

Agency 315

Department of Services for the Blind

Recommendation Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>2005-07 Expenditure Authority</b>	70.7	3,999	17,240	21,239
<b>Total Maintenance Level</b>	72.0	4,548	17,633	22,181
Difference	1.3	549	393	942
Percent Change from Current Biennium	1.8%	13.7%	2.3%	4.4%
<b>Performance Changes</b>				
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services		130	1,075	1,205
Children and Family Services	3.0	364		364
Revise Pension Gain-Sharing #		(6)	(22)	(28)
Nonrepresented Staff Health Benefit		3	7	10
WFSE Collective Bargaining Agreement		136	691	827
Nonrepresented Staff Salary Change		27	58	85
Self Insurance Premium		(132)		(132)
<b>Subtotal</b>	3.0	522	1,809	2,331
<b>Total Proposed Budget</b>	75.0	5,070	19,442	24,512
Difference	4.3	1,071	2,202	3,273
Percent Change from Current Biennium	6.1%	26.8%	12.8%	15.4%
<b>Total Proposed Budget by Activity</b>				
Department of Services for the Blind Administration	11.7	422	2,330	2,752
Blind Children and Family Program	5.0	674	20	694
Deaf-Blind Service Center		480		480
Blind Vendor Food Services Operations in State Buildings	2.9		1,703	1,703
Independent Living for the Blind	3.1	294	1,459	1,753
Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind			80	80
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind	52.4	2,913	12,825	15,738
Other Statewide Adjustments		287	1,025	1,312
<b>Total Proposed Budget</b>	75.0	5,070	19,442	24,512

PERFORMANCE LEVEL CHANGE DESCRIPTIONS

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services

The vocational rehabilitation and employment services program assists individuals who are blind or visually impaired in becoming competitively employed by developing their vocational and independent living skills. Additional state resources are provided in order to maximize estimated available federal revenue for these high demand services. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal).

## **HUMAN SERVICES - OTHER**

### **Children and Family Services**

The birth through age thirteen program works with nearly one-third of families served by the Department that have children in this age category who are blind or visually impaired. Additional funding will increase and improve outreach to assist parents in meeting the developmental needs of their children and to inform potential clients of available programs. Assistance at this early developmental stage improves the effectiveness of subsequent programs such as the transition from school to work program, as well as services and programs offered in later years by educational institutions and other state agencies.

### **Self Insurance Premium**

Funding for the Department's self insurance premium is decreased to reflect claims experience.

## **ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS**

### **Department of Services for the Blind Administration**

Staff provide administrative support and management for the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB). Their functions include budget and accounting, personnel, training, and information technology. Support for the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind is also included in this activity. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)

### **Blind Children and Family Program**

The Child and Family program provides consultation services to families of approximately 700 blind children (birth to age 14) and to the organizations that serve them, such as preschools and schools. The program provides support, advice, and information to families, teachers, and others about training, educational programs, and resources unique to the developmental needs of blind children. (General Fund- Federal, General Fund-Private/Local).

### **Deaf-Blind Service Center**

Funding designated for the Deaf-Blind Service Center, including funds transferred from the Department of Social and Health Services, are administered by DSB. The purpose of this center is to facilitate the effective access of deaf-blind individuals and their families to programs and services that meet their independent living and vocational rehabilitation needs. The center offers a single, central entry point in the greater Puget Sound area, allowing them to locate and receive a coordinated set of services, with emphasis on services that lead to competitive employment of deaf-blind individuals in integrated settings, and coordinated services for deaf-blind individuals with developmental disabilities.

### **Blind Vendor Food Services Operations in State Buildings**

Both federal and state law give first priority to qualified, legally blind persons for the opportunity to operate food facilities in publicly-owned buildings. The Vending Facility Program is a federal program funded entirely by revenues received from vending machines in state and federal buildings (\$900,000 annually). The Business Enterprise Program (BEP) trains and licenses legally blind people to manage snack/gift shops, espresso stands, and food service facilities in government buildings. BEP provides ongoing management assistance and essential food service equipment, and establishes new facilities as opportunities arise. (Business Enterprises Revolving Account-Nonappropriated)

### **Independent Living for the Blind**

The Independent Living program teaches recently blinded Washingtonians how to continue living in their homes after vision loss. Assigned to designated counties, contractors visit individuals' homes to provide low-cost devices and instruction in blindness techniques, including how to care for self and home, walking with the use of a cane, and how to continue to read and write. While 80,000 people are potentially eligible for these services, the program currently serves 1,700 individuals, most of whom are age 70 and over. (General Fund-State, General Fund-Federal)

### **Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind**

Telephonic Reading Services provides reading services to blind individuals through the use of phone lines. The service is operated by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in Baltimore, Maryland, and is mandated by RCW 74.18.045. (Business Enterprises Revolving Account-Nonappropriated)

**Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind**

The Vocational Rehabilitation program (VR) enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become competitively employed by developing their skills, independence, and self-confidence. Federal law mandates that VR provide comprehensive and individualized services to meet each participant's needs and to support each Individual Plan for Employment (IPE). Services include vocational counseling; assistive technology assessment and training; training of adaptive skills of blindness and adult basic skills; transition services; assistance with small business development; mental health counseling; transportation; assistance with job search, development, and placement; workplace accommodations; and employer follow-up.

**Other Statewide Adjustments**

This item reflects proposed compensation and other adjustments that were not allocated to individual agency activities. The agency will assign these costs to the proper activities after the budget is enacted.