

Minutes | 4th Quarterly SCVR Meeting

October 20, 2025

Hybrid Meeting

Physical Location: Frankfort, KY – Kentucky Transportation Cabinet,
Room C118

Zoom Option Provided

Members Present:

Danielle Burton, Chairperson, Allison Johnson, Vice Chairperson; Johnny Collett; Cora McNabb; Jeffrey Edwards; Kelly Bass; Kellie Smith; Terrie Terlau; Veronica Willis-Oldham; Michael Fein.

Members Absent:

Jade Finley.

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; Chad Hunt; and Brooke McDaniel.

Guests Present:

Many 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 (OVR) Administrative Specialist Senior, Brooke McDaniel. A quorum was established.

Executive Directors Report

Cora McNabb, Executive Director, and Susie Edwards, Deputy Executive Director, provided the report.

Due to Order of Selection (OOS), all categories remain closed. OVR has been questioned on when we will open priority categories or serve first from the waitlist. Cora informed the board that OVR will serve all persons from the waitlist before any categories open.

Current priorities for OVR include finalizing the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) closeout. OVR is also waiting on a Continuing Resolution (CR) or budget from the federal government to know what funds are available and ensuring there is a state match for the funds received. OVR is working closely with fiscal staff to monitor the current budget. Currently, OVR is utilizing state money for operations. Once a CR is voted on and approved, then funding can be dispensed. Cora reported this may not be an immediate dispense of funds once approved, but it does mean that RSA can at least begin the process of releasing funds to OVR. OVR is also working with fiscal staff on a formula that will allow for individuals to move from the waitlist once OOS has been lifted. Cora reassured the council that OVR continues to move in the same direction as always; continuing to evaluate its fiscal situation while still providing services to individuals with plans in place prior to the implementation of OOS. When it is reasonable and fiscally responsible, OVR will begin serving from the waitlist.

Legal staff are working diligently to finalize updates to the regulations. The plan is to file them through the emergency regulation process. This will allow for immediate enactment of administrative rules in the new regulations. Along with other items, this will update the priority category definitions (presented at the July meeting) and address the concerns of duplicative language identified by the Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) and discussed during the public hearings held by OVR earlier in the year. This would also include an update of the agency Policy and Procedure manual that is incorporated by reference. Once complete, the submission of the emergency regulation, along with the updated manual, will be communicated through the OVR website. Council member Johnny Collett asked if RSA had approved the draft revisions. Cora responded yes. Council member Terrie Terlau asked if this would allow OVR to come out of OOS when financially ready or will RSA need to provide approval? Cora responded yes, once funds are available OVR can begin serving from the waitlist without seeking additional RSA approval.

Cora reported OVR is reviewing the financial participation (i.e. Cost Sharing) process and formulas utilized during the process. Numbers have been updated to include the new calculations for the 2025 poverty level and new participation rates based on inflation. Additionally, hearing aids and Assistive Technology (AT) Devices will no longer have an excluded amount applied. AT defined as auxiliary aids for public use will be provided as required by regulation. Council member Terrie Terlau asked if a fact sheet highlighting cost sharing could be provided to distribute to legislators to help show the positive impact. Cora responded there is currently some information within the state plan modifications that can be distributed to the council.

A brief update on the current government shutdown and the impact on the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) was given.

Susie Edwards provided an update on the State Plan. Modifications to the State Plan are due in March 2026. OVR is currently working on the modification that will include changes to the section for the State Rehabilitation Council and Order of Selection (OOS). OVR will present these modifications to the Council for approval at the next quarterly meeting prior to the March submission deadline.

Regarding Council vacancies, Susie informed the Council that OVR has submitted applications for the vacancies that have received interest. Assistance from the Council was requested to fill the remaining vacancies. There are currently seven vacancies: One Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) (an application has been submitted), one individual with difficulty representing oneself, and four business and industry (one application has been submitted).

To close, Susie provided an update on Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). OVR recently received further guidance from RSA for Pre-ETS that further clarified whether or not a student exiting school in the transition period can be counted as a student or a youth. If a student exits high school and has not yet enrolled in a post-secondary school, they are no longer considered a student with a disability unless that training goal is on the individual plan for employment (IPE).

This concluded the report.

Division Director's Reports

The Division of Blind Services

Susie Edwards, Deputy Executive Director of OVR, provided the report. OVR has extended the preliminary Bioptic Training for more statewide coverage. There are currently 275 bioptic drivers reported in Kentucky. Recent changes in drivers licensing and the required vision exams seem to have filtered more requests for bioptic services, though there are no official stats to prove this. OVR has updated the policy on provision of Bioptic Services through Self-Pay to remove the barriers to those who want to pursue based on OVR being required by existing regulations to conduct specific evaluations as part of compliance for participants. There has been an increase in program interest from providers before any newly created outreach videos are released, which has boosted excitement and hope for even more success for the program in the future.

Susie reported the Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists have provided services to 49 individuals during the FFY. There are some on the waitlist, but this is generally due to inability of the individual being able to meet with the O&M Specialist. O&M Specialists have continued to observe stigma surrounding white cane usage and suggests that OVR should consider doing outreach around this topic. OVR has noted the suggestion and will be taken into consideration as an outreach educational project. This concluded her report.

Heidi Kesterson, Facility Administrator, provided an update for the Charles W. McDowell Rehabilitation Center. From July 1st to September 30th the McDowell Center has served/completed/participated in the following:

- 41 total consumers
 - 5 Independent Living
 - 36 Vocational Rehabilitation
 - 21 Male consumers
 - 20 Female consumers
 - 17 day students/consumers
 - 21 dorm students/consumers
 - 17 different counties served of the 41 total
- Average age served: 44 years
- 2 Kentucky Business Enterprises (KBE) evaluations completed

- 2 Bioptic students in the dorm
- 23 students completed training
- Average of 898 instructional hours provided per month (968 including Recreation)
- Students participated in 15 different community instruction activities
- Job Readiness and Career Exploration staff collaborated with 15 different employers for mock interviews, job shadowing and career exploration
- 8 community engagement activities – Epilepsy Foundation Training, SCVR, UK Optometrist Tour, KAFNC, AT Student Consult, and the Pre-ETS Summit

Heidi reported that the McDowell Center held a Senior Workshop on October 12th through the 15th and also held their annual White Cane Day event on October 15th. This concluded her report.

Division of Field Services

Holly Hendricks, Division Director of Field Services, provided the report. Below are data from the metrics report reflecting calendar year January 01, 2025, through September 30, 2025:

Category	2025	2024
Total Cases Served	42,041	43,518
Potentially Eligible Cases Served	16,526	16,798
Active Cases (*incl. Potentially Elig.)	27,524	29,276
Average Case by Caseload	271	275
Referrals	9,519	14,601
New Applications	7,135	9,643
Average Days from App. to Eligible	36	30
Average Days from Eligible to IPE	32	33
Credentials Earned	1,064	1,411
Measurable Skills Gains	2,651	2,234
Unsuccessful Closures	2,667	2,719
Successful Closures	4,422	3,741

Holly noted the decline in numbers from 2024 to 2025 is directly due to Order of Selection (OOS).

Holly also provided a Personnel Overview for the Division:

- 297 positions total
 - 136 Counselors
 - 88 Administrative Specialists
 - 21 Managers
 - 15 Employer Services Job Placement Specialists
 - 5 Regional Program Managers
- 37 Vacancies
 - 28 Assistants
 - 5 Counselors (Ashland, Bowling Green, Florence, East Jefferson, Covington)
 - 1 Adaptive Equipment Specialist
 - 1 Administrator – Assistive Technology
 - 1 Interpreter
 - 1 Regional Program Manager

Holly provided an update on OOS. On May 14, 2025, OVR closed all priority categories. Since that time, no new Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs) have been implemented. Individuals who had IPEs prior to that date have continued to receive services. Holly reported new applicants have continued to receive assessment services as needed in order for Counselors to determine their eligibility for the program. Since the implementation of *cost-sharing and closing of all priority categories, Holly reported there have been seven appeal requests, mostly dealing with consumer *cost-sharing and none regarding the assignment of priority categories. At this time, there are roughly 3,452 individuals on the waitlist, and the number changes daily. Below is the waitlist priority category breakdown:

Order of Selection Waitlist	Total
Priority Category 1	2,699
Priority Category 2	747
Priority Category 3	91
Priority Category 4	5

Holly also provided data on current open cases:

Status	Total
Application	538
Trial Work	3
IPE Implemented	2,843
Training	4,249
Job Ready	1,452
Employed	1,688
Total Active Cases	10,773

There are 2,510 less open cases than reported in July. This concluded the report.

**Cost-sharing is also referenced as Financial Participation in the ED report.*

The Kentucky Business Enterprises (KBE) Division

Corey Marcum, Kentucky Blind Enterprises Division Director, provided the report. The shut down is negatively affecting blind vendors; less staff in federal buildings means less customers and some buildings have been fully closed. There is also uncertainty of future funding for providing services to Ft. Knox through KBE. Corey reported there are currently two bids, one for the Louisville Dispatch Center (awarded to Marissa Chambers) and one for Franklin County Schools which currently has no interest. Planning continues for the Youth Entrepreneurship Summit funded by Pre-ETS. This continues to be a wide area of interest among students and educators alike. Corey reported concerns over the recent Department of War standing regarding the Randolph Sheppard Act. The Secretary of War has requested an exemption from the Randolph Sheppard Act from the Department of Education. The Department of Education has requested more information from the Department of War. There are no further updates at this time. This concluded his report.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC) Division

Alan Gullett, Division Director of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC), provided the report. The Perkins Center currently has 113 enrollments as of October 20th. Eleven are scheduled for a program in the next three weeks. Alan reported they have served 328 consumers through September 2025 and

received 234 referrals. This is down roughly 25% from the same timeframe in 2024. In total, CDPVTC has served consumers from 80 out of 120 Kentucky counties in 2025; an additional three counties from the same timeframe in 2024. As of September, 93 tours of CDPVTC have been conducted. 79 tours were in-person with 331 participants, and 14 were virtual with 114 participants. Alan reported that the fork truck training building plans have been halted at this time. This program continues to be one of the most popular and successful at CDPVTC. Alan reports having a designated structure to train in year-round is crucial, given the deterioration of the current training site. The estimated cost with the design and architectural work completed is \$625K. Alan reports that the Barista Training Program is now considered a “stand alone” program, consisting of 400 hours, the ServSafe certification, and hands-on experience in the CDPVTC’s shop “Carl’s Cup”. Councilmember Terrie Terlau asked Alan if there were any construction updates for the renovations being reported on at previous meetings. Alan reported that the Assisted Living Unit is now complete and fully accessible. A new fire panel is currently being installed and waiting for assessment and testing. This concluded his report.

Division of Program Policy and Support

Cora McNabb, Executive Director of OVR, provided a brief report. This division was established in July. There is currently no division director. Cora reported this was only a structural reorganization and no new staff were hired. The Community Rehabilitation Program Provider Branch was moved into this Division, along with the Program Policy and Quality Assurance Branch and the Grants Management and Systems Support Branch. Cora informed the Council that work on the new Case Management System (CMS) is still ongoing. Councilmember Michael Fein asked how reporting will be handled with the loss of federal staff? Cora responded the reports could be moved under the Department of Labor, and that these branch operations are still important even if it does come back to the State. There are no plans to change current staffing. This concluded her report.

Program or Other Reports

Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Elizabeth (Beth) Metzger provided the report. There are currently 47 information and referral requests – this is an increase from 2024. This resulted in 19 cases being opened; 18 of which were closed prior to September 30th. With funding uncertainty regarding the government shutdown, CAP tried to close as many

cases as possible. Beth gave a short presentation on data from fiscal years 2016-2020 in comparison to fiscal years 2021-2025.

Category	FY'16 – FY '20	FY'21 – FY'25
Information & Referrals*	331 (151 “other info provided”)	135
Cases*	96	69
Number of Trainings	6	47
Number of Training Participants	180	1,197
Training Participants	Professionals*	Individuals & Professionals

Beth also reported CAP would be highlighting National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) throughout October. This concluded her report.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Update

Dr. Mykal Leslie and Mikaela Roark provided an update on progress and data gathering efforts regarding the CSNA being conducted by UK Human Development Institute (HDI). Survey information is currently being shared across the state via Facebook links, emails, and physical flyers being delivered to consumers, stakeholders, and partners with OVR. UK-HDI also provided the Council with digital copies of the flyers to share with the public.

The Council took a brief intermission.

Business Meeting

SCVR Vice Chairperson, Allison Johnson, called the meeting to order for business. Chairperson Danielle Burton was not available at the start of the business portion of the meeting. Administrative Specialist Senior, Brooke McDaniel, provided the roll call, and a quorum was established. Councilmembers reviewed the minutes from the July 2025 quarterly meeting. Michael Fein made a motion to accept the

minutes. Terrie Terlau seconded. No oppositions or abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

SCVR Chairperson Danielle Burton provided the report. The Executive Committee met before the full council meeting, however, there were no old or new business to discuss, so the committee convened quickly. This concluded her report.

Nominating and Bylaws Committee

OVR Executive Director Cora McNabb provided the report. Cora is currently the only member of this committee due to expired terms and requested for assistance from the board to appoint members to this committee. This concluded her report.

Blind Services Committee

SCVR Chairperson Danielle Burton provided the report. The July meeting minutes were reviewed and approved. Staff Support Chad Hunt informed the committee of a change in his position and would no longer be staff support in the future. The committee discussed order of selection and agency staffing. Appointing members to the committee was also discussed. This concluded her report.

Consumer Services and Program Evaluation Committee

There were no reports to provide from this committee as they did not meet this quarter due to not reaching a quorum and due to a recent change in staff support.

Policy and Planning Committee

Committee Chair Allison Johnson provided the report. The committee reviewed and accepted the meeting minutes from July. Old business discussion included the Pre-ETS Summit, OVR intake process and Order of Selection updates. New business discussion topics included IEP, 504, and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation service model, the new Case Management System (CMS) and intake process, and the ongoing update requested from OVR regarding the Department of Education and OVR's partnership to develop a guidance document for IEPs and IPEs. Lastly, the committee discussed the current funding landscape at the federal and state levels and the impacts on OVR. Allison reported that the

committee will be sharing a request with the Executive Committee that OVR share their State Government Service Delivery Model (SGSDM) and the ask for updates regarding the KDE-OVR collaboration project. This concluded her report.

Public Awareness and Legislative Committee

Kellie Smith provided the report. The committee reviewed and accepted the July meeting minutes. There was no old business to discuss. The committee discussed a variety of legislative updates and topics, OVR funding, open positions and filling jobs. No motions or actions were taken. The committee discussed the award nominations and awards schedule with OVR Admin Spec. Senior Brooke McDaniel. In the past, the Arthur Campbell Jr. Advocacy Award was to be advertised in July and presented at the October quarterly meeting, and the Employer Recognition Award was to be advertised in March and presented at the July quarterly meeting. The committee voted to return to this timeline moving forward. The committee also voted on a theme for the Annual Report: OVR-No Longer the Best Kept Secret (and we have the stats to prove it). Lastly, the committee discussed expiring terms and committee participation. This concluded her report.

Old Business

The Council had no old business to discuss.

New Business:

Policy and Planning Committee Chair Allison Johnson presented to the full Council the committee's interest in having OVR present on any service delivery models utilized by OVR at a future meeting. Member Terrie Terlau made a motion to formally request this presentation from OVR. Member Michael Fein provided a second. No oppositions or abstentions. Motion carried unanimously.

Open Forum:

At this time the floor was opened for guests present to make public comment. A guest raised questions regarding vacant Council positions and how to fill those vacancies. Discussion was had among the guest, OVR, and the Council on how to achieve filling the vacancies.

Motion to Adjourn:

SCVR Chairperson Daniell Burton opened the floor for a motion to adjourn. Kellie Smith made a motion. Jade Finley seconded. No oppositions or abstentions. Motion to adjourn carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Date: January 26, 2026