

Minutes | 2nd Quarterly SCVR Meeting

April 20, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

Physical Location: Frankfort, KY – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
500 Mero Street, Room 136CE
Zoom Option Provided

Members Present:

Danielle Burton, Chairperson, Allison Johnson, Vice Chairperson; Johnny Collett; Cora McNabb; Theresa Thomas; Kelly Bass; Terrie Terlau; Michael Fein; Stephen Noble; Jaye Forsythe-Seward; Jade Finley.

Members Absent:

Jeffrey Edwards; Kellie Smith; April Thrasher; Jaye Forsythe-Seward; Jade Finley; Veronica Willis-Oldham.

Staff Present:

Susie Edwards; Holly Hendricks; Alan Gullett; Corey Marcum; Heidi Kesterson; Jonathan White; Kristen Beach; Tiffanie Caristo; Kathryn Spears; Anthony Sturgill; Rachel Prestenbach; Jennifer Withrow; Nanci Howard; Betty Whitaker; and Brooke McDaniel.

Guests Present:

Guests were present.

Welcome & Introductions

SCVR Chairperson Danielle Burton, gave the welcome and called the meeting to order. A roll call was taken by Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Administrative Specialist Senior, Brooke McDaniel. A quorum was established.

Executive Directors Report

Cora McNabb, Executive Director, provided the report. The regulatory process comment period has ended for both the ordinary and emergency regulations. OVR Staff worked with legal to finalize those responses. Cora reported that she and Susie Edwards, Deputy Executive Director, appeared before the Legislative Research Commission Committee on Regulations for the emergency regulations. Only one question was asked, related to financial participation. The emergency and ordinary regulations passed, but Cora and Susie will appear again in front of the Legislative Research Committee in May.

OVR received full funding on the federal level through the end of the fiscal year (July 2026), and received an additional \$7.5M in budget request for state funding. Cora reported that OVR is finalizing contracts for the upcoming year. OVR has received approval to fill a handful of vacant positions across the state. Cora also reported that frequently in meetings OVR is being discussed as “closed” and not serving anyone in any capacity. Cora requested that council members help correct the misinformation.

Cora reported the following data:

Case Status Update	
Referral Status	700
Application Status	537
Trial Work Status	3
Training Status	2000
Job Ready Status	3000
Ready to Work Status	1000
VR Supported Employment Services Status	264
Employed Status	787

While OVR is operating under an Order of Selection (OOS) at this time, the functions of OVR are still being utilized to those who were already receiving services before the OOS mandate.

Cora reported that OVR spent \$40M on case services in Federal Fiscal Year 2025. Cora reminded the council that it was important to have authorizations cancelled if it is noted that services are not going to occur. Currently in Federal Fiscal Year 2026, there are around \$5M outstanding authorizations, and close to \$9M have been paid. Around \$13M has been obligated so far for 2026.

Cora reported that OVR will begin serving from the waitlist May 1st. Cases have already been moved from OOS into accepted status. There are over 5,000 individuals on the waitlist.

Cora reported that the state plan modification had been posted for comments. Some comments were received, mostly related to financial participation. The state plan is due on April 30th, and is currently being worked on to later enter into the portal.

Cora reported that OVR will implement the new Case Management System (CMS) plan on July 13th. Staff will be involved in training during the weeks of May 20th, May 25th, and June 1st. This will cause staff response times to be slower as they attend comprehensive training. This will be an intensive process, migrating data into the new system, working through glitches, etc. Cora asked council members to help individuals understand and be patient during the change.

Cora announced that she would be retiring August 1st. This concluded the report.

Member Terrie Terlau asked “which categories will be opened? Will it be all categories or specific categories of severity of disability?”. Cora responded that “all categories will still remain closed. We will begin serving from the waitlist for Category 1, the most significant disabilities. Until everyone from Category 1 on the waitlist is served, we will not go to Category 2”. Member Theresa Thomas asked “you said there were 5,000 on the waitlist. Do you have the numbers for how many in each category and will all of those 5,000 have to be served before they open to the general public again?”. Cora responded “we do have them by priority category. We will serve Category 1 first, and everyone will have to come off the waitlist before we open up Category 2. The rest of the categories will remain closed until we serve off the waitlist there.”. Member Theresa Thomas followed up with a question of how many individuals were in each category. Cora

responded that Holly Hendricks could share that information during the Field Services report. Member Michael Fein asked an additional question “do you have a way to do a cost per consumer?”. Cora responded that OVR could come up with a cost. Michael asked “will OVR be able to fulfill requests by services that are automated without human resources, and if Category 4 could contain requests for services that could be automated, so not opening it up but you’ll be able to fulfill services by that methodology.”. Cora responded, “I don’t know the answer to that question at this time but that is an interesting concept.”. Additional discussion about what that would look like occurred. Cora noted that “the federal law dictates that we serve the most significantly disabled first”. Member Terrie Terlau asked again for clarification on how the waitlist and categories will work in regard to accepting new applications. Cora explained that yes, all individuals from the waitlist for each category will need to be served until new plans are written. During OOS, OVR has still been accepting new applications, but no new plans have been written since OOS was implemented.

Cora briefly reviewed dashboard data from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) with the council. Vice Chairperson Allison Johnson asked Cora to elaborate further on the data that shows Kentucky has one of the highest reported median wages. Cora explained that in RSA’s data report, data can fall into 1 of 4 quadrants. Kentucky ranks in the 1st quadrant for median wages, as well as the second highest state in the nation for wages overall.

Division Director’s Reports

The Division of Blind Services

Heidi Kesterson, Division Director of Blind Services, provided a report. From January to March, the McDowell Center served 42 individuals; 28 day students, 14 dorm students, 20 VR and 20 independent living. The McDowell Center has served 11 counties during this period, and one county in Indiana. Heidi reports that 16 students completed their training, and the McDowell Center provided an average of 665 service hours per month. Heidi reported referrals for VR and Independent Living (IL) have both increased. Staff participated in six different community engagement events during this quarter. Heidi reported preparations are underway for “McDowell U”, a three-week camp to be held in July for students planning to attend college in the fall.

For DeafBlind Services, Heidi reported that OVR's DeafBlind Coordinator partnered with Hellen Keller to provide training for 16 individuals to become support service providers. Many applications have been coming through for DeafBlind services that are being completed and referral documentation sorted through. Heidi reported the completion of an eight-month long training with all of the Rehab Counselors for the Deaf (RDC) and Rehab Counselors for the Blind (RCB). There are currently 90 individuals with DeafBlind listed as their primary disability.

For Independent Living/Older Individuals Who are Blind (IL/OIB), Heidi reported 470 total cases during the last quarter. 243 of those were new cases, and 164 carried over from the previous fiscal year. 98 different counties were served. Heidi reported the upcoming Kentucky Seniors Taking an Active Role (K-STAR) training that will take place at the McDowell Center, for five participants from five different counties to receive hands-on workshops and training focused on assistive technology and management skills.

For Orientation and Mobility (O&M), they are working on a video to release that will help with white cane stigma to share on the agency website and social media. The O&M Specialist will be participating in the Life Skills Symposium in Ashland and talking about guide dogs.

For Bioptic Driving, there are 40 individuals with open cases. 37 are VR and 3 are IL. Six of those are under the age of 18. From January to March, the program licensed 9 individuals and had 8 successful service completions.

This concluded the report.

Division of Field Services

Holly Hendricks, Division Director of Field Services, provided a report. Below are data comparisons between January 1st through March 31st, 2026, and the same time period in 2025:

	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2025
Active Cases	22,315	29,378
Potentially Eligible Cases Served	10,003	14,641
Average Cases Served by Caseload	163	225
Referrals	1,889	4,529

	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2026	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31, 2025
New Applications	1,293	2,884
New Accepted, in Order of Selection	1,002	0
Avg. Days from Accepted to Eligible	33	31
New IPE's Written	0	2,455
Avg. Days from Eligibility to IPE	N/A	36
Cases in Training Status	4,500	5,763
Cases in Job Ready Status	1,019	1,497
Cases in Employed Status	785	2,302
Credentials Earned	36	70
Measurable Skills Gains	836	919
Unsuccessful Closures	748	951
Successful Closures	616	1,564
Total Cases Served	24,985	34,828

Member Terrie Terlau posed the question “how does the comparison of successful and unsuccessful closures relate to Order of Selection?”. Holly responded, “we’re not writing new plans, so we don’t have new individuals getting services that are then resulting in outcomes, but we do have individuals who had open cases prior to closing categories whose services have continued...it’s primarily because we’re not writing new plans.”.

Member Michael Fein asked, “will you be showing metrics for the impacts on workload for the division?”. Holly responded back by pointing out the caseload numbers before OOS was implemented to now. Other discussion was had among the council regarding OOS and the implementation of the new CMS. Member Michael Fein suggested OVR devise a plan to respond to potential negative feedback to the decrease in numbers after such an increase in years prior.

Member Stephen Noble asked “is the reason why we are in OOS primarily due to the loss of emergency COVID funds that are no longer available, or just simply a drop in federal allocations to the VR program, or is it at the state level?”, to which Holly responded “it was an increase in people coming for services, and the cost of those services. Our funding never dropped. We never had a loss of funding. In a 6-month period we had around 9,000 referrals, which meant we would be spending more money.”.

Below is a breakdown of data regarding the OOS waitlist:

Order of Selection Waitlist	Total
Priority Category 1	4,916
Priority Category 2	316
Priority Category 3	304
Priority Category 4	19

Holly informed the council that OVR plans to release 84 cases off of the waitlist effective May 01, 2026. This number represents all of the individuals who are on the waitlist in Priority Category 1 and have an application date prior to January 01, 2025. OVR will continue to monitor expenses and move additional cases off of the waitlist as funding allows.

The data listed below depicts the number of cases that will be moved off of the waitlist in each district:

District	Number of Cases
Ashland	2
Bowling Green	7
Covington	6
Danville	5
East Blind	4
East Jefferson	3
Elizabethtown	1
Florence	1
Hazard	2
Lexington	4
Louisville	12
Owensboro	3
Paducah	13
Prestonsburg	10
Somerset	9
West Blind	2
Total	84

Member Jaye Forsythe-Seward asked, “is it 84 total for a reason?”. Holly responded “these 84 cases are the ones the agency has determined to remove from the waitlist given the projected expenditures that will result in obligation of funding in services for these individuals. These individuals have been on the waitlist since 2024, so we’ve started with them first.”. Jaye asked, “once all of the

2024 cases have been provided services will OVR look at the list again and choose more after that?”. Holly responded “yes, we’ll continue to monitor how many cases actually have plans written after removal from the waitlist and how much funding is actually being obligated.”.

Holly informed the council that staff will undergo training for the new CMS during May and June.

Holly presented data to the council specific to closed cases and the disability types represented in both successful and unsuccessful closures, along with the percentage of closures receiving supported employment within both types of closures. Informal discussion was had between the council and agency representatives regarding various parts of this data table.

This concluded the report.

The Kentucky Business Enterprises (KBE) Division

Corey Marcum, Division Director of KBE, provided the report. The Department of War recently granted a waiver to the Randolph Shepard Act for its Army Food Services installations. Corey noted that meant that OVR no longer has priority to those solicitations. Corey stated that this ruling was being challenged by the National Association of Wine Merchants, the National Federation for the Blind, and impacted vendors in Maryland district federal court system. The Department of War has issued two new solicitations, seeking conceptual designs and ideas piloted at locations outside of Kentucky. If the Army decides that these pilot programs provide a more positive impact and better outcomes than current designs, they would then be transferred into the two Kentucky locations, Fort Knox and Fort Campbell. Corey reports this would not be an ideal outcome for KBE. These new pilot programs could not only affect the vendor’s income, but would also affect the agency’s ability to draw down the set-aside dollars that these large, lucrative contracts bring into the state.

Corey reported that KBE has considered three RFP’s during the last quarter: University of Kentucky food service, the Boone Ridge Center in Bell County for food service, and the TARC Center in Louisville for vending. KBE passed on the UK and Bell County RFP’s after discovering the contracts varied greatly on needs and wants beyond just food service. The winner of the TARC Center in Louisville has not yet been announced. Corey is hopeful to announce acquiring this RFP at the next council meeting.

Corey reported a new licensed vendor in the Louisville area. KBE had two successful Performance Management Reviews (PMRs) within the Army at Fort Knox and Fort Campbell. Excellent service ratings are rare, and KBE continuously receives excellent service ratings for the performance at both Fort Knox and Fort Campbell.

This concluded the report.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC) Division

Alan Gullett, Division Director of CDPVTC, provided the report. The enrollment at CDPVTC sits at 80. Alan noted that OOS has caused quite an impact on enrollment numbers. There are only four scheduled CVE's and no training program entries scheduled through June. Between January and March of 2026, CDPVTC served 130 individuals and received 32 referrals from 55 counties. The completion rate is 88%. 24 credentials, 3 driver's licenses, and 17 driver's permits have been obtained. Alan also reported CDPVTC has started an online permit class, involving local high school students with currently 5 students participating. They are hopeful to expand the program in the future. There were 30 in-person tours conducted with a total of 220 participants. One virtual tour was given, which had 70 participants. Alan reports that CDPVTC has an active Preparing Adults for Competitive Employment (PACE) site in childcare, food service, barista, and logistics classes, working with local businesses for up to 96 hours. Alan reported that on-site training at the Ashland CVS has resumed. This concluded the report.

Division of Program Policy and Support

Jennifer Withrow, Program Policy and Quality Assurance (PPQA) Branch Manager, provided a report. The Case Quality Assurance staff reviewed 9,999 cases since January with a 93% compliance rate. 64% of those passed initial reviews, with 36 having additional cases pulled for additional review. The branch continues to focus on policy and procedure, forms, and accessibility on the website regarding adherence to guidelines set forth by CFR §35.200 Requirement for Web and Mobile Accessibility with a deadline of April 24, 2026, for OVR's webpages. Member Johnny Collett noted that the deadline had just been extended to April 24, 2027. Brooke McDaniel noted that there were questions around the work, such as who is enforcing it and what happens if the deadline is not met. Brooke also noted that the KATS network has been conducting training for other state agencies. This concluded the report.

Edward Monheimer, Grants Management and Systems Support Branch Manager, was not present. No report was provided.

Ron O'Hare, Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) Branch Manager, was not present. No report was provided.

Program or Other Reports

Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Beth Metzger provided an update. In Federal Fiscal year 2026, CAP received 18 calls for information and referrals. Beth reports there were 6 total cases. Of those 6, 3 have been closed. CAP has been increasing outreach efforts; creating information flyers to distribute with pertinent CAP information and utilizing social media engagement. Beth reported providing employment rights trainings at four therapeutic rehabilitation programs located in the Cumberland River Community Healthcare Center region (southeast Kentucky). CAP has attended the Center of Accessible Living Advocacy Summit and the Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE) Conference. Beth reported that CAP and Protection and Advocacy (P&A) submitted formal comments on both OVR's emergency and ordinary regulations. This concluded the report.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS)

Katie Wolf Whaley with the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute (UK HDI) provided the presentation. See the attached *Exhibit A* for the full report.

The Council took a brief intermission.

Business Meeting

Chairperson Danielle Burton called the meeting to order for business. OVR Administrative Specialist Senior, Brooke McDaniel, provided the roll call, and a quorum was established. Council members reviewed the minutes from the January 2026 quarterly meeting. Johnny Collett made a motion to accept the minutes. Allison Johnson seconded. No opposition or abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

SCVR Chairperson Danille Burton provided the report. The committee met at 9:00am before the Full Council meeting and a quorum was established. Committee members discussed quorum requirements and sub-committee memberships/attendance. This concluded the report.

Blind Services Committee

Committee Chair Terrie Terlau provided the report. The committee discussed quorum requirements and reviewed the status of the McDowell Center and O&M openings, and OVR's plans to seek personnel for these positions. The committee also discussed issues related to OOS. This concluded the report.

Consumer Services and Program Evaluation Committee

The chair was not present and other committee members did not have notes to present a report during the meeting. The below account was added using the committee meeting minutes:

Katie Wolf Whaley with UK HDI presented on the CSS. The committee approved the results and approved for a presentation to the full council. The committee discussed the appointment of a chair, and requested a chair be appointed by the Council Chairperson at the next meeting. Jeffery Edwards offered to represent the committee during reporting but did not desire to be chair of the committee. The committee discussed the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) and its completion to be presented to the full council in July.

Nominating and Bylaws Committee

Committee Chair Jaye Forsythe-Seward provided the report. The committee discussed council vacancies for business, industry, and labor and a vacancy for a representative for individuals with disabilities who have difficulty representing themselves. The committee presented two nominations. Jaye reported that Michael Fein's term as the SILC representative would be expiring soon, so a nomination for his replacement through the SILC will be sent through for Carissa Johnson with the Center for Accessible Living. Current council member Stephen Noble is seeking reappointment for a second term. Jaye reported upcoming

expirations for a representative of Parent Advocacy Groups and a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. The committee reviewed the proposed changes to the bylaws. This concluded the report.

Policy and Planning Committee

SCVR Vice Chairperson and Committee Chair Allison Johnson provided the report. The committee discussed the current funding landscape, the filing of regulations, the priority category definitions updates, and the expiration of Michael Fein's term as the SILC representative. The committee also discussed better means for scheduling meetings and are exploring a standing meeting option for each quarter. This concluded the report.

Public Awareness and Legislative Committee

Staff Support Anthony Sturgill provided a report, as the Committee Chair was not in attendance. The committee discussed the Employer Recognition Award that will be coming up for nominations in May. The committee briefly discussed OOS and how it impacted transition plans in school and after, along with the regulation updates. This concluded the report.

Old Business

Bylaws

SCVR Chairperson Danille Burton opened the floor for discussion surrounding the suggested bylaw changes presented at the January 2026 meeting. Member Stephen Noble voiced he found no concerns with the suggested changes after reviewing them closely. SCVR Vice Chairperson Allison Johnson requested the council take a vote to approve. Danielle opened the floor for a motion to approve. Allison made a motion to approve. Johnny Collett provided second. No opposition or abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Appointments

SCVR Chairperson Danielle Burton requested an update from OVR staff regarding the aforementioned appointments to vacant positions. OVR Administrative Specialist Senior Brooke McDaniel provided an update. The nominations mentioned by the Nominating and Bylaws Committee were distributed to the council via email, with a request to vote “yes” or “no” in response to the nomination being sent for appointment to Boards and Commissions. Brooke noted this was the first time an email had been sent to the council to approve the nominations be sent forward, but that it did provide the necessary feedback quicker than waiting for the following quarterly meeting to take place for the approval. This is beneficial due to the increased wait times to received appointments back from the Boards and Commissions Office.

3rd Quarterly Meeting Date

Chairperson Danielle Burton proposed the 3rd Quarterly Meeting date be held on July 20, 2026. There were no oppositions, so the date was established.

Guest Discussion

At this time the floor was opened for guests present to make public comment. No discussions were brought forth.

Open Forum

At this time the floor was opened for guests present to make public comment. No comments or discussions took place.

Motion to Adjourn:

SCVR Chairperson Daniell Burton opened the floor for a motion to adjourn. Theresa Thomas made a motion. Terrie Terlau seconded. No opposition or abstentions. Motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: July 20, 2026