement key changes, which Congress believes will better address the needs of Americans preparing for the 21st century.

The final rules governing implementation of WIOA were published in the Federal Register on August 19, 2016. The majority of those published rules are connected to the provision of services in the following programs: Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Supported Employment Services, Independent Living – Older Individuals who are Blind, and

Limitation on Use of Sub-Minimum Wage, and became effective on September 19, 2016.

NJ Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2016)

As required under WIOA, states must develop a Unified or Combined State Plan that includes all core partners across the four Titles of WIOA. New Jersey has chosen to submit a Combined State Plan. Commission administrative staff worked closely with key staff of the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) and other core partners to include specific sections of the plan that address the work of the agency and also



to provide input on the overall plan. The goals and the objectives for the agency, as contained in the plan, are in alignment with the agency's strategic plan. A key component of the Combined State Plan is an emphasis on building and expanding partnerships amongst the various core partners of the Workforce Development System as well as developing more robust relationships with employers and the business community to respond to their unique business and workforce needs.

In the Introduction Section of the Combined State Plan, five core activities are detailed that stress the importance of developing partnerships and strengthening collaborations amongst the various partners in the state's talent development system, including the state's diverse employers.

These core activities are:

1. New partnerships with employers across the state's seven key industries;
2. Strong collaborations among workforce programs, education, and higher education;
3. The use of technology to better connect jobseekers and employers;

4. Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments; and
5. Innovative partnerships among the state, local governments, community and faith-based organizations, and educational institutions.

In addition, the Combined State Plan focuses on five primary themes that summarize key workforce development activities as outlined in the implementation blueprint document for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. These themes taken directly from the state plan are listed below in their entirety.

Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry Valued Credentials

Through a common definition of career pathways, a newly created list of industry valued credentials, literacy standards and a renewed commitment to Employment First for all persons with disabilities, New Jersey will ensure that all workforce investments are enabling individuals to access greater economic opportunity and to build on their skills throughout their careers. These efforts

will expand the number of career pathways, at all levels of education and workforce services, which will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships

Across departments, New Jersey is focusing investments and programs on building employer-driven, high quality partnerships that follow a common definition and framework. These partnerships are critical to building new career pathways for jobseekers and students and help increase the number of individuals with an industry valued postsecondary degree or credential. To further support these efforts, the state's seven industry focused Talent Networks will facilitate the development of new high quality, employer-driven partnerships across the state; investments in new Targeted Industry Partnerships and Talent Development Centers will build a foundation for all of the state's workforce development investments.

Theme 3: Strengthening Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships

New Jersey is committed to supporting One-Stop Career Centers that meet local needs and assist individuals in obtaining new skills and employment. New Jersey will expand the number of jobseekers and students who have access to high quality career guidance and job search assistance through a new network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, libraries, community based organizations and faith based organizations, and organized labor and educational institutions.

Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations

Effective Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are critical to the success of New Jersey's Talent Development system. Led by the private sector, but inclusive of key partners, local WDBs engaged in an active governance role to ensure that investments are made in effective programs and that local residents can access the services they need for career success. New Jersey has committed to supporting regional planning, service coordination, and resource sharing for all workforce education and training programs, recognizing that labor markets are not constrained by governmental or political boundaries. New Jersey is a densely populated state, and our labor markets are not constrained by state and county boundaries. These efforts will be organized around three regions of the state: North, Central, and South.

Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

To reflect the strategic priorities of the state, New Jersey is adopting an additional set of performance measures and applying these measures, and those required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, to a broader number of programs. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card are critical tools assisting jobseekers and students making decisions about short-term occupational training programs.

Transition Programs



With the signing and implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a greater emphasis was placed on providing services to Youth with Disabilities (defined as individuals with disabilities, age 14-24), and more specifically to Students with Disabilities (defined as youth with disabilities enrolled in a credentialed secondary or post-secondary education program, ages 14-21). CBVI has a long history of providing Vocational

Rehabilitation services to students and youth with disabilities, with dedicated programs going back nearly 50 years to the creation of a college readiness program at Drew University. Since then, the Transition program has evolved significantly, and CBVI currently has: four Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors dedicated to the high school transition students we serve; three Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors dedicated to our consumers enrolled in college full-time, and many more programs that have been developed and continue to evolve to meet the needs of our consumers and the federal regulations that govern the Vocational Rehabilitation program. These transition programs, described below, include SHARP (Student Hands-on Alternative Reinforcement Project), Life 101, EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement), Work Skills Preparation, College Prep Experience, and Youth Employment Solutions (YES).



Student Hands-on Alternatives Reinforcement Project (SHARP)

The SHARP Program provides an innovative approach to enable students with vision impairment, ages 6 through 13, to acquire and practice blindness skills in the areas of Braille, assistive technology, and independent living, including orientation and mobility. The program was offered for the second year at each of the three CBVI Service Centers from July 12 through August 18, 2016. This year the program was divided into two sessions. Session One was for students in grades 5 through 8, and Session Two was for students in grades 1 through 4. By dividing the program into two sessions, each service center was able to accommodate a larger number of students. A total of seventy-seven



students completed the program. A team composed of staff from all CBVI disciplines developed the program curriculum, consisting of activities that provided students hands-on experiences, which reinforced skills developed during the program. New Jersey Transit, The Newark Museum, the Jenkins Aquarium, ShopRite Supermarket, Newark Police and Fireman, Liberty Science Center, State Forestry Services, and Say It with Clay are just a few of the community businesses and organizations that welcomed our students and provided them with life skill experiences.

Activities included art and music exploration, personal care, meal planning, budgeting, food preparation, recreation, and community engagement. The students also learned to download books, and travel independently. Finally, they practiced appropriate mealtime etiquette and interacting with the public. Students took part in group games and practiced their math skills to keep score. They learned to read map keys, common survival signs, and compass navigation, prior to going out to community field trips.

Students in the Newark Service Center visited the Turtle Back Zoo to see their favorite animals. The sprinkler cooling stations around the zoo were also a big hit. The students and staff had a tour of Newark Penn Station, and a train ride to Jersey City to visit a shopping mall.

In keeping with the Summer Olympics in Brazil, students in the Freehold Service Center explored the art, music, and culture of various countries and competed in their own version of the Olympic Games.

In the Cherry Hill Service Center, the students engaged in high level fitness activities with a personal trainer and a yoga instructor.

SHARP 2016 introduced students with vision impairments to core skills and life experiences that serve as a strong foundation for facilitating next steps for each student. The program success was evident by the numerous enthusiastic testimonials from students and their families, as well as staff who participated. Plans are underway to build on the successes of the program's second summer for an even better SHARP 2017.

The Life 101 Program

Life 101 is a two week, residential program conducted at the Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC), a facility managed by the New Jersey Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired (CBVI). Life 101 takes place at the end of July into the beginning of August and is designed for ninth and tenth grade high school students who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision-impaired. The ultimate goal of Life 101 is to give the enrolled participants a hands-on learning experience through which students are empowered with the necessary tools and self-awareness that can facilitate their preparation for life after high school graduation.

The Life 101 program incorporates educational sessions based on the following instructional areas: assistive and information technology, independence and daily living skills, career exploration, and post-secondary education preparation. The program is staffed by CBVI employees who have expertise in the subject matter for each of the program areas. CBVI staffs from JKTC and CBVI Transition VR counselors collaborate to coordinate the Life 101 program. In addition to instruction, the Life 101 students participate in a variety of community trips and evening activities designed to promote independence in a variety of ways. Themes related to communication skills, self-advocacy skills, decision making skills, and leadership skills are addressed throughout the program as challenging learning exercises are presented.

Technology Instruction

Students participate in the assistive and informational technology core instructional area and engage in a number of computer-based activities so their technology skills can be assessed. Instruction is then designed around students' needs and a strong emphasis is placed on assisting them to effectively utilize adaptive software.

Skills of Independence and Adaptive Living

Different key proficiencies and concepts are addressed in this instructional area. Critical skills related to money identification, management, and budgeting are underscored, and real life experiences are provided in this discipline.

Career Exploration Instructional Area

The purpose of the career exploration instructional area is to assist students to learn more about preparing for employment. Through various interactive formats, the Life 101 students are introduced to a number of career-related topics, and are encouraged to pose any questions they may have about employment, careers, job seeking skills, and labor market issues, as well as about services offered by CBVI.

Post-Secondary Planning Instructional Area Enrichment Activities

As students receive instruction related to post-secondary opportunities, they learn how to compare and contrast different educational programs and to identify their individual preferences. They become aware of terminology that will be used as they move forward in the college exploration and application process.

Enrichment Activities

During the evening hours, students participate in various in-house and community based experiences. For their final full day in JKTC, staying within a fixed budget, students work in groups to plan, organize, and execute a formal dinner party. For this special event, they have an opportunity to independently select and order the food, decorate the hall, and create a memorable evening filled with excitement and fun.

Employment-Development-Guidance-Engagement (EDGE)

The EDGE program assists blind, deaf-blind and vision-impaired high school students as they prepare to transition from high school to post-secondary education and the competitive job market. EDGE students participate in interactive group seminars, peer mentoring, and career guidance, giving them



the tools necessary to obtain employment. EDGE students explore topics such as resume writing, interview preparation, using adaptive technology, and independent travel. As EDGE moves into its second year, returning students are asked to increasingly apply the self-advocacy, independence, and work readiness skills to move toward post-secondary education and employment.

At its core, EDGE seeks to assist students in developing independent living, self-advocacy, and social skills; all of which

contribute to reaching the goal of successful competitive employment. Those who are not placed competitively are set up in stipend work experiences, in order to allow them to sample working and learn how to interact successfully with co-workers and supervisors. Since students are still living at home with their parents, who are often new to the idea of seeing their children become self-sufficient in interacting with the community around them, EDGE has a series of concurrent parent workshops that concentrate on making parents aware of what is possible and necessary in this regard.

EDGE is currently in its second year of operation with 42 students and counting. The launch and first year of EDGE was a success with 36 students completing the program, and approximately 15 students participated in a work experience this past summer. Many participating students have never met someone else with a vision impairment, and lack peer and adult blind mentors. This can sometimes result in hesitance to use accommodations, in order to fit in with their sighted high school peers, and reject the training and assistive technology that would allow them to become independent. For some, they may have missed out on knowing what is possible for them to accomplish independently. Through positive peer and adult mentor interaction, our consumers become more open to the possibilities that exist, the tools that enable independence, and increase social and soft skills. Since a focus of EDGE employment efforts is the development of individual job search networks, peer work skills networks and career advancement networks, the prerequisite development of social skills is critical. Therefore, EDGE also offers a schedule of events and outings that allow students to form relationships with both mentors and peers.

College Prep Experience (CPE)

The College Prep Experience (CPE) is a comprehensive transition-based program with a goal of preparing students for post-secondary education. CPE is composed of two parts: the College Prep Orientation and the TCNJ Pre-College Program.

This year, 14 students participated in a two-week College Prep Orientation. Students had the support of CBVI staff, a team including: Teachers of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Orientation and Mobility Instructors, a Rehabilitation Teacher, and Technology Support Specialists, as well as college students, and TCNJ professional staff. Students gained valuable knowledge



and experience with campus and dorm life, assistive technology, college and career readiness, and independent living skills. These opportunities helped students learn more about themselves and develop skills necessary for college. The College Prep Orientation concluded with a small ceremony and an official TCNJ tour given by a TCNJ Ambassador. During the ceremony, participants shared their favorite parts of the program and were presented with certificates of completion.

For the second year in a row, CBVI collaborated with the TCNJ Pre-College Program. The Pre-College Program is a summer program designed for rising high school juniors and seniors. Nine students receiving NJ-CBVI services were accepted into the fully integrated TCNJ Pre-College Program. Pre-College students are enrolled in a TCNJ credit-bearing course and engage in community service to earn one-unit (4 credits) to transfer to the college of their choice.

This year, participants had the opportunity to take either HIS177: 20th Century US History or SOC101: Introduction to Sociology. Coursework focused on the culture or history of Trenton. Students split their day equally between community service and class. They enjoyed an interactive, multidisciplinary approach to learning that included hands-on assignments, information sessions, guided tours of Trenton and the State House, and lectures. Community service took place at the Academic Sports Academy, a summer program in Trenton designed to foster learning

through rigorous academic tutoring as well as through sports training. Students had the opportunity to participate in academic support/tutoring where they planned and carried out meaningful lessons for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.

A culminating ceremony took place on the final day of the program, in which students participated in a collaborative, comprehensive presentation highlighting what they learned in class, at community service, and through research. There was also an opportunity for participants to share what inspired them during their Pre-College experience.

Work Skills Preparation (WSP)

The Work Skills Preparation (WSP) program at TCNJ is a two-week residential summer transition program designed for students who plan to pursue employment after high school. Two consecutive programs took place from June 26-July 22 and 22 high school students participated in activities reflecting the transition domains: academic, work, independent living, and recreation/leisure.

Students spend half of each weekday sampling different employment sites on-campus and/or in the community. Job coaches support the students as they navigate the work world, complete job tasks, and interact with co-workers, supervisors, customers, etc. The job coaches observe the students in order to identify tasks with which the students excel, environmental preferences, effective support strategies, and social interactions.

The second half of the weekday is comprised of functional academics where professional staff observes skills related to the core content, expanded core curriculum, self-advocacy, decision-making, and problem-solving through authentic activities, direct instruction, role-play, community-based instruction, and problem-based learning tasks. Effective support strategies and accommodations are identified for each student.

The students spend their evenings and weekends developing their independent living skills, participating in recreation and leisure activities, socializing, as well as engaging in experiences both on campus and in the local community. The college campus is an ideal setting for the students to practice managing their time, money, travel and personal needs.



Life Skills Facilitators (LSFs) organize lessons to teach students Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). LSFs use direct instruction, hands-on activities and community-based instruction to support the students to become more independent.

A summary of performance is written, reflecting skills, contributions, and support strategies in the areas of employment, functional academics, and independent living skills. Assessments facilitated by CBVI staff also provide recommendations and suggestions for Orientation and Mobility (as applicable), as well as technology use. In addition to a comprehensive report, and based on the Person-Centered Approaches in Schools Initiative from the New Jersey Department of Education and the Person-Centered Planning Initiative from the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities, a brochure was developed that illustrates the student's person-centered plan. The student is encouraged to share the brochure with his/her family, school personnel, employment support agencies, Transition Counselors, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

Youth Employment Solutions (YES)

The Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program currently is being piloted in partnership with the Center for Sensory and Complex Disabilities at The College of New Jersey (TCNJ) to serve individuals 18-25 years old. As part of CBVI's Customized Employment Initiative, TCNJ staff is continuing to work with former Work Skills



Preparation (WSP) participants to support them as they work toward their employment goals. TCNJ's role is to match a job seeker with a Support Specialist. In most cases, a Support Specialist is a former WSP staff or certified Special Educator that has been trained as a job coach. The goal is for the Support Specialist to engage the job seeker in the discovery process utilizing strategies that prove effective for individuals with developmental disabilities. Under a 90-day contract, the Support Specialist will

lay the foundation of job development and deliverables (i.e., Person-Centered Planning Tool, Brochure, Visual Resume) are put in place to document progress during this time. Additionally, milestones are created for Support Specialists to continue the job development/retention services to secure successful, gainful employment.

Most, if not all, of our job seekers are suitable for Supported Employment (SE) Services and also are working with a job coach affiliated with an agency in partnership with CBVI. The goal is to work together since the Support Specialist does not supplant the efforts/work of the job coach from the SE agency at all. The goal is for the Support Specialist to do the discovery process to help support the job coach with job development and raise awareness of greater potential.



Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC)

The Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC) is a state of the art facility that offers vocational rehabilitation, employment services, and skills training for blind and vision-impaired clients of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired (CBVI). The Joseph Kohn Center was inaugurated in 1988 in the city of New Brunswick, replacing the previous training

The mission of the JKTC is to assist blind and vision-impaired individuals to lead full and productive lives as they live and work in their communities. For this purpose, a robust program curriculum is developed for consumers seeking employment. The program is customized for each consumer and can range in duration from approximately two weeks to 20 weeks or more.



A wide range of services are designed to enable the program participants to increase their independence and access employment. Each participant begins the program by engaging in a comprehensive assessment to establish a baseline of skills and to identify areas for improvement. Subsequently, a customized program plan is

center, which was located in Newark for more than thirty years. The JKTC is a three floor residential center and houses meeting and conference rooms, classrooms, a cafeteria, a gym, a recreation room, a student lounge, an accessible kitchen, a technology demonstration and evaluation center, and student dorms.

Consumers have the choice to either dorm at the Center or attend the program on a commuter basis; there is no fee for eligible participants. Referrals for the program are to be submitted by CBVI VR Counselors. Eligible candidates for the program must be 18 years or older and classified as vision-impaired or legally blind. This is verified via a report provided to CBVI by a licensed eye doctor.

developed to address each participant's needs, abilities, and goals. Overall, the following core areas are generally assessed:

- ◆ Activities of Daily Living (ADL)
- ◆ Braille/Communication Skills
- ◆ Career Exploration
- ◆ Orientation and Mobility Skills (O & M)
- ◆ Technology Skills

Program plans for students include particular objectives in each of these areas. Participants then engage in individual and small group instructional sessions geared toward achieving the outlined specific goals.

JKTC consumers also participate in a variety of group activities in the areas of communication skills, self-advocacy, job

seeking skills, and adjustment to vision loss. Furthermore, support is provided in the areas of psycho-social adjustment counseling, nursing, and nutritional counseling. Presentations are offered by guest speakers from organizations such as: the Seeing Eye, the Talking Book and Braille Center (TBBC), New Jersey Work Incentives Network Support (NJ WINS), and the Community Health Law Project (CHLP), among others.

Also, to complement their training experience, program participants help to plan evening activities, community outings, and special events on a regular basis. These include: trips to parks, malls, movies, and sporting events.

In addition, students take part in a number of in-house activities such as planting and maintaining a vegetable and flower garden. They also are exposed to the “1-Touch” self-defense program on a periodic basis through scheduled seminars. Besides utilizing the Center’s gym, program participants are able to take advantage of the JKTC library, which houses books in accessible formats.

During a student’s enrollment in JKTC, an assigned case manager works actively with each participant to ensure that progress towards specific goals is achieved. Ongoing and regular communication is maintained with the primary CBVI VR caseworker throughout the consumer’s enrollment in the JKTC program. A team meeting is held at the midpoint and at the conclusion of a participant’s program. During these case conference discussions, the student’s progress is reviewed and next steps are clearly identified.

Towards the end of the program, a community work experience, which aligns with the participant’s interests and abilities,

is arranged. To date, some worksites that have been setup include: The Heldrich Hotel, Best Buy, the Clara Barton Assisted Living Center, the New Brunswick Food Co-op, the New Brunswick Public Library, Puerto Rican Action Board, CVS, and others. During work experience, participants are charged with the responsibility of independently setting up transportation to and from the job sites on a daily basis. This is usually arranged by students in the form of public transportation, Access Link, Uber, or taxi services. A job coach is initially available to provide support and orient the consumer to the job location. Once the JKTC student is comfortable with performing the assigned work tasks, the job coach fades out.

When consumers near the end of their JKTC training and work experience, a final team meeting is arranged, in which participants take an active role as their progress is reported by JKTC instructors, supervisors, and the caseworker. Next steps are identified as part of transition planning to ensure that progress toward achieving personal goals is sustained after the program is completed.

Following the final case conference, each participant has an opportunity to receive a graduation ceremony. At that time, students can share their experiences while completing the JKTC training program and can also discuss future plans. Likewise, family, friends, staff and other JKTC consumers have a chance to share their impressions of the graduate and highlight the positive changes that have occurred as a result of the program. Current program participants become inspired by recognizing that those being honored are more prepared to meet the challenges that life will bring.

Business Enterprises New Jersey (BENJ)

CBVI is the State Licensing Agency (SLA) for the Federal Randolph-Sheppard program and the Business Enterprises New Jersey (BENJ) is a service unit in the agency administering New Jersey's Randolph-Sheppard program. As such, BENJ is responsible for coordinating the operation of 53 Randolph-Sheppard food locations across the state. The types of operations include: 7 cafeterias, 6 single person sites (dry stands), 1 military cafeteria, 22 snack bars, and 17 vending sites.

Individuals who wish to enter BENJ are required to: be at least 18 years of age, be legally blind, have a high school diploma (or GED), pass a background check, and be a United States citizen. The BENJ unit is comprised of: 1 Supervising Community Program Specialist, 7 Field Representatives, and 1 Administrative Assistant.

BENJ 2016 Highlights

- ◆ Total gross sales: \$11,993,828
- ◆ Operator average net income: \$49,832
- ◆ Total number of Managers served: 53
- ◆ Total number of consumers evaluated for Small Business Program: 1
- ◆ Total number of consumers evaluated for BENJ: 3
- ◆ Total number of consumers receiving placements: 2

New Locations Setup

- ◆ Converted East Jersey State Prison into a satellite location
- ◆ Converted Monmouth County Courthouse East and West into one location
- ◆ Ongoing ordering new vending machines for our locations that are

user friendly for both our Blind Managers and customers

- ◆ At least five Blind Managers are utilizing the iPad cash register systems for their locations with more showing interest
- ◆ One Blind Manager is using the Clover cash register system for his location

BENJ 2017 Initiatives

- ◆ BENJ has incorporated the Hadley Institute for the Blind & Visually Impaired's Business Enterprise Program Licensee Training (BEPLT) into training requirements for the program
- ◆ Several potential candidates have enrolled in the Hadley Institute for the Blind & Visually Impaired's BEPLT
- ◆ BENJ is currently pursuing several opportunities presented by the General Services Administration (GSA)
- ◆ BENJ is currently in the process of developing vending opportunities within the private sector
- ◆ Implement the revised rules and regulations of Chapter 97, New Jersey's "mini Randolph-Sheppard" and the governing document of the BENJ
- ◆ Continuing education programs for upward mobility training for Blind Managers is planned
- ◆ The program will continue replacing aging vending machines with modern models at postal facilities and other vending locations
- ◆ BENJ has started making renovations to some of the current locations

Technological Support Services

CBVI offers support to New Jersey residents who are blind, vision-impaired, and deaf-blind in regard to assistive technology that is necessary to gain or retain employment. Assistive technology is defined as any item, piece of equipment, or system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is commonly used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

(TSSs) are responsible for maintaining and staffing five comprehensive and up-to-date Regional Technology Assistance Centers (RTACs) located throughout New Jersey. Each RTAC is stocked with a variety of assistive technology devices and is open to the public by individual or group appointments. Three of these labs are located in CBVI's Service Centers (Newark, Freehold, and Cherry Hill); the fourth is operated in partnership with the



The Agency's Technological Support Services department assists consumers to have direct access to computer equipment and other information technology. The goal of the unit is to minimize barriers to task performance by taking into account the consumers' specific needs. Technological Services Specialists

NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center and is located in Trenton; the fifth is located at the Joseph Kohn Training Center in New Brunswick.

In addition, the regional TSS staff performs technology assessments and skill evaluations for consumers who are

seeking employment and require equipment adaptations to assist in carrying out their work and/or tasks in an educational environment. The Specialists make recommendations suitable for each consumer's unique situation, such that it would enable the individual to efficiently address his/her professional or academic responsibilities. Following the evaluation, both in the regional offices and at the JKTC, a comprehensive report is completed by the TSS, which includes recommendations for equipment, software, integration and/or training. Recommended training is time limited, and goals are specifically linked to tasks and learning objectives via vocational training or on the job. The report details the number of training hours anticipated for the consumer to reach proficiency in the needed skill sets. Training services are provided by a statewide service provider under contract with the Commission. Training is provided one-on-one with consumers in their homes, at training locations, or at the work-site. The contracted agency provides periodic progress reports and a final report when training is completed.

The TSS staff installs, sets up, and configures recommended equipment for consumers on-site and provides brief instruction on proper utilization of assistive technology. TSS works with outside agencies, businesses, and institutions to evaluate work environments with respect to accessibility for vision-impaired employees. The specialists also suggest appropriate solutions to outside agencies that would make these workplaces, and the software applications they use, more compatible with assistive technology.

TSS staff members at the Joseph Kohn Training Center conduct an initial skills assessment to determine the appropriate assistive computer software and training goals suitable to the consumers' needs. Training is then provided to strengthen the necessary skills and technological proficiency that facilitates the opportunity to succeed in a work or educational environment. The TSS staff also provides technical support, evaluation, and training during CBVI summer



pre-vocational programs for transition-age consumers, such as Life 101.

The Adaptive Technology Loan Program is a CBVI funded project, managed on a day to day basis by the Talking Book and Braille Center. The loaner program is intended to provide computer access for VR consumers receiving assistive technology training as they move toward job readiness. Equipment available for loan includes desktop PCs, laptops, adaptive software, printers, scanners, and Closed Circuit Television Systems (CCTVS). There are also a small number of MacBooks and handheld digital magnifiers for loan on a limited basis. Laptops are available only for students enrolled in remedial college courses.

Deaf-Blind Services

The Deaf-Blind Services unit at CBVI provides transition and vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with dual sensory impairments, i.e., the combination of hearing and vision loss. The Agency employs two Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (Deaf-Blind Specialists), one located in the Newark Service Center serving the northern region of the state and the other in the Freehold Service Center serving the southern half of the state. A full range of services are provided to assist individuals with hearing and vision loss to reach their highest level of independence and prepare for, obtain, or retain employment.

Special attention is given to the unique communication needs of individuals who are deaf-blind. Interpreter services and special equipment may be provided to help individuals maximize their independence and achieve their employment goals.

Support Service Providers - New Jersey (SSP-NJ)

CBVI, its State Rehabilitation Council, and The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), collaborated to develop and implement a consumer-driven statewide network of Support Service Providers, or SSPs to promote greater community integration for adults who are deaf-blind. SSPs provide visual and environmental information, human guide

services, and access to communication. This facilitates the connection with others, thereby reducing barriers that would otherwise result in social isolation.

Into its seventh year, the Support Service Providers (SSP) program continues to assist adults who are deaf-blind to gain access to and integrate in their communities. SSPs relay visual and environmental information and serve in the role of sighted guides to facilitate communication and provide support. CBVI deaf-blind consumers eligible to receive



vocational rehabilitation services may be eligible to engage in up to 16 hours per month of SSP services. By promoting and supporting employment for adults who are deaf-blind, SSP-NJ encourages community integration through the development and implementation of a statewide network of Support Service Providers.

SSP-NJ has collaborated with a number of deaf, blind and deaf-blind state and non-profit organizations to further community outreach to potential consumers and/or SSPs.

Within the past year, SSP-NJ has collaborated with Eyes Like Mine, Inc., the Deaf Blind Community Access Network-New Jersey (DBCAN-NJ), and NJ Disability Pride Parade, to name a few. As a result, the number of deaf-blind consumers served has increased from 59 to 68. The potential to grow the program is expanding with the increase in collaboration with various groups, programs and organizations.

In accordance with program guidelines, deaf-blind program participants select when and how they want to use SSPs, and their SSPs of choice. If asked to match, we consider the skills of the SSP, the needs of the consumer, and the community location of both individuals. SSP-NJ program policy includes priority training for applicants recommended by program participants. For new program participants who may not know those in the SSP network, SSP-NJ provides community events where everyone can get to know each other in a neutral community activity, such as shopping in a mall. This way, program participants and SSPs can spend time “testing each other out” for compatibility before committing to working together. SSP-NJ Advisory Council meetings are held quarterly, and are also attended by the SSP-NJ business manager, program director, and statewide program coordinator.

SSP-NJ approved activities are applicable to the areas of:

- ◆ Post-secondary education/training: Assist in the classroom, library, educational project or trip, continuing education class, night school, study group, workshop, and acclimate to a new educational environment.

- ◆ Employment: Assist with job search, shopping for job-related clothing and materials/supplies, personal care appointments, job-related conference, meeting or workshop, job interview, acclimate to a new work environment, facilitate work experience, networking events, employer-sponsored events, accompany self-employed individuals to sales/development venues.
- ◆ Health and Well-Being: Assist with medical screenings, donate blood, blood work, doctor’s appointment, exercise or fitness activities, hospital or out-patient clinic appointment and/or surgery, prescribed related therapies, pharmacy.
- ◆ Household Management: Read mail, complete para-transit applications, scribe to complete forms, provide communication assistance with making phone calls (VRS, TTY).
- ◆ Accompany on Errands: Laundromat, personal finance and banking: reader and/or scribe support, shopping, in-store and online: food, clothing, household & personal items, read directions, recipes, labels and other household items.
- ◆ Community Integration: Public meetings and events, community seminars, civic organizations, assist in voting, volunteering in community organizations, peer support groups.

iCanConnect/NJ

Ava Bullis is like many girls her age. She plays basketball and rides horses. She loves to dance and draw. But unlike her classmates, she's doing it all with limited hearing and a progressive vision loss. Born with Usher syndrome, the 10-year-old has profound deafness and will eventually experience reduced visual fields. Assistive technology, provided by the National Deaf-blind Equipment Distribution Program (known as ICanConnect), is playing a critical role in keeping her connected to her family and peers.



“It’s like filling your toolbox with a bunch of tools,” said her mom, Carly Fredericks, a family specialist

for the New Jersey Consortium on Deaf-blindness at The College of New Jersey. “From a mom’s perspective, it’s very hard to watch your child struggle and you can’t fix it,” she said. “This program really helps. To watch the fulfillment it gives her and the independence...it’s amazing.”

Through ICanConnect, Ava received an audio cable that plugs her iPad and phone directly into the cochlear implants she wears to boost her hearing. A signaler – a vibrating device connected to the family’s home phone – alerts her to the ringing phone. Ava also received a touchscreen desktop computer and an iPhone through the program.

She uses her computer to communicate with her teacher and classmates about

school work, and for socializing with friends through Google Hangouts. Ava is part of a co-parenting family, so she uses her computer to Skype with her dad when she’s with her mom, and to talk to her siblings Mason, 5, and sister, Miley, 3, when she’s with her dad. The ICanConnect equipment also allows Ava to stay in touch with peers – other children with vision and hearing loss that she’s met at conferences and meetings. One older friend serves as a mentor, helping Ava understand what it’s like to live without vision. “It’s important for her to talk with others in her situation, because none of her classmates are dealing with the same issues,” said Carly. “It’s a really good program,” said Ava. “It provides you with things you need. It makes me feel like everybody else.”

Now in its fifth year, this program has provided various types of assistive technology and telecommunication devices to over 100 New Jersey residents since its inception. Devices such as iPads, iPhones, Braille notes, laptops, screen readers, and adaptive software, have been purchased for individuals meeting the program’s eligibility requirements. Eligibility requirements include significant dual sensory loss and income that does not exceed 400% of the federal poverty level.

This program is funded by the FCC as part of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act, which was established in order to make sure that laws enacted in the 1980s and 1990s to increase the access of persons with disabilities to modern communications are brought up to date with 21st century technologies, including new digital, broadband, and mobile communications.

Project BEST (Better Eye-Health Services and Treatment)

Project BEST is comprised of all eye health services offered by CBVI, a component of which is our screening unit. The primary roles of the Project BEST screening unit are to identify eye disease in target populations of New Jersey residents that do not have access to eye health care, facilitate treatment through community providers, and to serve as a robust source of CBVI referrals for those who meet the various eligibility criteria for blindness training and the other services covered under N.J.A.C. 10:94. Providing a growing array of services since 1979, the screening unit continues to meet its statutory obligation to increase access to the community. Approximately 500,000 residents have been screened in the past decade.

Along with identifying residents in need of eye health care and follow up, Project BEST provides outreach and education to people and organizations that host, as well as participate, in the eye screenings. Project BEST provides, in partnership with the Department of Health and CDC, a Diabetic Eye Disease Detection Screening, targeting populations with diagnosed

Type II diabetes. This program hopes to continue to grow, facilitating increased outreach for those with the disease. The grant award is for \$125,000. The Early Childhood Screening program (Pre-School Vision Screenings) identifies impediments to education, as well as eye diseases specific to that age group. The number of Pre-School Vision Screenings has increased by 14%, allowing for earlier detection of vision problems leading to earlier intervention. Migrant Worker Screenings and the Adult Vision Screenings primarily target adult populations, but are available to children as well. All venues offer an eye health education component and may be able to assist those that self-identify as having diabetes. CBVI staff also advocates for Affordable Care Act enrollment for all eligible residents.

Schools, faith-based groups, federally qualified health centers, municipalities, and other organizations throughout New Jersey can access vision screenings by contacting the Supervisor of Project BEST at (973) 648-7400.

2016 Highlights (Number of People Served)

Pre-School Vision Screening	24,361
On-Site Screening	5,735
Adult Vision Screening	5,202
Diabetic Eye Disease Detection (DEDD) Program	1,244
Self-Identified as having Diabetes	795
Migrant Screening	777
Total Individuals Screened	37,319
Total Number of Screening Events	905
Referred for Further Evaluation	3,458
Referred for additional CBVI services	284

Project BEST strives to expand services to address the need for access to eye health care in all 21 Counties. Working closely with federally qualified health centers and other community-based medical hubs, and appearing at large public gatherings such as health fairs, Project BEST will continue to return people with vision loss or at risk of vision loss to the workforce, provide education regarding systemic health conditions associated with vision loss, and serve CBVI by identifying residents in need of blindness skills training services.

Assistive Support Programs for Independence, Renewal, and Education (ASPIRE)

As the number of seniors with vision loss increases, these individuals struggle with the challenges of living a quality life. Vision loss coupled with diminished ability to participate in once cherished activities can take a heavy toll on a senior's emotional well-being. Loss of vision can often give rise to negative emotions such as anxiety, sadness, loneliness and lowered self-esteem.

In 2015, CBVI launched a new state-wide program targeted to improve the quality of life for older adults living with blindness and vision impairments. ASPIRE is a state-wide network of peer support groups that provide individuals who are living with vision loss the opportunity to gain the necessary coping skills, information, and education needed to thrive. In 2016, the ASPIRE Program increased the number of Peer Support Groups in its network from 30 to 43. ASPIRE connects with groups in 20 of New Jersey's 21 counties. Training for group facilitators is held annually.

ASPIRE is administered by the Independent Living Unit of CBVI, and is geared towards people with vision loss 55 years or older, but is also available to all adults interested in attending. ASPIRE offers individuals with vision loss the opportunity to connect with others who share similar challenges and the same life experiences. Through attendance in monthly group



meetings, program participants talk with one another and receive emotional support, exchange useful information, and find practical solutions for challenges that accompany low vision and blindness. ASPIRE helps people with vision loss to realize they are not alone and that they can achieve much more than they ever thought possible.

For more information about support Groups in the ASPIRE Network, please contact the Support Program Coordinator at 973-648-2821.

Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE)



options. Some of the specific activities/lessons included were: overall eye health and nutrition, diabetic education, shopping at the supermarket, train travel to Philadelphia from Atlantic City, cooking at the Lion's Blind Center, dining at restaurants, and music and relaxation therapy.

Participants became more independent and gained confidence in their skills. Their companions

From September 25, 2016 to September 30, 2016, 12 consumers that were 55 years and over, accompanied by four companions, participated in the agency's first Senior Hands-On Retreat Experience (SHORE) held in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Programming was scheduled from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. throughout the week. A Support Service Provider (SSP) was available every evening from 5:00 to 11:00 p.m. to assist the participants as needed.

Throughout the week, seniors participated in an all-inclusive program that provided real-life experiential learning. While at the retreat, participants received intensive independent living instruction in safe travel, health and wellness, assistive technology, communication and self-advocacy skills. Consumers also obtained information about, and/or participated in, coping with vision loss, community integration, and leisure activity

also began to encourage independence. Amidst continual programming and events, it was evident that the participants bonded. The participants met in the evening and began sharing their knowledge and newly acquired skills with their new found friends. Many have continued to stay in touch with one another. One of the participants stated that he feels that he was given a new start.



Library Equal Access Program (LEAP)

As the senior population increases, so do the number of blind and vision-impaired seniors. It is recognized that these individuals want and need access to assistive technology (AT). The Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) has recently made efforts to expand the array of AT services that are available to this segment

State Library Talking Book and Braille Center. The collaborative libraries are located in Mays Landing, South Orange, East Brunswick, Cherry Hill, Hackensack, Toms River, and Atlantic City. With assistive technology available now in local libraries across the state, blind and vision-impaired seniors may visit their hometown library and take advantage

of the library's resources, using the assistive technology provided by CBVI. In addition to rendering libraries more accessible, CBVI and our third-party contractor, Advancing Opportunities, use these seven LEAP locations to provide either small-group or individual instruction to a primarily blind and vision-impaired senior audience, in their local communities.



of our consumers. The Library Equal Access Program (LEAP) helps seniors 55 and older with a change in vision gain access to assistive technology (e.g. magnification, speech, and Braille supports) in seven local libraries across the state in partnership with the New Jersey

When classes are not in session, the equipment provided - computers (with speech and magnification software), iPads, and a Closed Circuit Television System (CCTVS) - may be used by library members.

Success Story

Geneve Blakemore graduated from the BENJ training class in April 2012. As a student, Geneve was focused on learning all that she could in preparation for her career in BENJ. She quickly moved from the “Certified for Placement” list to her first location at the snack bar in the Hughes Justice Complex selling pre-packaged snacks and novelty items. While at Hughes Justice, Geneve honed her skills in customer service, inventory control and cash management. Upon licensing, Geneve was eager to move to a larger, more profitable location. Although unsuccessful in her first couple of attempts, Geneve was even more determined to move forward. Rather than being discouraged, she took this as an opportunity to improve her interviewing skills and preparedness for a new location. Three’s a charm, and Geneve was awarded the location at The Burlington County Courthouse in Mount Holly upon the retirement of the current manager.

The coffee shop was closed for several months while undergoing a major renovation. Geneve did not sit idle, but used this time to interview and procure suppliers, hire employees and develop a concept and menu for her location. Sales were slow in the early days due to the time of year and the need to reestablish the customer base. The coffee shop and its employees took on Geneve’s personality, which was warm, friendly, and determined to succeed. Growth was steady as the word got out that the coffee shop, under the new management, was the place to go for quality product at a fair price coupled with friendly professional staff.



Geneve Blakemore

Today Miss G’s place, as it is affectionately known, is a thriving, vibrant place to go for judges, lawyers, courthouse employees, and visitors to the building.

Geneve is an outstanding example of what willingness to learn, ingenuity, and dedication can produce. The BENJ Program should be very proud of one of their outstanding members.

Success Story

Nimit Kaur



Nimit Kaur is a graduate of Sterling High School, class of 2016, and is currently attending Camden County College. In addition to her many extracurricular activities in school, Nimit has been an active participant in many of CBVI's programs for the past few years. She was part of CBVI's pilot program to utilize an iPad with a Braille display for academic textbook access while in high school in 2013, and continued to serve as a student accessibility tester and mentor to later students involved in the iPad program. Nimit was involved in the Cherry Hill Service Center's Summer Technology program in 2013 and 2014, the EDGE program in the 2015-2016 academic year, and the Pre-College program in the summers of 2015 and 2016. Below, please see, in her words, the impact of the Pre-College program on her successful transition from high school to college.

"As I go through college right now, I am really glad that I had the opportunity to attend the Pre-College Program at TCNJ because it

truly boosted my confidence and independence skills. I don't think I would be as prepared as I feel today if I hadn't attended the program. I recommend this to all other students who are visually impaired and are ready for this program. It is a great opportunity. I know how to communicate with the office of disabilities and my professors because of all the workshops. I am able to navigate my classes without asking for help.

In my case, I attended the program for two summers. I feel that I was more confident this year than last year. When I attended the program last year, I learned about my strengths and weaknesses. At the end of last summer, my goal was to improve on the skills I struggled with while I am at school. I tried my best to improve those skills. I wanted to attend the program again, so I communicated with my transition counselor to find out if it was a possibility. I was told that it could be possible and I applied and got accepted into the program again. I was very happy and I wanted to test myself and further improve my skills while I attended TCNJ again. I truly feel that I achieved more this year than last year.

In high school, we are always told that college is different than high school. I never actually understood the true difference and the freedom and the responsibilities that come with college. It was at the College Prep Experience at TCNJ that I truly understood what college life is like for students. The fact that we got to live in a dorm and experience college life really helped me be independent and improve my mobility and self-advocacy skills. I truly feel that I wouldn't be the same in college if I hadn't attended the program. I know you heard me say that probably a million times and you are like, "okay." but trust me, I mean every word I said. I will continue to tell people the same."

Success Story

Mary Fernandez

I started attending school at the age of 7. Being blind in Colombia, my country of birth, meant that getting an education would be virtually impossible.

As a child I had no idea if I would ever be able to read or write. I never knew if I'd be able to unlock the mysteries held in books. It was perhaps the seemingly impossible mission of attaining knowledge that made me thirst for an education above all things.

Coming to the U.S. was as life changing for me as it is for every immigrant who steps foot in this country. I remember meeting my Braille teacher Mrs. Marilyn Winograd, and for the first time in my life having tactile shapes placed under my fingers. I learned to read Braille in English in about two years, though I must confess I gave Mrs. Winograd the hardest time, as I refused to speak English until I spoke it without an accent! I could go on for a while, describing in detail how all the services that the commission provided made it possible for me to succeed academically. In addition to that most essential and life changing skills that is literacy, I received guidance throughout my school career, and I always looked forward to seeing my TVI. I had people who advocated for me in my school, in ways that I would not be able to appreciate until I became an adult. I got the technology skills and equipment necessary for me to be independent. But I think one of the most impactful programs that I took part of was the LEAD Program. Despite being an extremely good student, I had no confidence in myself as a blind person, until I met the mentors of the LEAD Program. I would not be the same person today if I hadn't met people like Sherlock Washington and Joe Ruffalo.

It's one thing to be told that you can accomplish your dreams, but it is all together another thing to see others like you fulfill their dreams.

With the support of the commission, I graduated from Emory University in 2012 with a BA in psychology and music. Once I got a job, a couple of months after my graduation, CBVI assisted me in getting a new Brailenote. Having Braille in the workplace is vital for me to do my job competently. Later, CBVI once again helped me in attaining additional blindness skills training at the Louisiana Center for the Blind, as I embarked on another episode of my life.

After training, I was fortunate enough to work for the EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) Program. Mentoring blind and vision impaired youth is so important to me because I know how much it affected me. I am particularly supportive of young women. As women, we face unique challenges in our society as we navigate the professional and personal landscape. Being disabled adds a layer of complexity which requires confidence, skills and sheer will to successfully negotiate our way. Being able to work with the young women in our program, hearing their stories, helping them find their confidence was such a huge responsibility, but so incredibly rewarding.

While working in EDGE was such a wonderful experience, I'm always looking for ways to challenge myself and break down barriers. When I received a job offer with the FBI early in 2016, I did not hesitate to accept and start the arduous process of my background check. I will be starting work sometime in the first half of next year, since the wheels of government do not quickly spin. But I am looking forward to the next phase in my life; knowing that thanks to the education and training I've received, blindness will not impede my success.

State Rehabilitation Council Goals for FFY 2017

- ◆ The SRC will continue to meet at least five times in FFY 2017 to maintain its effective working relationship among members and the CBVI Administration.
- ◆ The SRC Chair will work collaboratively with Commission administration and the SRC Chair for the New Jersey Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, to develop training protocols to educate new Council members on the role and responsibilities of the SRC membership.
- ◆ SRC members with vision impairments will participate in Commission sponsored programs and activities to share their knowledge base and expertise with consumers, and to serve as mentors and role models.
- ◆ The SRC will continue to be involved in public outreach so that agencies and individuals will better understand the capabilities of persons who are blind, deaf-blind, and vision-impaired.
- ◆ The SRC will continue to collaborate with the Commission to facilitate the implementation of a three to five-year agency-wide strategic plan to incorporate innovative and practical measures to insure the ongoing provision of high quality services to enable CBVI consumers to maximize their skills of independence and achieve their employment goals.
- ◆ The SRC will assist the Business Relations Unit to open up employment opportunities for CBVI consumers by fostering collaboration with the Business Community, the National Employment Team, and accessing the Talent Acquisition Portal.
- ◆ The SRC will expand SRC subcommittees to foster collaboration to effectively address the Commission's VR initiatives.
- ◆ The SRC will serve as the Disability Issues subcommittee for the State Employment Training Commission (SETC).
- ◆ The SRC will assist the agency in amending the Administrative Code governing the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services (NJAC 10:95).



Did you know?

- ◆ The NJ State Library Talking Book and Braille Center offers an array of leisure reading and magazines in digital audio, Braille, and large print. Call 1-800-792-8322 or visit: www.njsltbbc.org
- ◆ Bookshare.org offers thousands of leisure reading and academic materials in text to speech and embossed Braille formats. www.bookshare.org
- ◆ Learning Ally is a major provider of academic books on all levels in DAISY-format CD or download. www.learningally.org
- ◆ NJ Transit's ADA paratransit program known as Access Link was established to provide public transportation to people with disabilities who are unable to use the local bus service according to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). You may ride with Access Link or any other NJ Transit mode for some or all of your transportation needs. Call 1-800-955-2321 or visit: www.njtransit.com

If you are blind or vision-impaired you may be entitled to:

- ◆ Newspaper reader services from NFB – NEWSLINE, sponsored by CBVI at 1-888-882-1629.
- ◆ County-based paratransit services that provide transportation to work, medical appointments, and other community locations. Call the NJ Transit Office of Special Services at 1-973-491-7385 to get the phone number for your county.

The Commission may be able to assist with:

- ◆ Vocational Rehabilitation to help you obtain employment.
- ◆ Rehabilitation teaching to help you perform activities of daily living.
- ◆ Orientation and Mobility instruction to assist you in traveling independently.
- ◆ Referral to community resources for housing, financial assistance, and other supported services.

Also...

The Commission will respond to your concerns, if you are dissatisfied with the services you receive. Call the Office of the Executive Director at 973-648-2325.

The Client Assistance Program can assist you in resolving any disputes regarding provision of VR services by calling: 1-800-922-7233.

SRC Meeting Dates – 2017

SRC meetings are held in compliance with Section 105 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and also are in compliance with the NJ Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6.

The public is invited to all meetings, which will start at 9:30 a.m. on the following dates:

- ◆ February 3
- ◆ April 21
- ◆ June 2
- ◆ October 6
- ◆ December 1

Service Centers and Facilities

For a complete description of CBVI services, please visit the web site at <http://www.cbvi.nj.gov>

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE:

153 Halsey Street, 6th Floor
P.O. Box 47017, Newark, NJ 07102
Phone: (973) 648-3333 Fax: (973) 648-7364

Daniel B. Frye, Executive Director
daniel.frye@dhs.state.nj.us

John C. Walsh, Chief of Program Administration
john.walsh@dhs.state.nj.us

Amanda Gerson, Coordinator of Vocational Rehabilitation
and Transition Services
amanda.gerson@dhs.state.nj.us

Eva Scott, Director of Blindness Education
eva.scott@dhs.state.nj.us

Elizabeth DeShields, Coordinator of Independent
Living Services
elizabeth.deshields@dhs.state.nj.us

NEWARK SERVICE CENTER (NSC):

153 Halsey Street, 5th Floor, Newark, NJ 07101
Phone: (973) 648-2111 Fax: (973) 648-7674
Manager: John Reiff
john.reiff@dhs.state.nj.us

FREEHOLD SERVICE CENTER (FSC):

100 Daniels Way, Freehold Township, NJ 07728
Phone: (732) 308-4001 Fax: (732) 308-4104
Managers: John Reiff & Jack Thompson
john.reiff@dhs.state.nj.us
jack.thompson@dhs.state.nj.us

CHERRY HILL SERVICE CENTER (CHSC):

2201 Rt. 38 East, Suite 600, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
Phone: (856) 482-3700 Fax: (856) 482-3770
Manager: Jack Thompson
jack.thompson@dhs.state.nj.us

HAMMONTON OFFICE (SRO):

40 N. Whitehorse Pike, Hammonton, NJ 08037-1894
Phone: (609)704-6000 Fax: (609) 704-7109

DEAF-BLIND SERVICES:

153 Halsey Street, 6th Floor, Newark, NJ 07102
Phone: (973) 648-7504 Fax: (973) 648-7674
Supervisor: Ed Sroczynski
edward.sroczynski@dhs.state.nj.us

JOSEPH KOHN TRAINING CENTER:

130 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903
Phone: (732) 937-6363 Fax: (732) 247-6628
Manager: Del Basha
delavar.basha@dhs.state.nj.us

BUSINESS ENTERPRISES – NEW JERSEY:

Joseph Kohn Training Center
130 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903
Phone: (732) 937-6363 Fax: (732) 247-6628
Manager: Deacon Truesdale
napoleon.truesdale@dhs.state.nj.us

GEORGE F. MEYER INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCE CENTER:

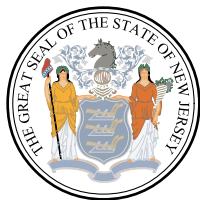
375 McCarter Highway, Newark, NJ 07114
Phone: (973) 648-2547
Manager: Christine Hinton
christine.hinton@dhs.state.nj.us

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. NJ DHS does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. The NJ DHS:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as: Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as: Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact Bonny E. Fraser, Esq., or if you believe that the NJ DHS has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance at: 222 South Warren Street, PO. Box 700, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0700; phone: 609-777-2026; fax: 609-633-9610; Bonny.Fraser@dhs.state.nj.us.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building Washington, D.C. 20201 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD) Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.



**New Jersey Department of Human Services
Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired**