



**OKLAHOMA**  
**Rehabilitation Services**

# ***Commission for Rehabilitation Services***



**Commissioners**  
**Janet Barresi, Wanda Felty,**  
**Lindsay Hanna, Kelsey Lee, Lance Robertson,**  
**Noel Tyler, and Kevin Wallace**

Regular Meeting

There is no video conferencing for this meeting

Disability Determination Services  
9801 N. Kelley Avenue, West Entrance  
Oklahoma City, OK 73131

August 12, 2026

Empowering Oklahomans with Disabilities



## **OKLAHOMA Rehabilitation Services**

### **Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services**

**Regular Commission Meeting  
August 12, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.**

Disability Determination Services  
9801 N. Kelley Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73131

This meeting is being conducted in accordance with the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act, 25 O.S. §§ 301–314.

Public Comment: To sign up to speak, please sign up on arrival prior to the start of the meeting. Public comments will be limited to three minutes per person.

Sign Language Interpreters are provided for public accessibility. There is no virtual attendance option for this meeting.

#### **AGENDA**

**1. Welcome, Roll Call and Determination of Quorum**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

**2. Statement of Compliance with the Open Meeting Act**

Kathleen Arrieta, Commission Assistant

**3. Public Comments**

Public Audience - Under Oklahoma Open Meeting Laws, the Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services cannot respond to or discuss any matter not on today's agenda.

**4. Interim Director's Report**

Sterling Zearley, Interim Director

- a) Recognitions
- b) Report includes meetings and updates on legislative engagement, State Plan, Administrative Rules, State Audits, and Process Improvement.
- c) Possible discussion

Pg.7

7301 N.W. Expressway, Suite 200, Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
o: 405-951-3400 | f: 405 951-3529 | Oklahoma.gov | okdrs.gov

Interim Executive Director Sterling Zearley  
Commissioners Janet C. Barresi, DDS, Wanda Felty, Lindsay Hanna,  
Kelsey Lee, Lance Robertson, Noel Tyler and Kevin Wallace

## ACTION ITEMS

### 5. Acting Chief Financial Officer's Report

Paula Nelson, Financial Budget Manager, Financial Services Division

- a) FY 2026 Financial Status Report as of June 30, 2026 Pg. 14
- b) FY 2027 Expenditure and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Budgetary Limits Pg. 21
  - Discussion and possible action
- c) FY 2027 Budget Pg. 22
- d) FY 2028 Budget Request Pg. 24

### 6. Proposed Increase to Staff Incentive Payments for Successful Social Security Administration (SSA) SSI/SSDI Reimbursement Cases

Pg.35

Mark Kinnison, VR Division Administrator

- a) Discussion and possible action.

### 7. Approval of the Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services 2027 Meeting Schedule

Pg. 42

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Discussion and possible action to modify and/or approve the 2027 Meeting Schedule.

### 8. Approval of the June 10, 2026 Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

Pg.44

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Discussion and possible action to modify and/or approve the minutes.

### 9. Acceptance of Donations to the Oklahoma School for Deaf (OSD)

Pg.50

Dr. Heather Laine, Superintendent

- a) Donation Report for June and July 2026
- b) Discussion and possible action to accept the donations.

### 10. Acceptance of Donations to the Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB)

Pg.53

Brent Pearce, Superintendent

- a) Donation Report for June and July 2026
- b) Discussion and possible action to accept the donations.

### 11. Acceptance of Donations to the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (OLBPH)

Pg.56

Tracy Brigham, Division Administrator, SBVI

- a) Donation Reports for June and July 2026
- b) Discussion and possible action to accept the donations.

## REPORTS

### **12. Human Resources Report**

Pg.59

LaChelle Westfahl, HR Director

- a) Personnel Activity report
- b) Introduction of new staff
- c) Possible discussion

### **13. Priority Group and Portal Update**

Mark Kinnison, Division Administrator

- a) Possible discussion

### **14. Communications Report**

Pg.71

Mark Beutler, Director of Communications

- a) Report includes events, projects and media/publicity.
- b) Possible discussion

### **15. Oklahoma ABLE Tech Report**

Pg.73

Allyson Robinson, Director of Accessibility Programs

- a) Report includes an overview of the Annual Report.
- b) Possible discussion

### **16. Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC)**

Pg.87

Carolina Colclasure, Program Manager

- a) Report includes an ORC overview, Council events and meetings, and Committee updates.
- b) Possible discussion

### **17. Statewide Independent Living Council Report**

Pg.93

Sidna Madden-Trimnell, Executive Director

- a) Report includes events and engagement, and Independent Living updates.
- b) Possible discussion

### **18. New Business**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Any matter not known about, or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of posting (24 hours prior to the meeting) as authorized by 25 O.S. § 311.
- b) Possible discussion and action.

**19. Proposed Executive Session to Discuss the Appointment of the Executive Director**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Discussion and possible vote to enter Executive Session pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1) for the purpose of discussing the appointment of the DRS Executive Director.
- b) Hiring Committee Report
- c) Vote to reconvene into Regular Session.
- d) Discussion and possible action on matters discussed in Executive Session.

**20. Possible Appointment of Executive Director**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Discussion and possible action

**21. Election of Officers to the Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Discussion and possible action.

**22. Adjournment**

Dr. Janet Barresi, Vice Chair

- a) Possible action

**Next Commission meeting: Wednesday, September 9, 2026**

**Note: “Possible action” by the Commission includes, but is not limited to, approval, authorization, adoption, rejection, denial, amendment, taking no action, or tabling the item for disposition at a later date or time.**



# Interim Executive Director's Report

**Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services**  
**INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**  
**August 12, 2026**

**Meetings and Agency Engagement for June and July**

- Oklahoma School for the Deaf visit and welcome activities for teachers and school leadership.
- Oklahoma School for the Deaf follow-up visit.
- Oklahoma Conference on Economic Development.
- Monthly Workforce Development Cabinet Meeting.
- Executive Leadership Retreat.
- Deaf Blind Awareness Day.
- Meetings with agency leadership, division administrators, and external partners regarding agency priorities and operations.

**Legislative Engagement**

- Met with Senate Committee Chair Paul Rosino and House Committee Chair Daniel Pae to discuss agency priorities, services for Oklahomans with disabilities, workforce development, and opportunities for continued legislative collaboration.
- As the agency continues strengthening relationships with state leaders, DRS is developing a more strategic approach to legislative engagement by emphasizing measurable outcomes that demonstrate the value of rehabilitation services. Discussions included the important role DRS plays in helping individuals with disabilities transition into competitive employment, strengthening Oklahoma's workforce while reducing long-term reliance on public assistance programs. The agency's new Legislative Liaison will play a key role in coordinating these efforts and will receive clear expectations regarding legislative outreach and communication.

**Oklahoma Combined State Plan – Approved**

- The Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC) is currently completing final modifications to the Combined State Plan. Once those updates have been finalized and the official version is published, a link to the completed plan will be provided to the Commissioners.
- The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program submitted the WIOA Combined State Plan Modification on April 30, 2026, covering Program Years 2026-2027 (July 1, 2026-June 30, 2028).
- The Oklahoma Combined State Plan was approved on July 17, 2026. When the plan is fully published, a link to the complete plan will be provided to the Commissioners.
- The modification aligns with statewide workforce development priorities and reflects continued collaboration with WIOA core partners to strengthen service delivery, improve coordination across the workforce system, and expand employment opportunities for Oklahomans with disabilities.

## Administrative Rules

- The 2026 amended Administrative Rules were approved by the Oklahoma Legislature through HJR 1093 on May 20, 2026. The amended rules became effective July 27, 2026, providing updated regulatory guidance for agency operations and programs.
- Planning and development for the 2027 Administrative Rules is underway.

## Governor's Transition Guide

DRS submitted a Governor's Transition Guide on July 29, 2026, in support of the upcoming gubernatorial transition. The briefing materials provided to OMES offer a comprehensive overview of DRS agency structure and operations.

## State Office Relocation

The DRS State Office relocation has been successfully completed. The new address is:

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services  
7301 Northwest Expressway, Suite 200  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132

Staff have been asked to update agency records and notify vendors, partners, and stakeholders of the new mailing address.

## Return-to-Work

- The new State Office provides sufficient workspace to accommodate all State Office employees.
- In accordance with the Governor's Return-to-Work directive, all State Office employees returned to in-office work on Monday, July 27, 2026.
- Executive Division coordinated communications and transition activities to support a smooth return while maintaining continuity of agency operations.

## Deferred Maintenance

- Agency leadership is preparing a comprehensive three-to-five-year deferred maintenance plan to identify and prioritize infrastructure needs across DRS facilities. Division leadership has been asked to develop a comprehensive inventory of maintenance needs, including electrical infrastructure, parking lot improvements, building systems, accessibility upgrades, and other critical facility improvements.
- **A preliminary list of deferred maintenance projects has been included in the Commission meeting packet for the Commission's review and informational purposes.** This list will continue to be refined as the agency develops long-range budget priorities and evaluates future capital improvement needs.
- Current priorities include evaluating a renovation of the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and the potential relocation of staff currently housed at Shepherd Mall. This long-range planning effort will support future budget development, improve utilization of agency-owned facilities, and reduce long-term operating costs.



## **DRS Purpose Conversations**

During the Executive Leadership Retreat, ten administrators and program managers presented how their respective divisions contribute to serving DRS clients and fulfilling the agency's mission. These presentations provided Executive Leadership with a broader understanding of agency operations while reinforcing the importance of collaboration across divisions.

One particularly meaningful presentation included Dr. Heather Laine sharing her personal experience as a former Vocational Rehabilitation client who received DRS services while attending college. Her story served as a powerful reminder of the life-changing impact of DRS, and agency leadership is exploring opportunities for her to share that experience during a future agency meeting.

## **Sterling Conversations**

Planning is underway for Sterling Conversations, a monthly Zoom webinar that will provide employees with regular agency updates and opportunities to hear directly from the Executive Director and agency leadership. The webinar is planned for the first Friday of each month and will feature interviews with agency staff, Commissioners, and organizational leaders. The newly elected Commission Chair will be invited to participate in an upcoming session. Craig Glasscock will continue leading implementation of this initiative.

## **Organizational Improvement**

The Executive Leadership Retreat generated productive discussions regarding opportunities to strengthen agency operations. Leadership identified several areas for continued improvement, including financial processes, hiring practices, internal communication, and operational efficiencies.

Beginning with future Executive Leadership meetings, each division will identify three to five systemic issues affecting its area to encourage collaborative problem-solving and continuous organizational improvement.

To strengthen budget planning, Division Administrators will also participate in State Budget meetings, as appropriate, providing subject matter expertise and increasing collaboration throughout the budget development process.

## **Process Improvement (PI)**

The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is required to submit several reports to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), the federal agency responsible for overseeing the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment programs. These reports demonstrate compliance with federal requirements, monitor program performance, and support continued eligibility for federal funding.

- No federal reports were due during the month of July.
- Staff are currently preparing the Program Year (PY) 2025, Quarter 4 RSA-911 report, which is due to RSA on August 15, 2026. RSA-911 is the primary federal case service report and contains participant demographics, services provided, expenditures, and

employment outcomes used by RSA to evaluate program performance and compliance.

- DRS continues to utilize the QA Advisor data validation tool to identify and correct RSA-911 reporting errors prior to submission. This quality assurance process helps improve data accuracy and reduce federal reporting exceptions.
- Staff are preparing to import the June 2026 University of Oklahoma Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) data into the case management system. This activity ensures services provided through contracted Pre-ETS programs are accurately documented and included in federal reporting and performance outcomes.
- Process Improvement staff continue to monitor federal reporting timelines and data quality to ensure DRS remains in compliance with RSA reporting requirements and maintains the integrity of agency performance data.

### **Commission Communication and Reporting**

Agency leadership will continue reviewing how information is provided to the Commission, including the agenda format, the amount of detail included, and whether Commissioners would prefer additional or different information in future meeting materials.

Additional emphasis will be placed on providing Commissioners with timely information regarding agency initiatives, legislative priorities, employee accomplishments, and opportunities to participate in agency events. The agency also plans to begin using professional electronic invitations for events where Commissioner participation is encouraged, strengthening communication and helping Commissioners serve as informed advocates for DRS throughout Oklahoma.

**Commission Vice Chair Janet C. Barresi** has established an **Organizational Committee** consisting of Commissioners **Lindsay Hanna, Noel Tyler, and Lance Robertson**. The committee will review the organizational structure of DRS and provide recommendations, as appropriate, to support effective governance, organizational effectiveness, and the continued advancement of the agency's mission.

### **Audit Update**

The agency has completed the audit covering **Fiscal Years 2022 through 2024**. As part of the agency's ongoing commitment to accountability and sound financial stewardship, DRS will be requesting an audit for **Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026**. The results of that audit will be shared with the Commission upon completion, and the appropriate agency representative will present the findings.

### **Executive Leadership Updates**

Special thanks to Danielle Durkee, Chief Financial Officer with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, for assisting DRS during the transition while the agency recruits a permanent Chief Financial Officer. Her partnership has ensured continuity of financial operations.

The Chief Financial Officer position and the Legislative Liaison position have been posted. Jake Zuker has been appointed Interim Director of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) and will be evaluated.

The agency also extends its sincere appreciation to the employees whose dedication and countless hours of work made the successful relocation of the DRS State Office to the Marathon Oil Building possible. Special recognition is extended to **Dusty Price, Cameron Weatherspoon, Jacob Muse, Daniel Lee**, and the Information Technology team—**Lucas Primm** and **Matthew Freeze**—for their exceptional efforts in planning, coordinating, and completing the move. Their professionalism, teamwork, and commitment ensured a smooth transition while maintaining uninterrupted agency operations.

### **In Memoriam**

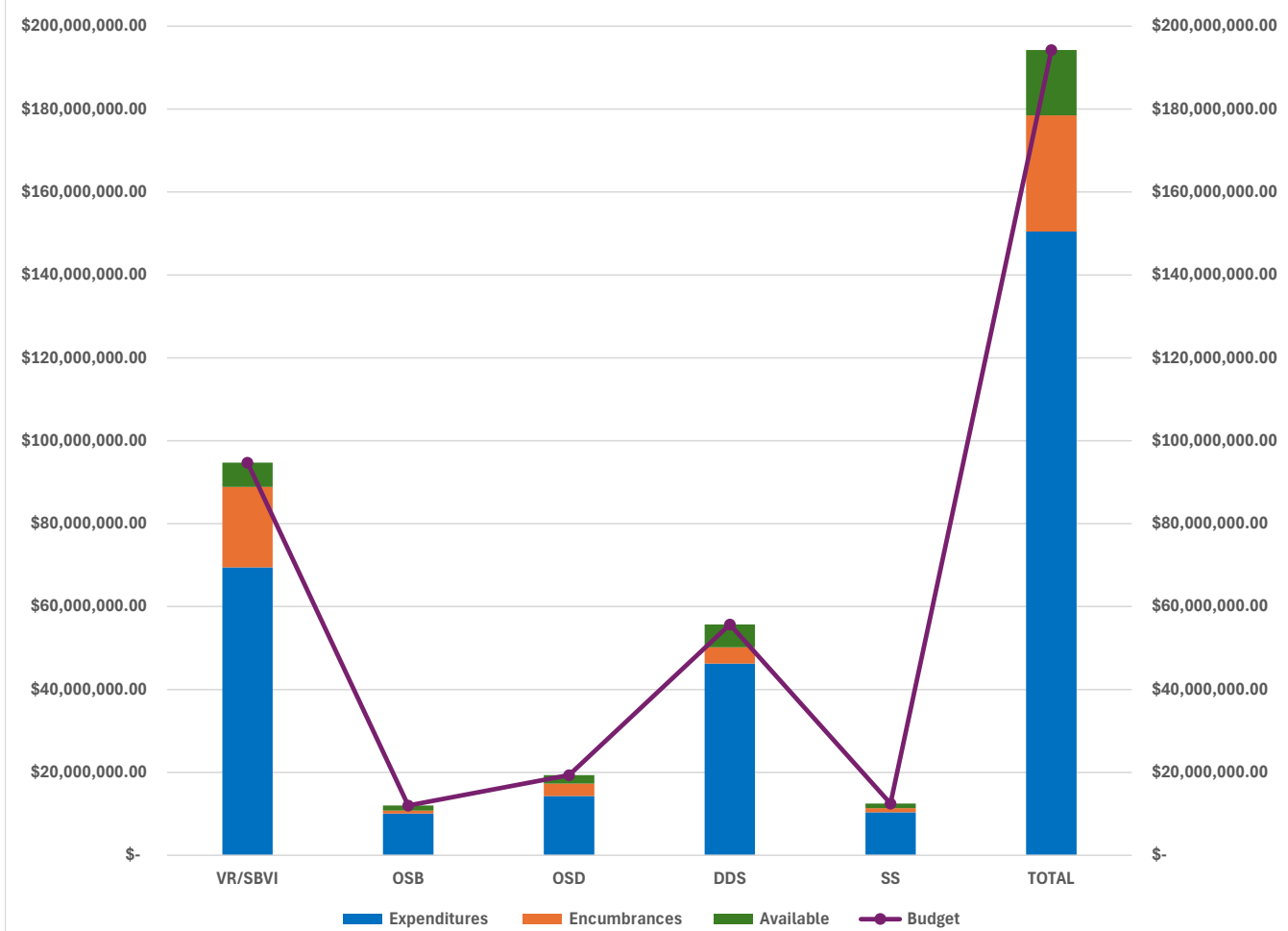
The agency extends its condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Mr. Warren Colbert, longtime Maintenance Engineer at Landmark Towers. Mr. Colbert faithfully served Landmark Towers for many years and was a familiar and valued presence to DRS staff. We are grateful for his years of service and extend our deepest sympathies to his loved ones.

***Respectfully submitted by***  
***Sterling Zearley, Interim Executive Director***



# Acting Chief Financial Officer's Report

### DRS FY26 Financial Status Report as of June 30, 2026



| Division         | Budget    |                       | Expenditures |                       | Encumbrances |                      | Available               |
|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| VR/SBVI          | \$        | 94,718,755.00         | \$           | 69,480,751.14         | \$           | 19,358,868.82        | \$ 5,879,135.04         |
| OSB              | \$        | 12,005,295.00         | \$           | 10,081,524.28         | \$           | 703,592.65           | \$ 1,220,178.07         |
| OSD              | \$        | 19,345,434.00         | \$           | 14,273,204.65         | \$           | 3,021,086.74         | \$ 2,051,142.61         |
| DDS              | \$        | 55,696,915.00         | \$           | 46,257,512.79         | \$           | 3,931,265.84         | \$ 5,508,136.37         |
| Support Services | \$        | 12,477,672.00         | \$           | 10,380,625.27         | \$           | 976,575.33           | \$ 1,120,471.40         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>\$</b> | <b>194,244,071.00</b> | <b>\$</b>    | <b>150,473,618.13</b> | <b>\$</b>    | <b>27,991,389.38</b> | <b>\$ 15,779,063.49</b> |

## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| Agency Summary               |                       |                   |                       |              |                      |              |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
|                              | Budget                | % of Total Budget | Expenditures          | % Expended   | Encumbrances         | % Used       |
| Personnel                    | 95,000,151.00         | 48.9%             | 84,794,173.40         | 89.3%        | 182,374.33           | 89.4%        |
| Travel                       | 1,824,046.00          | 0.9%              | 1,594,952.48          | 87.4%        | 5,520.35             | 87.7%        |
| General Operating            | 27,616,346.00         | 14.2%             | 18,212,695.72         | 65.9%        | 7,798,345.38         | 94.2%        |
| Office Furniture & Equipment | 3,502,257.00          | 1.8%              | 1,902,343.91          | 54.3%        | 730,460.04           | 75.2%        |
| Client / General Assistance  | 56,029,813.00         | 28.8%             | 34,623,985.99         | 61.8%        | 18,348,697.91        | 94.5%        |
| Indirect Cost                | 10,271,458.00         | 5.3%              | 9,345,466.63          | 91.0%        | 925,991.37           | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>194,244,071.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>150,473,618.13</b> | <b>77.5%</b> | <b>27,991,389.38</b> | <b>91.9%</b> |

## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| All Programs                                                             |                      |                   |                      |              |                      |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired |                      |                   |                      |              |                      |              |
|                                                                          | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances         | % Used       |
| Personnel                                                                | 30,795,704.00        | 32.5%             | 27,437,239.11        | 89.1%        | 101,891.75           | 89.4%        |
| Travel                                                                   | 1,280,300.00         | 1.4%              | 1,208,057.00         | 94.4%        | 250.00               | 94.4%        |
| General Operating                                                        | 10,027,238.00        | 10.6%             | 7,503,078.29         | 74.8%        | 3,191,870.34         | 106.7%       |
| Office Furniture & Equipment                                             | 1,672,200.00         | 1.8%              | 999,269.87           | 59.8%        | 315,050.77           | 78.6%        |
| Client / General Assistance                                              | 46,730,813.00        | 49.3%             | 28,547,806.00        | 61.1%        | 15,322,606.83        | 93.9%        |
| Indirect Cost                                                            | 4,212,500.00         | 4.4%              | 3,785,300.87         | 89.9%        | 427,199.13           | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                                             | <b>94,718,755.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>69,480,751.14</b> | <b>73.4%</b> | <b>19,358,868.82</b> | <b>93.8%</b> |
| Vocational Rehabilitation Grant                                          |                      |                   |                      |              |                      |              |
|                                                                          | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances         | % Used       |
| Personnel                                                                | 27,947,251.00        | 31.2%             | 24,934,465.27        | 89.2%        | 39,686.33            | 89.4%        |
| Travel                                                                   | 1,245,300.00         | 1.4%              | 1,183,886.26         | 95.1%        | 250.00               | 95.1%        |
| General Operating                                                        | 9,298,214.00         | 10.4%             | 6,885,255.20         | 74.0%        | 2,988,218.68         | 106.2%       |
| Office Furniture & Equipment                                             | 1,417,330.00         | 1.6%              | 821,527.55           | 58.0%        | 315,050.77           | 80.2%        |
| Client / General Assistance                                              | 45,944,667.00        | 51.2%             | 28,137,086.91        | 61.2%        | 15,063,721.78        | 94.0%        |
| Indirect Cost                                                            | 3,858,836.00         | 4.3%              | 3,475,840.46         | 90.1%        | 382,995.54           | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                                             | <b>89,711,598.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>65,438,061.65</b> | <b>72.9%</b> | <b>18,789,923.10</b> | <b>93.9%</b> |

## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| All Programs<br>Oklahoma School for the Blind |                      |                   |                      |              |                   |              |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
|                                               | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances      | % Used       |
| Personnel                                     | 7,565,178.00         | 63.0%             | 7,228,907.26         | 95.6%        | 8,489.72          | 95.7%        |
| Travel                                        | 111,200.00           | 0.9%              | 75,206.80            | 67.6%        | 420.00            | 68.0%        |
| General Operating                             | 2,805,179.00         | 23.4%             | 1,674,193.26         | 59.7%        | 587,414.81        | 80.6%        |
| Office Furniture & Equipment                  | 568,968.00           | 4.7%              | 218,188.60           | 38.3%        | 43,579.08         | 46.0%        |
| Client / General Assistance                   | 42,000.00            | 0.3%              | 35,947.40            | 85.6%        | 0.00              | 85.6%        |
| Indirect Cost                                 | 912,770.00           | 7.6%              | 849,080.96           | 93.0%        | 63,689.04         | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>12,005,295.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>10,081,524.28</b> | <b>84.0%</b> | <b>703,592.65</b> | <b>89.8%</b> |



## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| All Programs<br>Oklahoma School for the Deaf |                      |                   |                      |              |                     |              |
|----------------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
|                                              | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances        | % Used       |
| Personnel                                    | 9,578,719.00         | 49.5%             | 8,247,610.76         | 86.1%        | 12,973.02           | 86.2%        |
| Travel                                       | 248,540.00           | 1.3%              | 194,030.87           | 78.1%        | 450.00              | 78.2%        |
| General Operating                            | 6,893,030.00         | 35.6%             | 4,153,473.92         | 60.3%        | 2,236,827.43        | 92.7%        |
| Office Furniture & Equipment                 | 816,457.00           | 4.2%              | 463,556.62           | 56.8%        | 370,523.54          | 102.2%       |
| Client / General Assistance                  | 672,000.00           | 3.5%              | 175,528.73           | 26.1%        | 302,628.50          | 71.2%        |
| Indirect Cost                                | 1,136,688.00         | 5.9%              | 1,039,003.75         | 91.4%        | 97,684.25           | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>19,345,434.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>14,273,204.65</b> | <b>73.8%</b> | <b>3,021,086.74</b> | <b>89.4%</b> |

## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| All Programs                      |                      |                   |                      |              |                     |              |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Disability Determination Services |                      |                   |                      |              |                     |              |
|                                   | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances        | % Used       |
| Personnel                         | 38,154,742.00        | 68.5%             | 33,588,797.19        | 88.0%        | 27,594.28           | 88.1%        |
| Travel                            | 52,001.00            | 0.1%              | 16,044.01            | 30.9%        | 3,000.35            | 36.6%        |
| General Operating                 | 4,523,017.00         | 8.1%              | 2,921,259.27         | 64.6%        | 840,732.68          | 83.2%        |
| Office Furniture & Equipment      | 381,164.00           | 0.7%              | 205,359.85           | 53.9%        | 0.00                | 53.9%        |
| Client / General Assistance       | 8,585,000.00         | 15.4%             | 5,861,537.42         | 68.3%        | 2,723,462.58        | 100.0%       |
| Indirect Cost                     | 4,000,991.00         | 7.2%              | 3,664,515.05         | 91.6%        | 336,475.95          | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>55,696,915.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>46,257,512.79</b> | <b>83.1%</b> | <b>3,931,265.84</b> | <b>90.1%</b> |

## Department of Rehabilitation Services Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

| All Programs<br>DRS Support Services |                      |                   |                      |              |                   |              |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
|                                      | Budget               | % of Total Budget | Expenditures         | % Expended   | Encumbrances      | % Used       |
| Personnel                            | 8,905,808.00         | 71.4%             | 8,291,619.08         | 93.1%        | 31,425.56         | 93.5%        |
| Travel                               | 132,005.00           | 1.1%              | 101,613.80           | 77.0%        | 1,400.00          | 78.0%        |
| General Operating                    | 3,367,882.00         | 27.0%             | 1,960,690.98         | 58.2%        | 941,500.12        | 86.2%        |
| Office Furniture & Equipment         | 63,468.00            | 0.5%              | 15,968.97            | 25.2%        | 1,306.65          | 27.2%        |
| Client / General Assistance          | 0.00                 | 0.0%              | 3,166.44             | 0.0%         | 0.00              | 0.0%         |
| Indirect Cost                        | 8,509.00             | 0.1%              | 7,566.00             | 88.9%        | 943.00            | 100.0%       |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>12,477,672.00</b> | <b>100.0%</b>     | <b>10,380,625.27</b> | <b>83.2%</b> | <b>976,575.33</b> | <b>91.0%</b> |

# Department of Rehabilitation Services

## Financial Status Report FY 26

As of June 30, 2026

### Personnel

---

Salary Expense

Insurance Premium -Health-Life, etc

FICA-Retirement Contributions

### Travel

---

Travel - Agency Direct

Travel - Reimbursements

### General Operating

---

AFP Encumbrances

Bond Indebtness and Expenses

Buildings-Purchase, Construction and Renovation

General Operating

Inter/Intre Agency Payment for Personal Services

Maintenance & Repair

Miscellaneous Administration Fee

Professional Services

Production, Safety, Security

Refunds, Indemnities, Restitution

Rent Expense

Scholarships, Tuition and Other Incentive-Type Payments

Shop Expense

Specialized Supplies & Materials

### Office Furniture & Equipment

---

Library Equipment & Resources

Office Furniture & Equipment

### Client / General Assistance

---

Social Service and Assistance Payments

### Indirect Cost

---

# Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services

## Executive Summary

### ISSUE:

Staff requests approval of the FY 2027 Expenditure Limits and FTE Limit

### BACKGROUND:

The FY 2027 Budget Request was approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services and submitted to the Office of Management and Enterprise Services. The Governor of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma Legislature considered this request for appropriations. DRS's FY 2027 state appropriations decreased (\$723,146), or (1.71%) from FY 2026 appropriations. Total DRS State Appropriations for FY 2027 are \$41,679,805.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the following:

#### FY 2027 Division Expenditure Limits

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| DVR/DSBVI        | \$103,000,000     |
| OSB              | 13,000,000        |
| OSD              | 23,000,000        |
| DDS              | 52,000,000        |
| Support Services | <u>13,000,000</u> |
| DRS Total        | \$204,000,000     |

#### FTE Limit

The legislature did not impose a full-time equivalent (FTE) limit for the agency. However, the FTE limit for FY 2027 shall be set at 1000.0 FTE.

### BUDGET IMPACT:

Allow spending levels up to limits stated above.

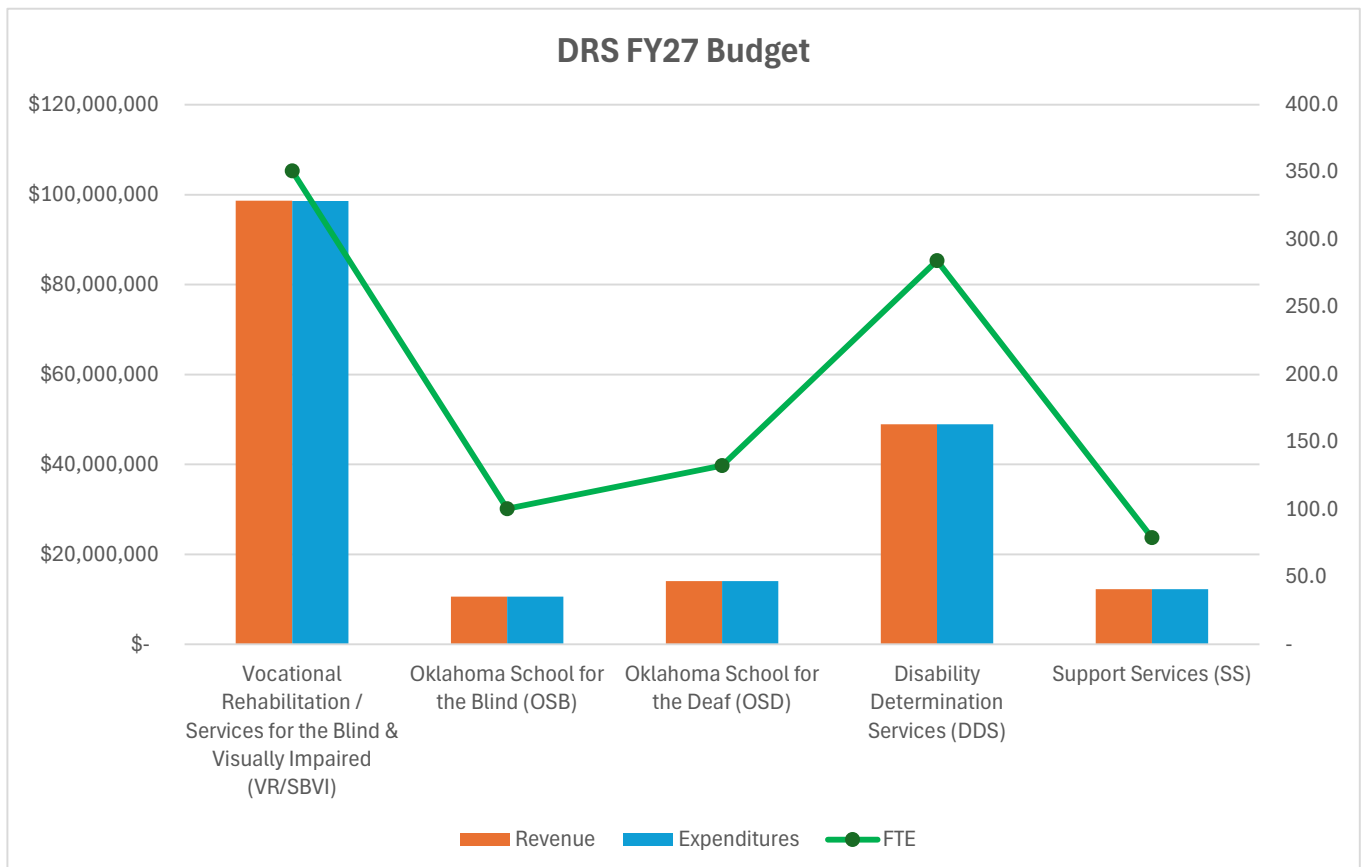
### Budget Impact Reviewed by:

Danielle Durkee  
Danielle Durkee  
Interim Chief Financial Officer

Date: August 3, 2026

**Department of Rehabilitation Services  
FY27 Budget**

| Division                                                                         | Revenue               | Expenditures          | FTE          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Vocational Rehabilitation / Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired (VR/SBVI) | \$ 98,631,942         | \$ 98,593,100         | 351.0        |
| Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB)                                              | \$ 10,613,284         | \$ 10,613,284         | 100.5        |
| Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD)                                               | \$ 14,079,748         | \$ 14,079,748         | 132.5        |
| Disability Determination Services (DDS)                                          | \$ 48,900,005         | \$ 48,900,005         | 284.4        |
| Support Services (SS)                                                            | \$ 12,249,503         | \$ 12,249,503         | 79.0         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                     | <b>\$ 184,474,482</b> | <b>\$ 184,435,640</b> | <b>947.4</b> |



| <b>VR/SBVI</b>                 | <b>Revenue</b>       | <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>FTE</b>   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Independent Living             | \$ 386,734           | \$ 386,734           | -            |
| Older Blind                    | \$ 1,062,305         | \$ 1,062,305         | 9.5          |
| FCC Deaf Blind Equipment       | \$ 131,198           | \$ 131,198           | 0.1          |
| Interpreter Certification      | \$ 20,000            | \$ 20,000            | -            |
| Basic Support                  | \$ 94,425,205        | \$ 94,386,363        | 323.4        |
| Blind Vendor Benefits          | \$ 235,000           | \$ 235,000           | -            |
| Oklahoma Library for the Blind | \$ 2,280,479         | \$ 2,280,479         | 18.0         |
| Able Tech                      | \$ 91,021            | \$ 91,021            | -            |
| <b>Total VR/SBVI</b>           | <b>\$ 98,631,942</b> | <b>\$ 98,593,100</b> | <b>351.0</b> |

| <b>OSB</b>                    | <b>Revenue</b>       | <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>FTE</b>   |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Oklahoma School for the Blind | 10,109,677.00        | 10,109,677.00        | 100.50       |
| OSB Capital                   | 503,607.00           | 503,607.00           | -            |
| <b>Total OSB</b>              | <b>\$ 10,613,284</b> | <b>\$ 10,613,284</b> | <b>100.5</b> |

| <b>OSD</b>                      | <b>Revenue</b>       | <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>FTE</b>   |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Oklahoma School for the Deaf    | \$ 13,171,141        | \$ 13,171,141        | 131.5        |
| Telecommunications for the Deaf | \$ 405,000           | \$ 405,000           | 1.0          |
| OSD Capital                     | \$ 503,607           | \$ 503,607           | -            |
| <b>Total OSD</b>                | <b>\$ 14,079,748</b> | <b>\$ 14,079,748</b> | <b>132.5</b> |

| <b>DDS</b>                        | <b>Revenue</b>       | <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>FTE</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Disability Determination Services | \$ 40,769,304        | \$ 40,769,304        | 222.1        |
| DDS Extended Service Team         | \$ 8,130,701         | \$ 8,130,701         | 62.3         |
| <b>Total DDS</b>                  | <b>\$ 48,900,005</b> | <b>\$ 48,900,005</b> | <b>284.4</b> |

| <b>Support Services</b>                 | <b>Revenue</b>       | <b>Expenditures</b>  | <b>FTE</b>  |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Commission                              | \$ 100,619           | \$ 100,619           | 1.0         |
| Executive, Management Services, Finance | \$ 11,622,907        | \$ 11,622,907        | 74.0        |
| Credit Card Participation               | \$ 4,000             | \$ 4,000             | -           |
| SS State Funds                          | \$ 521,977           | \$ 521,977           | 4.0         |
| <b>Total Support Services</b>           | <b>\$ 12,249,503</b> | <b>\$ 12,249,503</b> | <b>79.0</b> |

## OKLAHOMA COMMISSION FOR REHABILITATION SERVICES

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**ISSUE:**

Review of the FY 2028 Budget Request

**BACKGROUND:**

The DRS Interim Chief Financial Officer has reviewed funding change requests and justifications for the FY 2028 Budget Request.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff requests Commission review and recommendations for the FY 2028 Budget Request

**BUDGET IMPACT:****FY 2028 Operations Funding Changes**

| Description                 | State               | Federal             | Total               | FTE        |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------|
| DVR/DSBVI                   | \$2,750,000         | \$9,237,089         | \$11,987,089        | 0.0        |
| State Appropriated Programs | \$790,000           | \$0                 | \$790,000           | 0.0        |
| OSB and OSD                 | \$1,500,000         | \$0                 | \$1,500,000         | 0.0        |
| Support Services            | \$158,500           | \$0                 | \$158,500           | 0.0        |
| Support Services            | \$211,000           | \$0                 | \$211,000           | 0.0        |
| SBVI                        | \$1,300,000         | \$0                 | \$1,300,000         | 0.0        |
| OSB                         | \$3,000,000         | \$0                 | \$3,000,000         | 0.0        |
| DRS                         | \$3,143,402         | \$1,068,981         | \$4,212,383         | 0.0        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>\$12,852,902</b> | <b>\$10,306,070</b> | <b>\$23,158,972</b> | <b>0.0</b> |



### ***FY 2028 Operations Funding Change Requests***

|                              |                                                                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 1                                                                            |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | Vocational Rehabilitation and Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired   |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                                                          |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$2,750,000                                                                  |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations                                     |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Maintain Necessary State Match Funding Associated with Title I Federal Funds |

Increased funding maximizes services to Oklahomans with disabilities, enhancing their opportunity to become self-sufficient through employment and becoming independent in their homes and communities. This means more Oklahomans can terminate their dependence on state and federal programs and move toward becoming taxpayers. This funding increase will positively impact the stability of the Oklahoma economy. The ratio of funding is \$4 federal dollars to every \$1 dollar of state matching funds. Funding this request will allow DRS to fully match all federal funds available and keeps DRS in a position to put disabled Oklahomans on a path to independence through employment.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Grant is a formula grant which adjusts for annual economic growth. This request is an incremental request of \$2,750,000 above current appropriations in order to fully meet the federal allocation for the FFY-28 grant. This will allow Oklahoma to match an additional \$9.2 million dollars in federal grant proceeds to continue serving existing clients and expand services to better reach underserved populations and will allow DRS to fund all obligations associated with the Vocational Rehabilitation Federal Grant awarded to the State of Oklahoma.

|                              |                                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 2                                        |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | State Appropriated Programs              |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                      |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$790,000                                |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Annual Maintenance Request               |

This maintenance funding request is based on the 3.2% Consumer Price Index as of June 2026 and keeps operating budgets economically current by allowing for incremental adjustments to funding that would not otherwise be available. Programs include Older Blind, Oklahoma Library for the Blind, AIM Center, and Able Tech in the VR/SBVI divisions; Oklahoma School for the Blind; Oklahoma School for the Deaf; Commission and Support Services State Funds. The Older Blind program includes \$684k in annual appropriations above the required 10% match for the federal grant. All other programs are state funded.

The Older Blind program provides independent living skills training, orientation and mobility training, and other services for individuals aged 55 and older who are blind or severely visually impaired.

OLBPH provides books, periodicals, textbooks, and other instructional materials in recorded, large print and Braille formats for library patrons and students with visual impairments, as well as specialized educational aids to students with blindness or other disabilities in Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade through the Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Center.

The Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB) in Muskogee and Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD) in Sulphur provide effective education options for children with all levels of blindness or visual impairments and deaf or hard-of-hearing impairments. The schools do not receive funding from local ad valorem taxes or the State Department of Education funding formula.

Funding for the State Assistive Technology Program (Able Tech) improves access to assistive technology for individuals with disabilities of all ages.

State funds for Support Services provides necessary funding for payroll and operating costs associated with the Commission, Communications, and Legislative Liaison.

|                              |                                                                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 3                                                              |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | Oklahoma School for the Blind and Oklahoma School for the Deaf |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                                            |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$1,500,000                                                    |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations                       |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Restore Capital Funds                                          |

The Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB) in Muskogee, and Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD) in Sulphur provide effective education options for children with all levels of disabilities. The goals of the schools are to provide an environment that maximizes the learning opportunities for children with disabilities, certify their learning in accordance with State standards, and provide a solid foundation of knowledge that the students can lean on well into adulthood. Both schools serve as a resource center to complement the spectrum of services provided within common education for the State of Oklahoma. Communication and literacy are the two most crucial components for learning. OSB and OSD provide an education tailored to the needs of the students. Both schools are state appropriated and do not receive funding from local ad valorem taxes or the State Department of Education funding formula.

OSB and OSD have the same budgetary challenges as all other local school districts, but with the additional challenge of operating a residential facility. Appropriations for capital projects at the schools was \$2,507,214 in SFY-26; however, this amount was reduced by \$1.5 million dollars for SFY-27. Restoring \$1.5 million dollars would allow both schools to continue addressing urgent maintenance needs across their respective campuses.

|                              |                                                |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 4                                              |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | DRS Support Services                           |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                            |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$158,500                                      |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations       |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Increase in Operating to Offset Increased Rent |

DRS State Office moved its office location in July 2026 due to termination of the lease agreement by Landmark Apartments (previously Landmark Towers). Cost of the new space increased from 22,409 sq.ft. at \$12.50 per sq.ft., to 25,811 sq.ft. at \$16.50 per sq.ft. in SFY-27 and is scheduled to increase annually by 3% per the lease agreement, resulting in an increased cost of \$158,545 in SFY-28 compared to the previous rent at Landmark Apartments. At the same time, DRS is unable to increase its indirect cost recovery due to a three-year fixed rate of 10.1% which began in SFY-26 and continues through SFY-28. Requests to renegotiate the rate with U.S. Department of Education have so far been unsuccessful.

|                              |                                                  |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 5                                                |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | DRS Support Services                             |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                              |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$211,000                                        |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations         |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Increase in Operating to Offset Relocation Costs |

DRS State Office moved its office location in July 2026 due to termination of the lease agreement by Landmark Apartments (previously Landmark Towers). Relocation costs were approximately \$211,000, including moving expenses and IT retrofit at the new office. At the same time, DRS is unable to increase its indirect cost recovery due to a three-year fixed rate of 10.1% which began in SFY-26 and continues through SFY-28. Requests to renegotiate the rate with U.S. Department of Education have so far been unsuccessful. This one-time request of \$211,000 is to offset increased operating costs in Support Services due to the move and the inability to adjust the indirect cost rate.

|                              |                                              |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 6                                            |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                          |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$1,300,000                                  |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations     |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Oklahoma Library for the Blind Renovation    |

This request is to renovate space at Oklahoma Library for the Blind. The goal is to make room for the SBVI office currently housed at Shepherd Mall which would allow that lease to terminate. The renovated library space would include offices for staff currently located at Shepherd Mall, as well as an assistive technology lab, mock apartment and kitchen area for training visually impaired clients. Renovation would include removing large electronically controlled shelving and adding a door in one of the library walls for an egress to meet fire marshal guidelines.

|                              |                                          |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 7                                        |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | Oklahoma School for the Blind            |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                      |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$3,000,000                              |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | School Cafeteria Construction            |

This request is for construction of a new school cafeteria. The existing cafeteria is built over original sewer and plumbing lines dating back to 1904. These systems are outdated and failing. Floor drains do not function properly, and maintenance has made repeated repairs to the piping. The water lines and grease traps are aging and require full replacement. The current facility also presents functional and safety challenges. Ceilings are low, lighting is inadequate, and multiple load-bearing columns throughout the dining area create obstacles, making it difficult for visually impaired students to navigate safely and independently. A new cafeteria would address these infrastructure and accessibility concerns. The existing cafeteria could be repurposed by converting the space into additional classrooms, which would expand the capacity for the school.

|                              |                                            |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Agency Priority:</b>      | 8                                          |
| <b>Program Description:</b>  | Department of Rehabilitation Services      |
| <b>Requested FTE:</b>        | 0.0                                        |
| <b>State Appropriations:</b> | \$3,143,402                                |
| <b>Funding Description:</b>  | Funding Request for State Appropriations   |
| <b>Purpose:</b>              | Salary Increase of 7% Across All Divisions |

DRS is requesting funding for a 7% increase in salaries across all divisions. This increase is needed to remain competitive among other state agencies and to bring salaries closer to market rates. The increased salaries will improve employee retention, morale, and will help in attracting professional and competent workers in all job codes and geographical areas across the state. DRS has locations across the state making recruiting in some areas more difficult. This increase would help expand the capacity around the state.



## Department of Rehabilitation Services

| FY 2028 Budget Request       |                             |                                                                              |                            |                 |               |               |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Agency Priority              | Program                     | Funding Purpose                                                              | State Appropriated Funding | Federal Funding | Total Funding | Requested FTE |
| 1                            | DVR / DSBVI                 | Maintain necessary state match funding associated with Title I federal funds | \$2,750,000                | \$9,237,089     | \$11,987,089  | 0.0           |
| 2                            | State Appropriated Programs | Annual maintenance request                                                   | \$790,000                  | \$0             | \$790,000     | 0.0           |
| 3                            | OSB and OSD                 | Restore capital funds                                                        | \$1,500,000                | \$0             | \$1,500,000   | 0.0           |
| 4                            | Support Services            | Increase in operating to offset increased rent                               | \$158,500                  | \$0             | \$158,500     | 0.0           |
| 5                            | Support Services            | Increase in operating to offset relocation costs                             | \$211,000                  | \$0             | \$211,000     | 0.0           |
| 6                            | SBVI                        | Oklahoma Library for the Blind renovation                                    | \$1,300,000                | \$0             | \$1,300,000   | 0.0           |
| 7                            | OSB                         | School cafeteria construction                                                | \$3,000,000                | \$0             | \$3,000,000   | 0.0           |
| 8                            | DRS                         | Salary increase of 7% across all divisions                                   | \$3,143,402                | \$1,068,981     | \$4,212,383   | 0.0           |
| Total FY 2028 Budget Request |                             |                                                                              | \$12,852,902               | \$10,306,070    | \$23,158,972  | \$0           |



# Staff Incentive Payments

**Proposed increases to staff incentive payments for successful Social Security Administration (SSA) SSI/SSDI reimbursement cases.**

*Mark Kinnison, VR Division Administrator*

*Jason Price, Program Manager II, SSA VR Programs Office*

**Request**

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services is requesting an increase in incentive payments for VR counselors and designated support staff for SSI/SSDI beneficiary cases that result in the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) receiving 100% reimbursement from the Social Security Administration (SSA) under its Vocational Rehabilitation Cost Reimbursement Program.

1. **Increase the Vocational Rehabilitation counselor incentive from \$500 to \$800** for successful SSI/SSDI cases resulting in 100% reimbursement from SSA.
2. **Increase the rehabilitation technician/support staff incentive from \$100 to \$300** for successful SSI/SSDI cases resulting in 100% reimbursement from SSA.

We want to bring the counselor SSI/SSDI reimbursement incentive up to \$800, and the technician SSI/SSDI reimbursement incentive up to \$300. Going by inflation the original \$500 counselor incentive would now need to be \$794 to have the same purchasing power. As for the technician, \$169 would restore the original purchasing power of the \$100 incentive, but we would like to increase it to \$300 as a tangible acknowledgment of the technician's vital role in successful SSA reimbursements.

This will be easily absorbable as we will go from \$0.05 of each reimbursement dollar put toward incentives to \$0.09 of each reimbursement dollar flowing that direction.

There was a meeting between the previous CFO and select DVR leadership where these suggested numbers were pushed forward for consideration. Please see attached charts for additional info and research.

The incentive amounts are set by DRS internal policy (DRS:10-1-1) rather than by statute or administrative rule and may be revised upon Commission adoption.

**Maintain a financially sustainable incentive structure:**

Currently, approximately \$0.05 of every reimbursement dollar received from SSA is directed toward these incentives. Under the proposed increases, approximately \$0.09 of every reimbursement dollar would be directed toward incentives.

## **Staff incentive payments, con't**

### **Background**

In 2007, the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) worked with State lawmakers to establish incentive payments for Vocational Rehabilitation counselors and

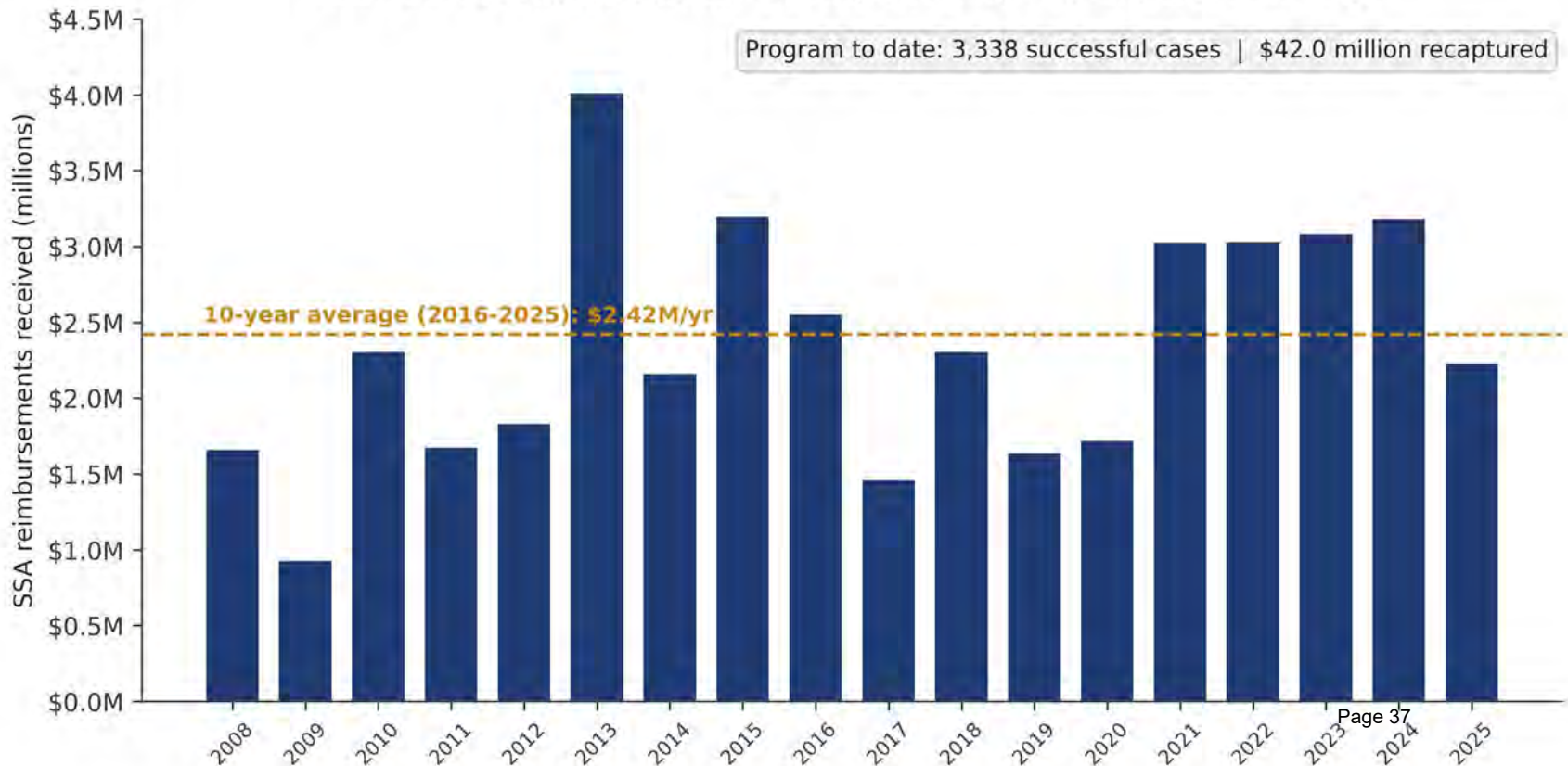
designated support staff who successfully help individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) obtain and maintain competitive employment.

Under the legislation, counselors receive a \$500 incentive and designated support staff receive a \$100 incentive when a beneficiary achieves at least nine months of employment at the Social Security Administration's Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) level. Once this milestone is met, the Social Security Administration reimburses DRS for 100% of the eligible case service costs.

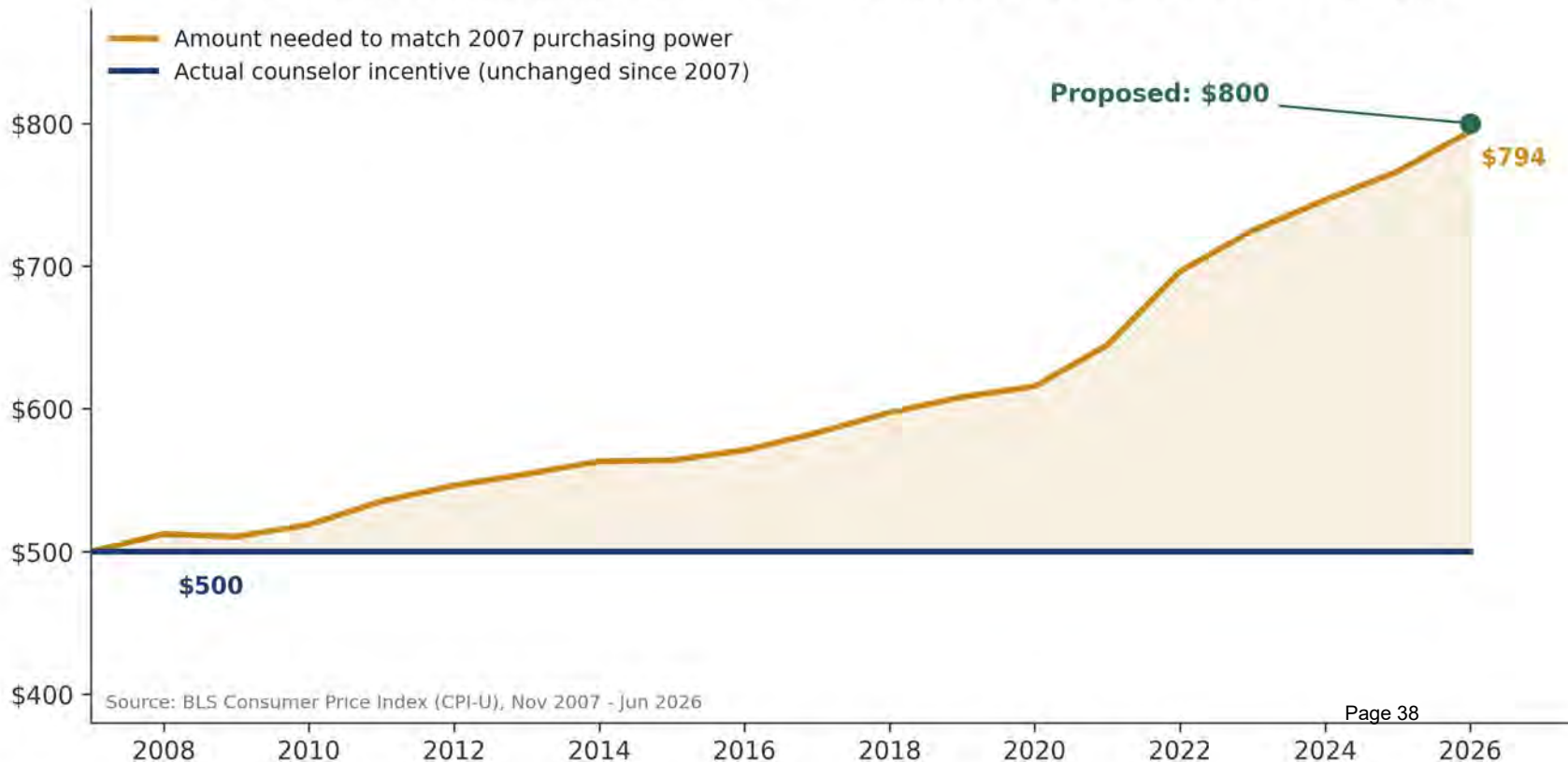
The proposed agenda item would consider increasing these incentive amounts. According to SSA, for every \$1 reimbursed to vocational rehabilitation agencies through this program, approximately \$7 is saved by reducing long-term disability benefit payments, making the program beneficial for both taxpayers and individuals achieving greater financial independence.

## SSA Cost Reimbursements Recaptured by DRS Staff, 2008-2025

Program to date: 3,338 successful cases | \$42.0 million recaptured

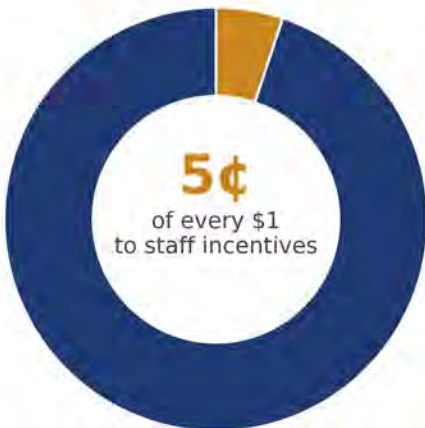


## Counselor Incentive: Inflation Has Reduced Real Value by More Than One Third

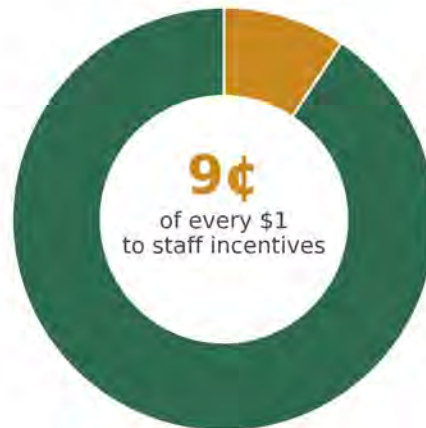


## Staff Incentives as a Share of Each SSA Reimbursement Dollar

**Current incentives**  
(500 *counselor*/100 **technician**)

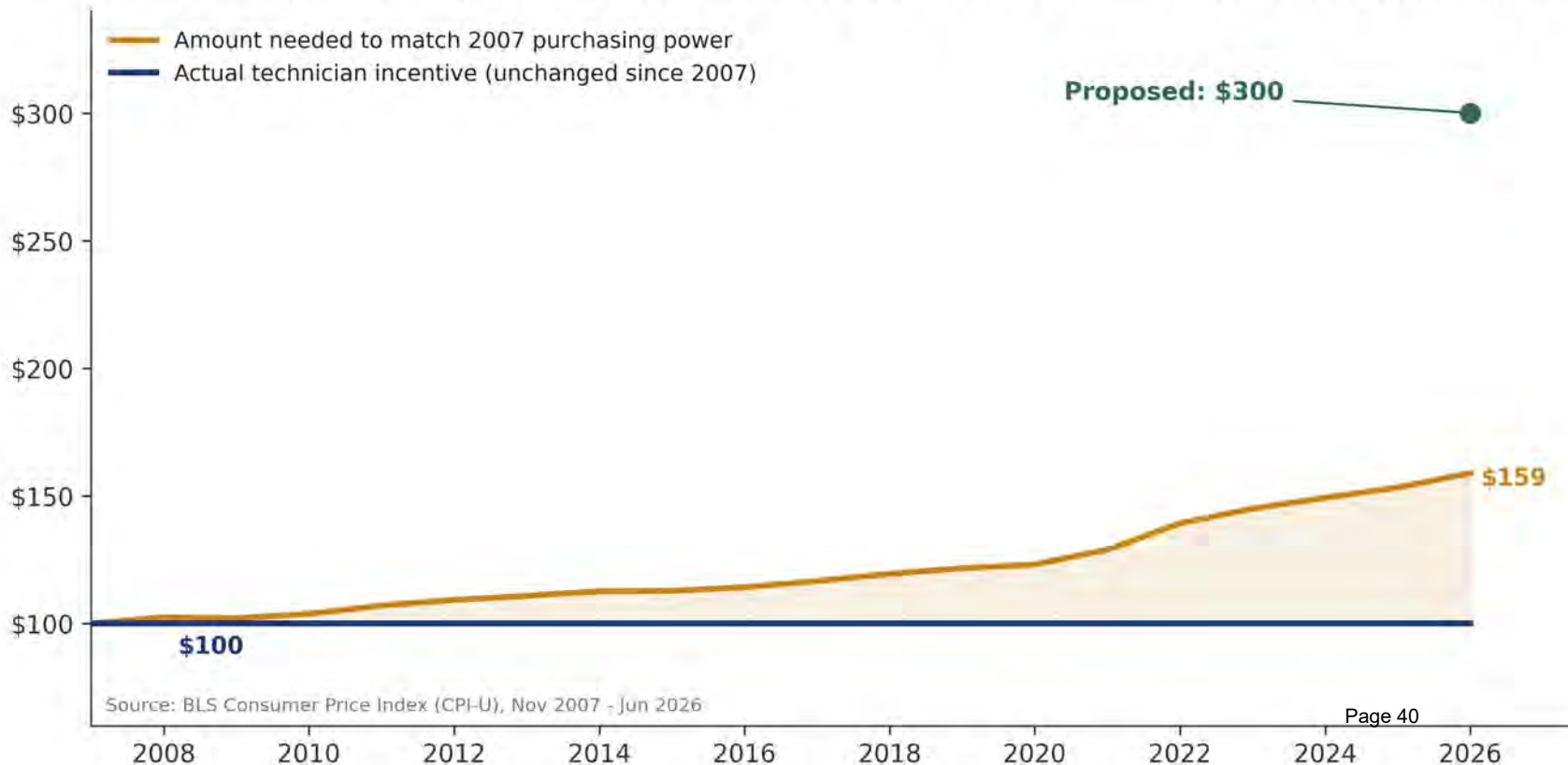


**Proposed incentives**  
(800 *counselor*/300 **technician**)



Based on the average SSA reimbursement of approximately \$11,750 per successful case over the ten-year period 2016-2025. The remainder of each dollar is retained by DRS. The incentive program is funded entirely by SSA reimbursements; no appropriated funds are used.

## Technician Incentive: Proposed Increase Restores Value and Recognizes Expanded Casework Role







# **DRAFT**

# **2027 Commission Meeting Schedule**



**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION FOR REHABILITATION SERVICES**  
**State Office, 7301 N.W. Expressway, 2nd Floor**  
**Oklahoma City, OK 73132**

**2027 Regular Meeting Schedule**

| <b>DATE</b>       | <b>TIME</b>           | <b>LOCATION</b>                             |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| January 20, 2027  | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| February 10, 2027 | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| March 10, 2027    | 10:30 AM              | Oklahoma School for the Deaf, Sulphur, OK   |
| April 14, 2027    | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| May 12, 2027      | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| June 9, 2027      | 10:30 AM              | Oklahoma Library for the Blind, OKC         |
| July, 2027        | NO COMMISSION MEETING |                                             |
| August 11, 2026   | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| September 8, 2027 | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| October 13, 2027  | 10:30 AM              | Oklahoma School for the Blind, Muskogee, OK |
| November 10, 2027 | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |
| December 8, 2027  | 10:30 AM              | State Office, 2nd Floor                     |

**Contact:**

**Kathleen Arrieta, Assistant to the Commission**

[Kathleen.Arrieta@okdrs.gov](mailto:Kathleen.Arrieta@okdrs.gov)

work cell: 405-651-1075



# Commission Minutes



## **Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services**

### **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**June 10, 2026**

Disability Determination Services  
9801 N. Kelley Avenue  
Oklahoma City 73131-2433

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 10:38 a.m. by Commissioner Flannery with a quorum present: Janet Barresi, Theresa Flannery, Lindsay Hanna, Kelsey Lee, Noel Tyler and Kevin Wallace. Lance Robertson was absent.

#### **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE**

Commission Assistant Kathleen Arrieta confirmed the Commission for Rehabilitation Services follows the Open Meetings Act.

#### **PRESENTATION OF LONGEVITY CERTIFICATES**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

The Chair presented longevity certificates to the following staff:

- Melinda Wilson, 30 years with DRS, Vocational Rehabilitation Technician, Norman
- Jennifer Hardin, 25 years with DRS, Legislative Liaison, OKC
- Jonathan Woodward, 25 years with DRS, Information Technology Director and Central Dept. Services Administrator, OKC

#### **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S REPORT**

*Randy Weaver, COO*

Report Highlights:

**DRS Headquarters Relocation:** The DRS state office relocation will begin July 1, 2026, and is anticipated to be completed by July 31, 2026. Estimated relocation costs include \$67,352.60 for moving services and approximately \$100,000 for technology and IT implementation. The building owner is covering door modifications and buildout costs. Staff continue to coordinate with OMES and vendors on technology installation, staff preparations, and facility readiness to minimize disruption and keep the project on schedule.

3535 N.W. 58th Street, Suite 500, Oklahoma City, OK 73112  
o: 405-951-3400 | f: 405 951-3529 | Oklahoma.gov | okdrs.gov

Executive Director Melinda Fruendt  
Commissioners Janet Barresi, Theresa Flannery, Lindsay Hanna, Kelsey Lee, Noel Tyler, Lance Robertson and Kevin Wallace

## **Process Improvement (PI)**

- Case Review - The Quality Assurance (QA) team continues to audit cases. In May, a closed case audit was conducted which included 91 randomly selected cases.
- Program Standards, Statistical Research - The research staff are working on planning and early-stage projects for the Needs Assessment.

## **New telephone system:**

Mark Beutler, Communications Director, reported that DRS received a Telly Award for its public service announcement, "See Me, *Not My Disability*." The PSA has been available online and broadcast statewide since September and can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/@okdrs>

Mr. Beutler also reported that a new automated phone system is being implemented in preparation for the agency's move to the Marathon Building. The system is expected to improve communication and streamline incoming calls while reducing staffing costs through the elimination of one full-time equivalent position.

## **CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT**

*Kevin Statham, CFO*

- Financial Status Report FY 2026 - As of April 30, 2026 the agency spent \$126.0 million of the \$194.2 million budget, with remaining encumbrances of \$58.5 million, which represents 95% of the budget
- Finance Committee/Budget Report – Mr. Statham went over the FY 2027 budget, including funding sources, federal carryover, transfers, client services, Pathfinder costs, and anticipated indirect cost under-recovery. The Commission discussed budget oversight and the potential use of budget limits. The budget is subject to revisions during the fiscal year and the Pathfinder funding issue may require future legislative action. The Commission asked for the expenditure limits be presented and voted on at the next Commission meeting.
- Operational Audit Overview: FY 22 through FY 24.- There was one finding related to a lack of documented review and approval during a period of staffing changes. Additional internal controls have been implemented to ensure required reviews are documented.
- FY 2028- FY 2035 Capital Outlay Request. The request includes are three projects at the Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB) totaling \$3,995,000.00 and one at the Oklahoma School for the Deaf (OSD) with a cost of \$3,000,000.00. The total for the four projects are \$6,995,000.00

*Commissioner Lee made a motion to accept the capital outlay requests as priorities for the agency. Commissioner Hanna seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the motion carried.*

## **HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

*LaChelle Westfahl, Human Resources Programs Manager*

- As of May 31, 2026, three vacant positions were filled, and 54 positions were open. There were 12 separations, which included retirements, resignations, and trial period discharges. There were 891 filled positions.

## **PRIORITY GROUP UPDATES AND PORTAL REFERRALS**

*Tracy Brigham, Division Administrator, Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SBVI)*

### Priority Group Update:

On June 3, 2026, 29 clients waiting were cleared off the Priority Group 3 wait list.

As of June 8, 2026

- Priority groups 1 and 2 are open
- Priority group 3 clients waiting: 5

Total clients waiting: 5

### Portal Referral Update for May 2026

- 67 applications received:
  - o 42 active assignments
  - o 6 pending assignments
  - o 19 closed for reasons which include referrals to other agencies, no shows,

## **ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS TO THE OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND (OSB)**

*Brent Pearce, Superintendent*

The donations for May 2026 totaled \$2,600.00

*Commissioner Hanna made a motion to accept the May 2026 OSB donations. Commissioner Wallace seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative, and the motion carried.*

## **ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS TO THE OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF (OSD)**

*Dr. Heather Laine, Superintendent*

The donations for May 2026 totaled \$715.00.

*Commissioner Lee made a motion to accept the April 2026 OSD donations. Commissioner Hanna seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative, and the motion carried.*

## **ACCEPTANCE OF DONATIONS TO THE OKLAHOMA LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED (OLBPH)**

*Kevin Treese, Program Manager III, SBVI*

The donations for May 2026 totaled \$50.00

*Commissioner Wallace made a motion to accept the May 2026 OLBPH donations. Commissioner Barresi seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative, and the motion carried.*

## **REVIEW OF THE May 13, 2026 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

*Commissioner Tyler made a motion to approve the May 13, 2026 minutes as submitted. Commissioner Lee seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative, and the motion carried.*

## **NEW BUSINESS**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

There was no new business.

## **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1)**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

- **Vote to convene into executive session.**

*Commissioner Flannery made a motion to convene into an Executive Session for the purpose of 1) discussing the “the employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining or resignation” of the Executive Director, to include approval, modification, or rejection of a potential severance package, and 2) discussing the “the employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, demotion, disciplining or resignation” of a potential Acting Executive Director, to include compensation and establishing signing authority. Commissioner Lee seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the motion carried.*

- **Vote to exit Executive Session.**

*Commissioner Flannery moved to exit executive session. Commissioner Lee seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the motion carried*

- **Vote on matters discussed in executive session.**

*Commissioner Wallace made a motion to accept the Executive Director's resignation and approve the statutory severance agreement. Commissioner Barresi seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the motion carried.*

*Commissioner Lee made a motion to appoint an interim Executive Director as discussed in Executive Session and set the compensation commensurate with the pay band for Executive Director II. The Executive Director's term is not to exceed the end of the calendar year or at such time a permanent Executive Director is hired, whichever is earlier. Commissioner Hanna seconded.*

**ESTABLISH THE HIRING PROCESS FOR A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, DETERMINING NECESSARY JOB QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES, AND THE PROCESS FOR HIRING AN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, WHETHER TO UTILIZE A SEARCH FIRM AND/OR TO CREATE A HIRING COMMITTEE.**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

*Commissioner Lee made a motion to establish a hiring committee, and to appoint three members of commission, Theresa Flannery, Lindsay Hanna, and Noel Tyler to that hiring committee, and give the hiring committee the authority to engage a search firm to conduct a search for a new executive director. Commissioner Wallace seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the motion carried.*

**ADJOURN**

*Theresa Flannery, Chair*

*Commissioner Flannery made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Hanna seconded. All Commissioners voted in the affirmative and the meeting was adjourned-.*





# Oklahoma School for the Deaf Donation Report

## OSD Donation Report

June 2026

### Donations Under \$500.00

| Date      | Name                         | Cash            | Fund           | Explanation                      | Property Value |
|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| 6/11/2026 | Anonymous                    | \$ 10.00        | 70100/20201    | Needy Pupil                      |                |
| 6/11/2026 | Casey's                      | \$ 2.60         | 70100/20601/00 | Needy Pupil                      |                |
|           | Subtotal Cash Under \$500.00 | <u>\$ 12.60</u> |                | Subtotal Property Under \$500.00 | <u>\$ -</u>    |

### Donations Over \$500.00

| Date      | Name                        | Cash               | Fund        | Explanation                           | Property Value |
|-----------|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| 6/11/2026 | NW OKC Rotary Club          | \$ 1,500.00        | 70100/20029 | In Memory of Signing Santa Gary Davis |                |
|           | Subtotal Cash Over \$500.00 | <u>\$ 1,500.00</u> |             | Subtotal Property Over \$500.00       | <u>\$ -</u>    |

Subtotal Cash Combined

\$ 1,512.60

Subtotal Property Combined

Total donations for June 2026

**\$1,512.60**

# OSD Donation Report

## July 2026

### Donations Under \$500.00

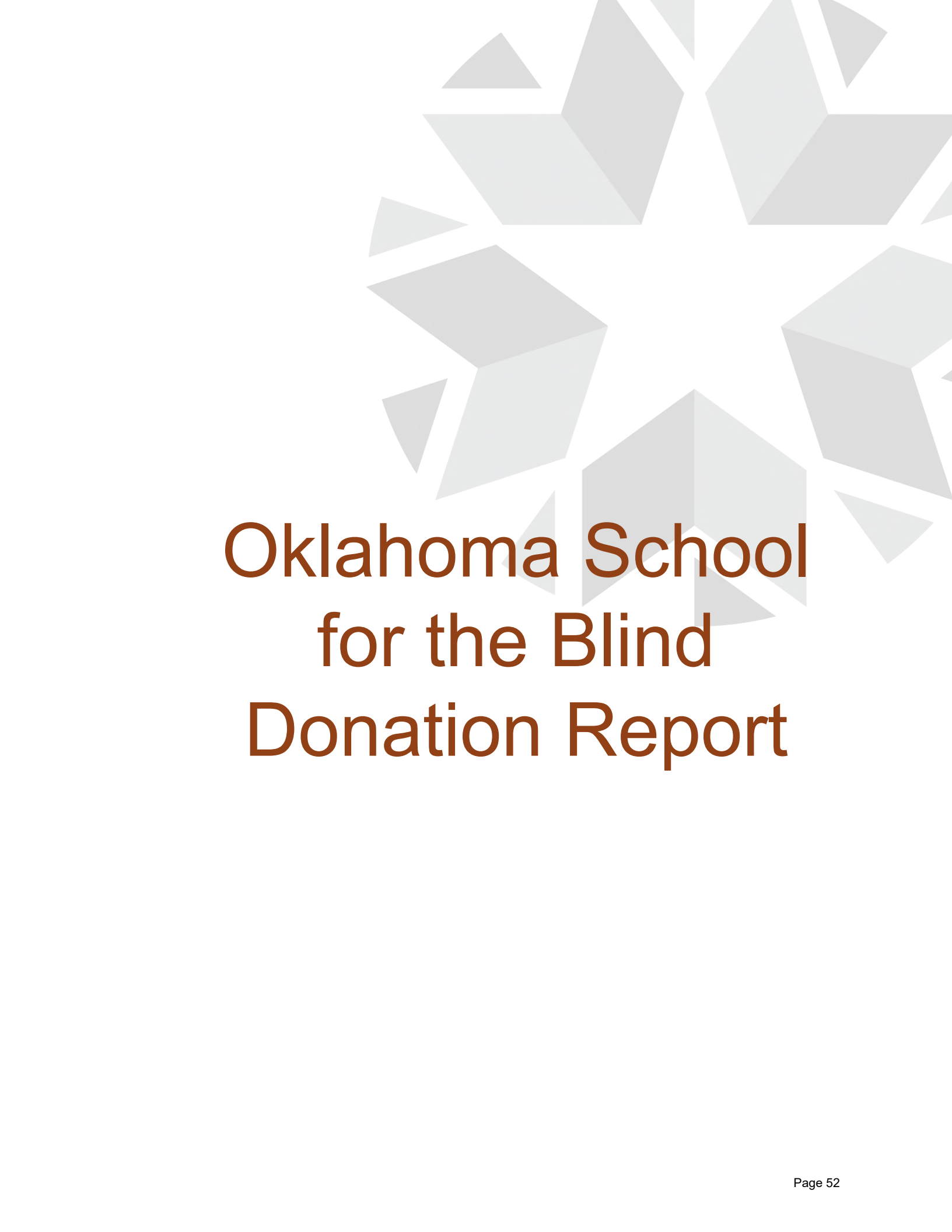
| Date                         | Name        | Cash | Fund                             | Explanation   | Property Value |
|------------------------------|-------------|------|----------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 7/1/2026                     | Lisa Mathis |      | Library                          | Library books | \$ 69.93       |
| Subtotal Cash Under \$500.00 |             |      | Subtotal Property Under \$500.00 |               | \$ 69.93       |

### Donations Over \$500.00

| Date                        | Name | Cash | Fund                            | Explanation | Property Value |
|-----------------------------|------|------|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Subtotal Cash Over \$500.00 |      |      | Subtotal Property Over \$500.00 |             | \$ -           |
| Subtotal Cash Combined      |      |      | Subtotal Property Combined      |             | \$ 69.93       |

Total donations for July 2026

**\$69.93**



# Oklahoma School for the Blind Donation Report

## OSB DONATION REPORT

### June 2026 Donations

#### Donations under \$500

| Date | Name | Cash | Fund | Property | Value |
|------|------|------|------|----------|-------|
|------|------|------|------|----------|-------|

Subtotal of Cash (under \$500) donated in June 2026

\$ -

Subtotal prop.

\$ -

#### Donations \$500 and over

\$ -

6/18/2026 UAFS Delta Gamma/Recreation

\$ 2,952.42      701

Subtotal of Cash (\$500 and over) donated in June 2026

\$ 2,952.42

Subtotal prop.

\$ -

TOTAL DONATION AMOUNTS June - 2026

\$2,952.42

## OSB DONATION REPORT

### July 2026 Donations

#### Donations under \$500

| Date      | Name                                             | Cash | Fund | Property  | Value     |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| 7/23/2026 | Brenda Knutson / trail mix for foodservice dept. |      |      | trail mix | \$ 131.61 |

|                                                     |      |                |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|-----------|
| Subtotal of Cash (under \$500) donated in July 2026 | \$ - | Subtotal prop. | \$ 131.61 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|-----------|

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Donations \$500 and over | \$ - |
|--------------------------|------|

|                                                        |      |                |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|
| Subtotal of Cash (\$500 and over) donated in July 2026 | \$ - | Subtotal prop. | \$ - |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|

|                                  |          |
|----------------------------------|----------|
| TOTAL DONATION AMOUNTS July 2026 | \$131.61 |
|----------------------------------|----------|



# Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Donation Report

OLBPH June 2026 Donations

| Donations under \$500                    |                                                |       |                                                              |       |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| DATE                                     | NAME                                           | CASH  | PROPERTY                                                     | VALUE |
| 06/02/2026                               | Gail Burks                                     | \$50  |                                                              |       |
| 06/02/2026                               | Edna Turner                                    | \$30  |                                                              |       |
| 06/02/2026                               | Oleta Whitaker                                 | \$25  |                                                              |       |
| 06/02/2026                               | Janet Whitworth                                | \$200 |                                                              |       |
| 06/12/2026                               | June and Johnny Griffin                        | \$100 |                                                              |       |
| 06/16/2026                               | Kerrey Matlock                                 | \$50  |                                                              |       |
| 06/24/2026                               | Tina Cross                                     | \$50  |                                                              |       |
| 06/30/2026                               | Oklahomans for Special Library Services (OSLS) |       | Items for Kevin's Retirement Party (cake, snack trays, etc.) | \$209 |
| <b>Subtotal of Donations Under \$500</b> | <b>\$714</b>                                   |       |                                                              |       |

|                              |              |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Total Donation Amount</b> | <b>\$714</b> |
|------------------------------|--------------|

Donations made by individuals in June were in memory of Cindy and Johnny Crabtree. Cindy was a patron of the library, an active member of OSLS, and retired Visual Services counselor. I've included the URL to her obituary here:  
<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/cindy-crabtree-obituary?id=61510387>



OLBPH July 2026 Donations

| Donations under \$500             |                                                |      |                                                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| DATE                              | NAME                                           | CASH | PROPERTY                                                          | VALUE |
| 07/27/2026                        | Oklahomans for Special Library Services (OSLS) |      | Reservation to Sam Noble for Summer Reading Program (SRP) Wrap-Up | \$150 |
| Subtotal of Donations Under \$500 | \$150                                          |      |                                                                   |       |

| Donations \$500 and over             |          |      |                                  |          |
|--------------------------------------|----------|------|----------------------------------|----------|
| DATE                                 | NAME     | CASH | PROPERTY                         | VALUE    |
| 07/06/2026                           | OSLS     |      | Action Imprints T-Shirts for SRP | \$532.67 |
| Subtotal of Donations \$500 and over | \$532.67 |      |                                  |          |

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Total Donation Amount | \$682.67 |
|-----------------------|----------|



# Human Resources Report

## PERSONNEL ACTIVITY REPORT AS OF JUNE 30, 2026

### FILLED AND VACANT POSITIONS

Personnel Activity = 12 vacant positions filled / 47 positions in Announcement or Selection Process

| Division         | Title/PIN                                    | Date Vacated | Location | Begin date | End date   | Ann. #                 | Action/Incumbent                   | Date Filled              |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| EXEC             | Interim Exec Dir / 1054                      | N/A          | EXEC     | N/A        | N/A        | Commission Appointment | Sterling Zearley                   | 06/18/2026               |
| EXEC             | Business Analyst / 0682                      | 11/02/2025   | EXEC     | 01/21/2026 | 03/04/2026 | 26-040                 | Cooper Livingston                  | 06/01/2026               |
| FSD              | Accountant / 0013                            | 10/02/2025   | FSD      | 03/23/2026 | Continuous | 26-044                 | Angela Thompson                    | 06/08/2026               |
| FSD              | Accountant / 0096                            | 04/01/2025   | FSD      | 03/23/2026 | Continuous | 26-073                 | Michael Serna                      | 06/08/2026               |
| MSD              | Administrative Programs Officer / 0630       | 04/24/2026   | MSD      | 05/11/2026 | Continuous | 26-070                 | Glennan Wrinkle                    | 06/24/2026               |
| MSD              | Contracting & Acquisitions Agent / 0502      | 04/30/2026   | MSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-058                 | Kimberly Coulter                   | 06/01/2026               |
| VR/SBVI<br>ADMIN | Programs Field Representative / 0376         | 12/31/2025   | VR/SBVI  | 04/06/2026 | 04/10/2026 | 26-059                 | In Selection Process               |                          |
| OSB              | Direct Care Specialist / 0069                | 05/31/2026   | OSB      | 06/12/2026 | Continuous | 26-086                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSB              | Programs Manager (Compliance Officer) / 0515 | 07/31/2026   | OSB      | 05/06/2026 | Continuous | 26-071                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSB              | Teacher / 0212                               | 07/31/2026   | OSB      | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-076                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSB              | LPN / 0420                                   | 04/08/2026   | OSB      | 04/01/2026 | Continuous | 26-064                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSB              | Food Service Specialist / 0231, 0444         | 06/01/2026   | OSB      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-065                 | Justin Chatley<br>Cynthia Thompson | 06/01/2026<br>06/01/2026 |
| OSB              | Independent Living Instructor / 0037         | 06/14/2022   | OSB      | 04/17/2026 | Continuous | 26-066                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Teacher / 0635                               | 08/01/2024   | OSD      | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-082                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Early Development Specialist / 1499          | 07/31/2026   | OSD      | 05/11/2026 | Continuous | 26-072                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Teacher / 0619                               | 07/31/2026   | OSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-060                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Administrative Assistant / 0353              | 03/26/2026   | OSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-061                 | Jenny Ligon                        | 06/22/2026               |
| OSD              | Teacher / 0243                               | 06/01/2026   | OSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-063                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Administrative Assistant / 0088              | 12/01/2025   | OSD      | 02/27/2026 | Continuous | 26-053                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Housekeeping/Custodial Worker / 0712         | 02/23/2026   | OSD      | 02/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-052                 | Della Phelps                       | 06/01/2026               |
| OSD              | Construction/Maintenance Tech / 0701         | 11/12/2025   | OSD      | 12/05/2025 | Continuous | 26-035                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Teacher / 0423                               | 06/01/2024   | OSD      | 09/19/2025 | Continuous | 26-016                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Manual Sign Language Spec / 0186             | 07/31/2025   | OSD      | 08/18/2025 | Continuous | 26-085                 | Emma Paddon                        | 06/22/2026               |
| OSD              | Speech Language Pathologist / P107653        | NEW PIN      | OSD      | 07/17/2025 | Continuous | 26-003                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | School Counselor / 1488                      | 10/06/2022   | OSD      | 07/15/2024 | Continuous | 25-007                 | Currently Open                     |                          |
| OSD              | Sign Language Specialist, 2308 / 1090        | 07/20/2023   | OSD      | 08/17/2023 | Continuous | 24-023                 | Currently Open                     |                          |

|      |                                                      |                          |                         |            |            |          |                          |
|------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|----------|--------------------------|
| OSD  | Direct Care Specialist (Classroom) / 0934            | 02/26/2025               | OSD                     | 12/02/2024 | Continuous | 25-055   | Currently Open           |
| OSD  | Direct Care Specialist (Dorm) / 0115,<br>0578, 1028, | 08/20/2025               | OSD                     | 10/24/2023 | Continuous | 23-032   | Currently Open           |
| OSD  | Teacher, 2083 / 0890, 0022, 0282                     | 08/01/2021<br>07/31/2026 | OSD                     | 10/04/2023 | Continuous | 23-079   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist /<br>0516, 0690 | 03/17/2026<br>03/31/2026 | VR80 –<br>Tulsa         | 05/12/2026 | Continuous | 26-074   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0820          | 04/28/2026               | VR56 –<br>Woodward      | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-075   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0627          | 04/30/2026               | VR18 –<br>Muskogee      | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-077   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0776          | 05/15/2026               | VR86 – Ada              | 05/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-079   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Rehabilitation Technician / 0437                     | 05/08/2026               | VR81 –<br>Chickasha     | 05/20/2026 | Continuous | 26-080   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0119          | 05/19/2026               | VR12 –<br>Lawton        | 05/27/2026 | Continuous | 26-081   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0138          | 04/01/2026               | VR47 – OKC              | 04/22/2026 | 04/28/2026 | 26-067   | In Selection<br>Process  |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0671          | 04/30/2026               | VR77 –<br>Miami         | 04/24/2026 | Continuous | 26-068   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Rehabilitation Technician / 0011                     | 04/21/2026               | VR08 – Enid             | 04/29/2026 | Continuous | 26-069   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0690          | 04/01/2026               | VR80 –<br>Tulsa         | 02/20/2026 | Continuous | 26-047   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Job Placement Specialist / 0372                      | 07/01/2025               | VR47 – OKC              | 09/19/2025 | Continuous | 26-015   | Walter Lowery 06/17/2026 |
| VR   | Programs Field Representative / 0786                 | 08/31/2024               | VR – TBD                | 05/01/2025 | Continuous | 25-093   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Job Placement Specialist / 0925                      | 05/31/2023               | VR86 – Ada              | 05/09/2025 | Continuous | 25-098   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Behavioral Health Clinician / 0165                   | 03/01/2011               | VR13 –<br>McAlester     | 05/15/2025 | Continuous | 25-101   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Assistive Technology Specialist / 0263               | 02/01/2025               | VR36 – OKC              | 04/22/2025 | Continuous | 25-089   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Assistive Technology Specialist / 0085               | 05/01/2024               | VR36 – OKC              | 04/18/2025 | Continuous | 25-085   | Currently Open           |
| VR   | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0567          | 09/01/2020               | VR67 –<br>Tulsa         | 11/01/2023 | Continuous | 21-028.1 | Currently Open           |
| SBVI | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0563          | 05/08/2026               | SBVI – TBD              | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-084   | Currently Open           |
| SBVI | Vending Facility Business Consultant /<br>0134       | 05/04/2026               | SBVI33 –<br>OKC         | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-083   | Currently Open           |
| SBVI | Programs Manager / 0193                              | 05/31/2026               | SBVI91 –<br>Tulsa       | 05/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-078   | Currently Open           |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation of the Blind Spec / 0812              | 03/06/2026               | SBVI69 –<br>Weatherford | 03/25/2026 | Continuous | 26-055   | Currently Open           |

|      |                                                  |            |                   |            |            |        |                |            |
|------|--------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|------------|------------|--------|----------------|------------|
| SBVI | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0938      | 01/30/2026 | SBVI64 –<br>Tulsa | 02/20/2026 | Continuous | 26-046 | Vicki Hampton  | 06/08/2026 |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation Technician / 0267                 | 02/13/2026 | SBVI64 –<br>Tulsa | 02/19/2026 | Continuous | 26-051 | Currently Open |            |
| SBVI | Mechanical Systems Technician / 0560             | 08/11/2017 | SBVI33 –<br>OKC   | 06/03/2025 | Continuous | 25-114 | Currently Open |            |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation of the Blind Specialist /<br>0754 | 10/01/2018 | SBVI – TBD        | 05/23/2025 | Continuous | 25-107 | Currently Open |            |

|                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DISCHARGES/RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS = 17</b> |
| <i>As of June 30, 2026</i>                      |

**SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION (Executive/MSD/FSD)**

**DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

Trial Period Discharge = 1

1 = 2 months

**SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED DIVISION**

Discharge = 1

1 = 14 years

Resignation = 2

1 = 3 months

1 = 4 months

Retirement = 2

1 = 20 years 1 month

1 = 10 years 11 months

**OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

Resignation = 1

1 = 11 years 10 months

**OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**

Resignation = 4

1 = 1 year

1 = 2 years 2 months

1 = 10 months

1 = 4 months

**DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES**

Resignation = 6

1 = 3 years 8 months

1 = 7 years 4 months

1 = 16 years 5 months

1 = 10 years 9 months

1 = 1 year 9 months

1 = 16 years 8 months

## CURRENT FTE STATUS FY 2026

*FTE as of June 30, 2026*

| <u>DIVISION</u>                              | <u>BUDGETED FTE</u> | <u>FILLED</u> | <u>PENDING</u> | <u>EXEMPT<br/>FTE</u> | <u>TOTAL FILLED PLUS PENDING<br/>MINUS EXEMPT FTE</u> |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Support Services (Executive/MSD/FSD)         | 82.5                | 81.00         | 0.00           | (1.00)                | 80.00                                                 |
| Vocational Rehabilitation                    | 230.0               | 211.00        | 17.00          | 0.00                  | 228.00                                                |
| Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired | 113.0               | 102.00        | 7.00           | 0.00                  | 109.00                                                |
| VR/SBVI-DP                                   | 4.00                | 3.00          | 1.00           | 0.00                  | 4.00                                                  |
| Oklahoma School for the Blind                | 100.0               | 92.00         | 5.00           | 0.00                  | 97.00                                                 |
| Oklahoma School for the Deaf                 | 131.5               | 117.00        | 17.00          | 0.00                  | 134.00                                                |
| <b>Total (NON-EXEMPT)</b>                    | <b>660.80</b>       | <b>606.00</b> | <b>47.00</b>   | <b>(1.00)</b>         | <b>652.00</b>                                         |
| Disability Determination Services (EXEMPT)   | 327.20              | 281.00        | 0.00           | (281.00)              | 281.00                                                |
| <b>TOTAL NON-EXEMPT &amp; EXEMPT</b>         | <b>988.0</b>        | <b>887.00</b> | <b>47.00</b>   | <b>(282.00)</b>       | <b>933.00</b>                                         |

**FY 26 Budgetary Limit = 1255**

**\* Authorized agency FTE limit does not include Executive Fellow and SWIP appointments**

ROUTING TO: Sterling Zearley, Interim Director  
 Danielle Durkee, Fractional Chief Financial Officer  
 Randy Weaver, Chief of Operations  
 LaChelle Westfahl, Human Resources Program Director  
 Mark Beutler, Director of Communications  
 Kathleen Arrieta, Executive Assistant  
 Brett Jones, Public Information Officer III

## PERSONNEL ACTIVITY REPORT AS OF JULY 31, 2026

### FILLED AND VACANT POSITIONS

Personnel Activity = 8 vacant positions filled / 59 positions in Announcement or Selection Process

| Division | Title/PIN                                                    | Date Vacated | Location | Begin date | End date   | Ann. # | Action/Incumbent | Date Filled |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------|------------|------------|--------|------------------|-------------|
| VR/SBVI  |                                                              |              |          |            |            |        |                  |             |
| ADMIN    | Programs Field Representative / 0376                         | 12/31/2025   | VR/SBVI  | 04/06/2026 | 04/10/2026 | 26-059 | Victoria Stegall | 07/01/2026  |
| OSB      | Recreational Activities Specialist / 0419                    | 04/01/2026   | OSB      | 07/09/2026 | Continuous | 27-003 | Currently Open   |             |
|          |                                                              | 02/08/2026   |          |            |            |        |                  |             |
|          |                                                              | 03/04/2026   |          |            |            |        |                  |             |
| OSB      | Direct Care Specialist / 0378, 0576, 0586                    | 04/27/2026   | OSB      | 07/13/2026 | Continuous | 27-008 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSB      | Social Services Specialist / 1024                            | 07/31/2017   | OSB      | 06/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-087 | Mickie Johnson   | 07/01/2026  |
| OSB      | Direct Care Specialist / 0069                                | 05/31/2026   | OSB      | 06/12/2026 | Continuous | 26-086 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSB      | Programs Manager (Compliance Officer) / 0515                 | 07/31/2026   | OSB      | 05/06/2026 | Continuous | 26-071 | Erika Perry      | 07/01/2026  |
| OSB      | Teacher / 0212                                               | 07/31/2026   | OSB      | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-076 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSB      | LPN / 0420                                                   | 04/08/2026   | OSB      | 04/01/2026 | Continuous | 26-064 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSB      | Independent Living Instructor / 0037                         | 06/14/2022   | OSB      | 04/17/2026 | Continuous | 26-066 | Cheri Roudebush  | 07/01/2026  |
| OSD      | Early Development Specialist / P108259                       | NEW PIN      | OSD      | 07/08/2026 | Continuous | 27-001 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Housekeeping/Custodial Worker / 0542                         | 07/01/2026   | OSD      | 07/09/2026 | Continuous | 27-002 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Social Services Specialist / 0697                            | 08/05/2021   | OSD      | 06/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-090 | Bridget Hicks    | 07/01/2026  |
| OSD      | Teacher / 0635                                               | 08/01/2024   | OSD      | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-082 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Early Development Specialist / 1499                          | 07/31/2026   | OSD      | 05/11/2026 | Continuous | 26-072 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Teacher / 0619                                               | 07/31/2026   | OSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-060 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Teacher / 0243                                               | 06/01/2026   | OSD      | 04/03/2026 | Continuous | 26-063 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Administrative Assistant / 0088                              | 12/01/2025   | OSD      | 02/27/2026 | Continuous | 26-053 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Construction/Maintenance Tech / 0701                         | 11/12/2025   | OSD      | 12/05/2025 | Continuous | 26-035 | Ren Stone        | 07/01/2026  |
| OSD      | Teacher / 0423                                               | 06/01/2024   | OSD      | 09/19/2025 | Continuous | 26-016 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Speech Language Pathologist / P107653                        | NEW PIN      | OSD      | 07/17/2025 | Continuous | 26-003 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | School Counselor / 1488                                      | 10/06/2022   | OSD      | 07/15/2024 | Continuous | 25-007 | Currently Open   |             |
| OSD      | Sign Language Specialist / 1090                              | 07/20/2023   | OSD      | 08/17/2023 | Continuous | 24-023 | Currently Open   |             |
|          |                                                              | 02/26/2025   |          |            |            |        |                  |             |
| OSD      | Direct Care Specialist (Classroom) / 0934, P106372, 0111     | 06/30/2026   | OSD      | 12/02/2024 | Continuous | 25-055 | Currently Open   |             |
|          |                                                              | 06/30/2026   |          |            |            |        |                  |             |
| OSD      | Direct Care Specialist (Dorm) / 0115, 0578, 1028, 0746, 0028 | 08/20/2025   | OSD      | 10/24/2023 | Continuous | 23-032 | Currently Open   |             |
|          |                                                              | 05/21/2026   |          |            |            |        |                  |             |



|     |                                                      |                                                      |                       |            |            |          |                          |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|----------|--------------------------|
|     |                                                      | 11/13/2024<br>06/17/2026<br>06/30/2026               |                       |            |            |          |                          |
|     |                                                      | 08/01/2021<br>07/31/2026<br>07/31/2026<br>07/31/2026 |                       |            |            |          |                          |
| OSD | Teacher, 2083 / 0890, 0022, 0282, 0666               | 07/31/2026                                           | OSD                   | 10/04/2023 | Continuous | 23-079   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Rehabilitation Technician / 1189                     | 07/12/2026                                           | VR44 –<br>Stillwater  | 07/14/2026 | Continuous | 27-009   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Rehabilitation Technician / 0708                     | 06/22/2026                                           | VR05 –<br>Weatherford | 07/14/2026 | Continuous | 27-010   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Secretary / 0086                                     | 08/31/2026                                           | VR82 –<br>Tulsa       | 07/20/2026 | Continuous | 27-011   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist /<br>0516, 0690 | 03/17/2026<br>03/31/2026                             | VR80 –<br>Tulsa       | 05/12/2026 | Continuous | 26-074   | Hannah Barlow 07/16/2016 |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0820          | 04/28/2026                                           | VR56 –<br>Woodward    | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-075   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0627          | 04/30/2026                                           | VR18 –<br>Muskogee    | 05/15/2026 | Continuous | 26-077   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0776          | 05/15/2026                                           | VR86 – Ada            | 05/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-079   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Rehabilitation Technician / 0437                     | 05/08/2026                                           | VR81 –<br>Chickasha   | 05/20/2026 | Continuous | 26-080   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0119          | 05/19/2026                                           | VR12 –<br>Lawton      | 05/27/2026 | Continuous | 26-081   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0138          | 04/01/2026                                           | VR47 – OKC            | 04/22/2026 | 04/28/2026 | 26-067   | In Selection<br>Process  |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0671          | 04/30/2026                                           | VR77 –<br>Miami       | 04/24/2026 | Continuous | 26-068   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Rehabilitation Technician / 0011                     | 04/21/2026                                           | VR08 – Enid           | 04/29/2026 | Continuous | 26-069   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0690          | 04/01/2026                                           | VR80 –<br>Tulsa       | 02/20/2026 | Continuous | 26-047   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Programs Field Representative / 0786                 | 08/31/2024                                           | VR – TBD              | 05/01/2025 | Continuous | 25-093   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Job Placement Specialist / 0925                      | 05/31/2023                                           | VR86 – Ada            | 05/09/2025 | Continuous | 25-098   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Behavioral Health Clinician / 0165                   | 03/01/2011                                           | VR13 –<br>McAlester   | 05/15/2025 | Continuous | 25-101   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Assistive Technology Specialist / 0263               | 02/01/2025                                           | VR36 – OKC            | 04/22/2025 | Continuous | 25-089   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Assistive Technology Specialist / 0085               | 05/01/2024                                           | VR36 – OKC            | 04/18/2025 | Continuous | 25-085   | Currently Open           |
| VR  | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0567          | 09/01/2020                                           | VR67 –<br>Tulsa       | 11/01/2023 | Continuous | 21-028.1 | Currently Open           |

|      |                                               |            |                      |            |            |        |                        |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|------------|--------|------------------------|
| SBVI | Rehabilitation Technician / 0038              | 06/30/2026 | SBVI90 – OKC         | 07/09/2026 | Continuous | 27-004 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0367   | 06/12/2026 | SBVI64 – Tulsa       | 07/10/2026 | Continuous | 27-005 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation Technician / 0513              | 06/18/2026 | SBVI90 – OKC         | 07/13/2026 | Continuous | 27-006 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Programs Manager / 0006                       | 06/30/2026 | SBVI72 – OKC         | 07/13/2026 | Continuous | 27-007 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist / 0563   | 05/08/2026 | SBVI – TBD           | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-084 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Vending Facility Business Consultant / 0134   | 05/04/2026 | SBVI33 – OKC         | 06/02/2026 | Continuous | 26-083 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Programs Manager / 0193                       | 05/31/2026 | SBVI91 – Tulsa       | 05/26/2026 | Continuous | 26-078 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation of the Blind Spec / 0812       | 03/06/2026 | SBVI69 – Weatherford | 03/25/2026 | Continuous | 26-055 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation Technician / 0267              | 02/13/2026 | SBVI64 – Tulsa       | 02/19/2026 | Continuous | 26-051 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Mechanical Systems Technician / 0560          | 08/11/2017 | SBVI33 – OKC         | 06/03/2025 | Continuous | 25-114 | Currently Open         |
| SBVI | Rehabilitation of the Blind Specialist / 0754 | 10/01/2018 | SBVI – TBD           | 05/23/2025 | Continuous | 25-107 | Jake Murphy 07/13/2026 |

|                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>DISCHARGES/RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS = 19</b> |
| <i>As of July 31, 2026</i>                      |

**SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION (Executive/MSD/FSD)**

Discharge = 2

1 = 25 years 1 month

1 = 32 years 1 month

Resignation = 1

1 = 23 years 9 months

Retirement = 1

1 = 24 years 1 month

**DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION**

Resignation = 1

1 = 7 years 10 months

Retirement = 1

1 = 16 years 11 months

**SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED DIVISION**

Trial Period Discharge = 1

1 = 9 months

**OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

Resignation = 2

1 = 2 years

1 = 6 years

Retirement = 1

1 = 20 years

**OKLAHOMA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF**

Trial Period Discharge = 1

1 = 3 years 9 months

Resignation = 6

1 = 8 years

1 = 6 years 8 months  
1 = 2 years  
1 - 24 years 10 months  
1 = 3 years  
1 = 5 years 6 months

Retirement = 1  
1 = 30 years

**DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES**

Discharge = 1  
1 = 31 years 8 months

## CURRENT FTE STATUS FY 2027

*FTE as of July 31, 2026*

| <u>DIVISION</u>                              | <u>BUDGETED FTE</u> | <u>FILLED</u> | <u>PENDING</u> | <u>EXEMPT<br/>FTE</u> | <u>TOTAL FILLED PLUS PENDING<br/>MINUS EXEMPT FTE</u> |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Support Services (Executive/MSD/FSD)         | 79.0                | 78.00         | 0.00           | (1.00)                | 77.00                                                 |
| Vocational Rehabilitation                    | 232.5               | 212.00        | 19.00          | 0.00                  | 231.00                                                |
| Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired | 115.5               | 99.00         | 10.00          | 0.00                  | 109.00                                                |
| VR/SBVI-DP                                   | 3.00                | 3.00          | 0.00           | 0.00                  | 3.00                                                  |
| Oklahoma School for the Blind                | 100.5               | 94.00         | 7.00           | 0.00                  | 101.00                                                |
| Oklahoma School for the Deaf                 | 132.5               | 114.00        | 23.00          | 0.00                  | 137.00                                                |
| <b>Total (NON-EXEMPT)</b>                    | <b>663.0</b>        | <b>600.00</b> | <b>59.00</b>   | <b>(1.00)</b>         | <b>658.00</b>                                         |
| Disability Determination Services (EXEMPT)   | 284.4               | 279.00        | 0.00           | (279.00)              | 279.00                                                |
| <b>TOTAL NON-EXEMPT &amp; EXEMPT</b>         | <b>947.4</b>        | <b>879.00</b> | <b>59.00</b>   | <b>(280.00)</b>       | <b>937.00</b>                                         |

**FY 27 Budgetary Limit = 1000**

**\* Authorized agency FTE limit does not include Executive Fellow and SWIP appointments**

ROUTING TO: Sterling Zearley, Interim Director  
 Danielle Durkee, Fractional Chief Financial Officer  
 Randy Weaver, Chief of Operations  
 LaChelle Westfahl, Human Resources Program Director  
 Mark Beutler, Director of Communications  
 Kathleen Arrieta, Executive Assistant  
 Brett Jones, Public Information Officer III



# Communications Report

**Department of Rehabilitation Services**  
**Office of Communications Report for August 2026**

- July Job Fair--Media coverage on KOCO-TV 5
- DeafBlind Awareness Day--July media coverage on KFOR-TV, KOCO-TV and KWTW-TV
- Continuing to think outside the box for establishing our brand. We partnered with OKC Philharmonic where OSB jazz orchestra students were invited to attend a spring youth concert at the Civic Center Music Hall. They participated in a one-on-one Q&A with Maestro Alexander Mickelthwate. KFOR-TV photojournalist Galen Culver featured the story on his "Is This a Great State or What" series.
- Received Telly Award for the "See Me, Not My Disability" public service announcement. Media coverage on the award from OKC Friday newspaper and Kingfisher Times and Free Press.
- Working with Oklahoma Association of Broadcasters to produce a new PSA this fall that will go into rotation with the existing campaign.
- Current PSA campaign resulted in 3,621 television and radio spots in June, with 29,323 spots to date. Total value to date on spots broadcast is \$687,637.
- Social media channels continue to gain new followers, with high engagement across Facebook, Instagram, X and YouTube.
- Media blitz planned for October for National Disability Employment Awareness Month, and White Cane Safety Day. Working with OKC and Tulsa area media to promote both events.
- Beginning a new series of videos this fall highlighting DRS employees. Designed to spotlight our colleagues who consistently work to make DRS better. We will pitch some stories to local media.
- Work has begun on the 2026 Annual Report



# ABLE Tech Report





# **FY26 Annual Report**

**Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services**

**July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026**

# Contents

|                                                                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Alternative Financing Program Report.....</b>                                     | <b>3</b>  |
| Descriptive Data .....                                                               | 3         |
| Portfolio Performance - Alternative Financing Program (AFP).....                     | 3         |
| Loan Information .....                                                               | 4         |
| <b>Creating an Accessible Workforce System for All .....</b>                         | <b>6</b>  |
| Contract Item 1: Training, Technical Assistance, and Information and Assistance..... | 6         |
| Contract Item 2: Online Courses.....                                                 | 7         |
| Contract Item 3: TechAccess Oklahoma.....                                            | 8         |
| Contract Item 4: Digital Accessibility Communications.....                           | 9         |
| Contract Item 5: Digital Accessibility Resources .....                               | 10        |
| Contract Item 6: Pope Tech .....                                                     | 10        |
| Contract Item 7: Annual Report.....                                                  | 11        |
| <b>AT, AEM, and ICT Accessibility for Pre-ETS .....</b>                              | <b>12</b> |
| Contract Item 1: Course Materials.....                                               | 12        |
| Contract Item 2: AT Devices, Information, and Training to BEST STEP Campers .....    | 12        |
| Contract Item 3: Training and TA to Pre-ETS Staff.....                               | 12        |
| Contract Item 4: Assist with Providing Information about Pre-ETS to the Public.....  | 13        |
| Contract Item 5: Prepare and Submit Data and Reports .....                           | 13        |
| Contract Item 6: Year-End Progress Report .....                                      | 13        |

# Alternative Financing Program Report

## Descriptive Data

---

### Types of Alternative Financing Loan Models

- A. Direct Loan
- B. Interest Rate Buy-Down Loan
- C. Guaranteed/Interest Rate Buy-Down Loan

### Name of Partners

- D. **Lead Agency:** Oklahoma State University - Oklahoma ABLE Tech
- E. **Community-Based Organization:** Oklahoma Assistive Technology Foundation (OkAT)
- F. **Lending Institution:** BancFirst of Stillwater

### Loan Program Features

- **Range of loan amounts program generally provides:** There are no minimum or maximum loan amount restrictions for unsecured loans or vehicle loans. Home accessibility modification loans are limited to \$25,000. Loans for the past year ranged from \$65 to \$50,923 with an average loan size of \$7,656.
- **Interest rates provided to borrower:** All loans had an interest rate of 8% fixed over the term of the loan. OkAT was able to buy down the interest rate for BancFirst loans from **8.75%** for secured/guaranteed loans and from **10.49%** for unsecured loans.
- **Repayment terms the program generally provides:** The program generally offers terms of 6 to 60 months (about 5 years) for unsecured and secured loans. Home modification direct loans can have a term of up to 84 months (about 7 years). The shortest loan term was 8 months.
- **Total loan fund capacity as of June 30, 2026:** Total dollars available for closing new loans is **\$1,523,592**
- **Restrictions on types of devices purchased:** The loan program does not restrict the type of AT a borrower can purchase.

## Portfolio Performance - Alternative Financing Program (AFP)

---

- A. **Outstanding loans, for which the principal was not paid in full, as of June 30, 2026, of Guaranteed and Direct loans for which the loan program could incur losses:**

| Type of Loan   | Number of Loans | Outstanding Principal Balance |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Guaranty Loans | 103             | \$1,015,445                   |
| Direct Loans   | 141             | \$307,873                     |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>244</b>      | <b>\$1,323,318</b>            |

**B. Losses this past year:**

- a. Total dollar amount of net losses (money lost on direct loans and guarantee payouts minus recoveries from collateral or payments): **\$71,357**
- b. Number of loans defaulted as of June 30, 2026: **18**

**C. Outstanding loans, for which the principal was not paid in full, as of June 30, 2026, of non-guaranteed loans for which the loan program cannot incur losses:**

- a. Total number of outstanding loans: **30**
- b. Total dollar amount of principal still outstanding: **\$274,224**

## Loan Information

---

**A. Number of Applications received**

| Application Status for Metro vs. Non-Metro             | Metro     | Non-Metro | Total      |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Number of applications approved - <b>loan made</b>     | 43        | 32        | 75         |
| Number of applications approved - <b>loan not made</b> | 9         | 9         | 18         |
| Number of applications rejected                        | 46        | 50        | 96         |
| <b>Total</b>                                           | <b>98</b> | <b>91</b> | <b>189</b> |

**B. Income of borrowers - Average gross income of all borrowers: \$61,033**

| Annual Gross Income Range | \$15,000 or Less | \$15,001 to \$30,000 | \$30,001 to \$45,000 | \$45,001 to \$60,000 | \$60,001 to \$75,000 | \$75,001 or More |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Number of Loans Made      | 5                | 12                   | 18                   | 9                    | 7                    | 24               |

### C. Loans closed

| Type of Loan                           | Number of Loans Made | Total Dollar Amount |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Direct Loan                            | 36                   | \$132,206           |
| Preferred Interest Rate Buy-Down Loans | 8                    | \$64,515            |
| Preferred Guaranteed & Buy-Down Loans  | 31                   | \$377,453           |
| <b>Total of All Loans</b>              | <b>75</b>            | <b>\$574,174</b>    |

### D. Type of AT purchased from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025

| Type of AT                               | Number of Devices | Total Dollar Amount |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Hearing                                  | 99                | \$280,852           |
| Vehicle modifications and transportation | 10                | \$248,527           |
| Daily Living                             | 4                 | \$3,787             |
| Environmental Adaptation                 | 1                 | \$377               |
| Vision                                   | 2                 | \$388               |
| Speech Communication                     | 0                 | \$0                 |
| Computer Related                         | 1                 | \$97                |
| Learning, Cognition, and Developmental   | 8                 | \$3,221             |
| Mobility, Seating, and Positioning       | 5                 | \$36,925            |
| Recreation, Sports, and Leisure          | 0                 | \$0                 |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>130</b>        | <b>\$574,174</b>    |

### E. Purpose of AT

| Purpose          | Count     |
|------------------|-----------|
| Education        | 2         |
| Employment       | 21        |
| Community Living | 52        |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>75</b> |

# Creating an Accessible Workforce System for All

## Contract Item 1: Training, Technical Assistance, and Information and Assistance

---

**Provide ad hoc digital accessibility training, technical assistance, and information and assistance to all DRS personnel and partners, including Workforce partners and American Job Centers.** These services will help ensure that Oklahomans with disabilities can fully access all web content and mobile applications provided by all DRS partners, per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Sections 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), and Oklahoma's Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility (EITA) Act. Quarterly reports will be made available and will inform the development of future training topics.

### Training Update

ABLE Tech presented 26 trainings to 1,309 unique participants across Oklahoma in FY26, including:

- 410 participants from the County Officers & Deputies Association (CODA)
- 268 participants from 7 different Tech Centers
- 774 participants from 21 State & Local Government entities
- 529 participants from 19 education institutions, from K-12 to Higher Ed

### Technical Assistance Update

In FY26, ABLE Tech provided 33 hours of technical assistance to agencies, higher ed institutions, organizations, and workforce partners, including:

- Helping Kiamichi Technology Center review the accessibility of their web content, providing recommended fixes, and going over many digital accessibility resources.
- Working with the Washington County Courthouse to create a strategy for reaching compliance with the new ADA Title II accessibility rule.
- Serving on the OSU/A&M Board of Regents' Digital Accessibility Working Group, providing accessibility policy guidance, and developing resources and training materials for students and faculty.

- Helping Western Oklahoma State College (WOSC) develop an accessible Degree Plan template that will be used to create every degree plan at WOSC moving forward and providing information on how to make tables accessible in PDFs for use with their Academic Calendars.
- Developing an accessible newsletter document template with the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). This template will be used by one of their statewide programs to create a series of newsletters available to every parent of children with disabilities across Oklahoma.
- Helping the Oklahoma State University Facility Maintenance Department develop an accessible digital form to collect information from students and faculty about possible ADA issues on campus.
- Helping Tulsa Community College (TCC) evaluate the accessibility of their counseling appointment tracking software, Titanium and providing guidance on remediating web forms produced by Titanium.
- Working with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to evaluate and remediate various Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and PDFs.

## Information & Assistance Update

ABLE Tech provided information and assistance 131 times to a total of 304 people across Oklahoma. This includes answering accessibility questions received via email and phone, sending resources, and meeting to discuss various accessibility topics.

## Contract Item 2: Online Courses

---

**Create and host a catalog of self-paced online training courses on a variety of topics related to accessibility in the workforce and the Access for All initiative.** The goal of these courses is to help teach all DRS personnel and partners, including Workforce partners and American Job Centers, about accessibility and their requirements under the law and the Access for All initiative.

## Online Courses Update

| Course Name                                   | Canvas | Reach 360 |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| Introduction to Digital Accessibility         | 104    | 10        |
| The Four Core Skills of Digital Accessibility | 0      | 6         |
| Describing Complex Images                     | 46     | 3         |

| Course Name                                   | Canvas     | Reach 360 |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Accessible Web Design                         | 90         | 3         |
| Accessibility Testing for Beginners           | 20         | 1         |
| Accessibility in Microsoft PowerPoint for Mac | 17         | 0         |
| Accessibility in Microsoft PowerPoint for PC  | 50         | 3         |
| Accessibility in Microsoft Word for Mac       | 26         | 1         |
| Accessibility in Microsoft Word for PC        | 127        | 4         |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>480</b> | <b>31</b> |

With **511 total course completions in FY26**, enrollment has stayed steady. The courses were transferred from Canvas to a new Learning Management System (Reach 360) in quarter 4 which significantly increased the speed at which courses were created, leading to the release of the following two new courses in FY26:

1. Introduction to Digital Accessibility
2. The Four Core Skills of Digital Accessibility

These courses comprise the [Digital Accessibility Basics](#) learning path and set the foundation for all future course plans.

## Contract Item 3: TechAccess Oklahoma

**Host the annual TechAccess Oklahoma Accessibility Conference.** TechAccess Oklahoma provides the opportunity to learn about digital accessibility from nationally recognized experts. Sessions often cover topics such as beginner-level introductions to accessibility, advanced web development, accessibility policies and procedures, document remediation, and everything in between. The goal of TechAccess Oklahoma is to increase the overall knowledge of accessibility across the state to help ensure that all Oklahomans can access the digital content of every state and local government entity, including state agencies, higher education institutions, and career and technology education centers.

### TechAccess Oklahoma Update

This year marked the 11th anniversary of TechAccess Oklahoma, Oklahoma's premier digital accessibility conference. The conference was hosted on March 2-3, 2026, and returned to



MetroTech’s Spring Lake Campus. In total, **more than 400 attendees** participated in-person and online.

This year’s theme, “Local Voices, Lasting Impact,” presented the opportunity to invite amazing presenters who live or work in Oklahoma. Additional information about this year’s speakers and sessions can be found on the [2026 Speakers](#) and [2026 Sessions](#) pages on [TechAccessOK.org](https://TechAccessOK.org).

## Contract Item 4: Digital Accessibility Communications

---

**Create and distribute various communications on digital accessibility topics that apply to employment.** Communications will help ensure all DRS personnel and partners, including Workforce partners and American Job Centers are aware of the trainings and courses, technical assistance, information and assistance, conference, and resource materials available to help improve skills, knowledge, and competencies in the various topic areas. These communications could include blog posts, newsletter articles, social media posts, and more. Topics could include tips on how to create accessible digital content, information on helpful accessibility tools, or tips on assistive technology (AT) devices.

### Digital Accessibility Communications Update

Primary methods of distributing digital accessibility communications continue to be monthly ABLE Tech newsletter and social media channels. Information on the following topics and resources were distributed in FY26:

- 9 updated [Accessibility Tips for Employers](#) (previously Access for All Tips)
- Annual [TechAccess Oklahoma](#) conference, including speakers, sessions, and registration instructions
- Call-to-action for participation in [Global Accessibility Awareness Day \(GAAD\)](#)
- The release of a new series of Accessibility Quick Reference Guides
- The creation of the new Workforce Accessibility Hub (WAH)
- The launch of a new Digital Accessibility Course Library

More information on many of these resources is available under Contract Item 5: Digital Accessibility Resources below. The full repository of newsletters can be found on the [ABLE Tech Publications and Newsletters](#) page.

## Contract Item 5: Digital Accessibility Resources

---

**Create and maintain a webpage containing training resources on various digital accessibility topics.** The resources will be a combination of materials created by the Contractor and materials sourced from reputable third parties. The resources will be made publicly available on the Contractor's website and will serve as reference material for DRS personnel and partners, including Workforce partners and American Job Centers. Resources will be reviewed at least annually.

### Digital Accessibility Resources Update

As mentioned above, the collection of [Accessibility Tips for Employers](#) (previously Access for All Tips) was updated during FY26.

Content can now be accessed through the new [Workforce Accessibility Hub \(WAH\)](#).

In FY26 [Digital Accessibility Resources](#) were updated and Accessibility Quick Reference Guides were added:

- [PDF Accessibility Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Word Accessibility Quick Reference Guide](#)

## Contract Item 6: Pope Tech

---

**Utilize the Pope Tech enterprise accessibility testing tool to evaluate the accessibility of DRS and partner websites.** Pope Tech allows the Contractor to easily scan, evaluate, and collect data on the accessibility of hundreds of web pages at a time, saving significant time and effort. This data will be used to monitor the progress of accessibility initiatives performed on the websites of DRS and their partners over time. The Contractor will also use this data to help DRS and their partners prioritize which webpages or accessibility barriers to target for remediation first, ensuring assessment projects are efficient, effective, and valuable. The Contractor will also provide technical assistance alongside any assessment to help DRS and their partners fully understand the assessment results.

### Pope Tech Update

In FY26, Pope Tech was used to audit the accessibility of the following websites, totaling **1,430 individual web pages**:

- Oklahoma's five Regional Workforce Boards:
  - o Central Oklahoma Workforce Innovation Board

- o Green Country Workforce Development Board
  - o South Central Oklahoma Workforce Board
  - o Southern Workforce Board
  - o Western Oklahoma Workforce Development Board
- Plan Your Way OK
- Oklahoma ABLE Tech
- Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC)
- Special Education Resolution Center (SERC)
- National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC)

## **Contract Item 7: Annual Report**

---

**Prepare and submit an annual report to DRS on outcomes achieved toward the Contract.**

### **Annual Report Update**

- Creating and submitting this Annual Report satisfies this contract item.

# AT, AEM, and ICT Accessibility for Pre-ETS

## Contract Item 1: Course Materials

---

Oklahoma ABLE Tech continues to add courses on digital accessibility to its course catalog. Visit the [course catalog](#).

## Contract Item 2: AT Devices, Information, and Training to BEST STEP Campers

---

- “[AT in the Workplace](#),” a self-paced course, was updated to continue to support transition-related training at the Pre-ETS BEST STEP camps. The course introduces various types of AT that might be used in the workplace.
  - o Thirty (30) individuals completed the “AT in the Workplace” course in FY26.
- Six hundred (600) ABLE Tech packages were distributed to all BEST STEP campers at multiple sites in Oklahoma. Included were a “Goal Setting Worksheet” and guidance on how to access the self-paced course. All participants received two (2) low-tech AT devices (including one (1) Make n’ Take item) as examples and for use as needed. Videos were developed corresponding to the AT included to assist in the construction (Make n’ Take) and to model use.
- Postcards were created to share information about the course catalog and how to borrow AT devices for short-term loans to make informed decisions prior to AT acquisition. These, too, were disseminated to BEST STEP campers.

## Contract Item 3: Training and TA to Pre-ETS Staff

---

- ABLE Tech coordinated with Pre-ETS administrators at multiple sites to better facilitate the development and dissemination of resources and presented to counselors—soliciting their input on activities and the selection of AT to include.
- Guidance and information were provided to Pre-ETS staff on how to use materials and incorporate the videos into their instruction.
- The DRS transition coordinator was informed continuously.

## **Contract Item 4: Assist with Providing Information about Pre-ETS to the Public**

---

The course “AT in the Workplace” continues to be available to the public. It has and will continue to be marketed to other transition-focused groups (e.g., public schools).

Information regarding Pre-ETS is also communicated through ABLE Tech newsletters and transition networks and partners.

## **Contract Item 5: Prepare and Submit Data and Reports**

---

Relevant data was collected, entered, and submitted to DRS with monthly invoices. Data is also entered into the NATADS system and submitted to the Administration for Community Living in an annual performance report.

## **Contract Item 6: Year-End Progress Report**

---

This report meets this deliverable.



# Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC) Report

## **Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC) Report**

**August 12, 2026**

The Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council (ORC) is a federally mandated advisory council established under the Rehabilitation Act to partner with the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). The Council is composed of Governor-appointed members who represent individuals with disabilities, businesses, community rehabilitation providers, advocacy organizations, workforce partners, educators, and other stakeholders.

Together, these diverse perspectives help ensure that Oklahoma's vocational rehabilitation programs remain responsive to the needs of individuals with disabilities, employers, and communities throughout the State.

### **The Council's Mission**

The Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council works in partnership with DRS to ensure Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services are of the highest quality and lead to meaningful employment outcomes for Oklahomans with disabilities while promoting consumer education and empowerment.

### **The Functions of the Council**

- Review, analyze, and advise the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding the performance of its responsibilities.
- Develop, agree to, and review state goals and priorities and evaluate the effectiveness of the VR/VS program.
- Advise the Department of Rehabilitation Services regarding activities authorized to be carried out and assist in the preparation of the State plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations.
- Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation/visual services and consumer satisfaction.
- Prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Governor and the Commissioner of RSA on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the state.
- Coordinate the work of the Council with the activities of other disability-related councils.
- Establish working relationships between the Department of Rehabilitation Services; the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and the Centers for Independent Living (CIL) within Oklahoma.

### **How does the Council Support DRS**

The Council exists to strengthen, not duplicate, the work of DRS.

Council members volunteer their expertise, professional experience, and community connections to support DRS in achieving its mission of helping Oklahomans with disabilities prepare for, obtain, maintain, and advance in competitive integrated employment.

Some of the work done through the Committees includes:

- Building partnerships across Oklahoma.
- Connecting DRS with employers, educators, and disability organizations.
- Encouraging continuous improvement through collaboration.
- Supporting strategic planning and long-term initiatives.
- Promoting awareness of vocational rehabilitation and employment opportunities.
- Helping ensure the voices of consumers remain central to decision-making.
- Providing independent, community-based perspectives.

## FFY26 Report

Since the last ORC report to the Commission in December 2025, the Council met in person on February 19 and May 21, 2026.

During this time, the Council has worked and completed the following objectives and activities:

- The FFY25 ORC Annual Report was submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), the Governor's Office, and made available to the public on December 17, 2025.
- On January 14, 2026, the ORC Program Manager (PM), Carolina Colclasure, participated in the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) 2026 Administrative Rules Public Hearing and presented the support letter on behalf of the Council.
- From February 13-27, 2026, the ORC Employment Committee hosted a Self-Employment training for 130 DRS Counselors, Program Managers, Field Coordinators, and both Division Administrators (DA). This initiative originated in FFY24, when the DRS leadership requested assistance from the Council in developing self-employment training opportunities utilizing the expertise of Business, Industry and Labor (BIL) representatives serving on the Council.  
As planning began, the ORC Program Manager attended a conference session highlighting a nationally recognized Self-Employment Toolkit. Following the conference, the presenters were contacted, and in collaboration with the DRS Training Unit, arrangements were made to bring the training to Oklahoma. The Council provided funding for the trainers and training materials, while DRS coordinated participant involvement and logistics.  
The training was delivered in two separate sessions, held February 23–24 and February 26–27, 2026, and included 130 counselors from VR and SBVI. Pre- and post-training survey results demonstrated a significant increase in participant knowledge and understanding of self-employment resources, tools, and strategies. The Council was extremely pleased with the outcomes and encouraged by the success of this collaborative effort. This partnership serves as an excellent example of how collaboration between the Council and DRS can strengthen staff capacity and ultimately enhance services and opportunities for Oklahomans with disabilities.
- The Council participated in the 2026 People with Disabilities Awareness Day (PWDAD) on March 10, 2026, at the Oklahoma History Center.  
In preparation for the event, the Council updated its Legislative Primer to provide more comprehensive information and incorporated a visual chart to make key concepts and legislative priorities easier to understand. The revised primer was reviewed by the DRS Communications Unit and aligned with the information DRS planned to share with legislators and senators during the legislative session and meetings held throughout PWDAD.  
Printed copies of the Legislative Primer were distributed during the event and subsequently shared with all Council members. The ORC remains committed to its advocacy efforts and will continue to utilize and distribute these materials during outreach activities, public events, and informational booths throughout the year to promote awareness of vocational rehabilitation services and disability-related issues affecting Oklahomans.
- On March 28 and 29, Council members Stephanie Hesser, Kennda Miller, and Council Staff Allyson Robinson and Carolina Colclasure participated in the 2026 National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) Spring Conference. The conference addressed a variety of topics relevant to the Council's responsibilities, including:



- o State Rehabilitation Council 101
- o Putting Faces to the Work: How SRCs Can Use Social Media to Strengthen Engagement, Communication, and Strategic Impact
- o Partnership as Practice: Collaborative Inquiry in the CSNA Process
- o Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Update
- o Association of People Supporting Employment First National Update
- o Navigating Forward: From mission to measurable impact in State Rehabilitation Councils
- The 2026 Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Spring Conference took place from March 30 to April 1, 2026. The Council was represented by Allyson Robinson and Carolina Colclasure. The Conference included sessions like:
  - o Talent that works – Elevating the Business Voice in Vocational Rehabilitation
  - o Building Smarter Systems: How Quality Data Enables Responsible AI
  - o If Leaders Can't See It, They Can't Fund It: Making Fiscal Information Work for VR
  - o From Visibility to Access: How Nevada VR Uses Digital Media and Online Services to Strengthen Engagement and Efficiency
  - o Improving Employment Outcomes in California Through Sector-Based Service Delivery
  - o Customized Employment: Is It Time to Try Another Way?
  - o Positioning VR for the Future: Federal Policy, Disability Alignment, and Systems Transformation
- The ORC and ABLE Tech hosted the Oklahoma Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (OKTVR) Council meeting on April 17 at the Seretean Wellness Center in Stillwater. There were 30 participants, and after their regular meeting, they attended ABLE Tech's Smart Home demonstration.
- The ORC PM has attended the Governor's Council for Workforce and Economic Development meetings on behalf of the Council on April 24 and July 24, 2026.
- On July 14, Taylor Rhoades, the Chair of the Employment Committee, presented on "Disability Etiquette" during the DRS Business Services Program (BSP) Talent without Borders in Idable. The ORC PM also attended the event and assisted with the sessions during the day.
- On July 28, the ORC PM and Harrison Consulting participated in the DRS Ready, Set Hired Career Expo. The event had close to 200 participants and was hosted by DRS and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The Council continues to work to meet all the objectives and activities in its Strategic Plan. Below is a summary of the last committee meetings:

### **Executive Committee**

The Committee met via Zoom on March 26 and June 18, 2026.

The meetings started with general updates from DRS leadership regarding ongoing agency activities, staffing, and upcoming conference participation. During the June 25, 2026 meeting, the Division Administrators shared the appointment of the Interim Executive Director, Sterling Zearley.

Council membership and partnership updates were also reviewed. The Council currently has vacancies, including a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) position and an additional workforce representative position, both resulting from recent resignations.

Members also discussed the ongoing collaboration with the Oklahoma Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Council (OKTVR).

### **Advocacy Committee**

The Advocacy Committee met via Zoom on April 9 and June 25, 2026.

The Advocacy Committee discussed planning the advocacy training in the summer, as it couldn't be done before People with Disabilities Awareness Day (PWDAD). It will be recorded and posted on ORC's YouTube channel and/or the ORC website so council members and partners can view it on demand.

The committee reviewed the Strategic Plan objectives and activities.

The committee discussed customer satisfaction surveys, and Tiffany Davis reported that no VR-specific survey is currently planned. A broader consumer satisfaction survey may occur later in the year (possibly in the fall), but near-term emphasis remains on current survey projects and on completing the needs assessment.

The Committee reflected on advocacy and legislative outreach activities completed during the current legislative session and PWDAD. The Committee confirmed that ORC successfully participated in the event with a booth and distributed updated legislative primers and DRS informational materials to legislators and attendees.

The Committee has followed up on the PWDAD efforts by emailing Senators and Legislators a digital copy of the Legislative Primer.

### **Transition Committee Report**

The Transition Committee met via Zoom on April 9 and June 25, 2026.

The committee reviewed Activity 4 and the ongoing dissemination efforts for transition resources, summer programs, transition fairs, and DRS newsletters. Members discussed continuing to share information through the ABLE Tech newsletter, the PlanYourWayOK website, and partner organizations. The group also highlighted the value of transition-related videos and digital resources available on the website and discussed strategies to improve visibility and encourage greater stakeholder engagement with online content.

The transition folders have been printed and will be delivered to DRS to start disseminating at the beginning of the school year.

### **Employment Committee Report**

The Employment Committee met via Zoom on April 10 and June 26, 2026, to review the Strategic Plan.

The committee discussed opportunities to strengthen partnerships between employers, providers, and workforce teams to improve employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. Carolina Colclasure shared feedback from the Transition Committee regarding the need for stronger coordination with DRS BSP staff and providers supporting approximately 37 individuals currently seeking employment through Bridges Foundation. The Committee explored the possibility of developing a pilot partnership effort to connect these job seekers more directly with workforce and employer engagement initiatives. Carolina will coordinate a meeting with Bridges and BSP to go over the possibility of this collaboration.

Yasmin discussed ongoing collaboration efforts in the Tulsa area and shared updates on the upcoming "Career 101" pilot initiative, which focuses on soft skills and employment-

readiness training. The initiative is expected to include employer participation and networking opportunities to support individuals with disabilities as they enter the workforce.

Taylor Rhoades proposed developing a “reverse job fair” model that would enable employers to meet directly with job seekers with disabilities in an inclusive, supportive setting. The Committee agreed that the concept could help strengthen employer confidence and increase awareness of disability inclusion strategies in the workplace.

The committee also reviewed disability etiquette materials, interview guidance, and inclusive hiring resources currently used internally at Mercy. Members discussed building on existing materials to create practical tools to support accessibility and inclusive hiring efforts for employers.

The next ORC Quarterly Meeting will be on Thursday, August 20, 2026, at 9:30 am at Francis Tuttle, Portland Campus.

The FFY27 Strategic Planning Meeting will be on Thursday, September 3, 2026, at 9:30 am at Francis Tuttle, Portland Campus.

***Respectfully submitted by  
Carolina Colclasure, ORC Program Manager***



# Statewide Independent Living Council of Oklahoma Report

## **Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Report DRS Commission Meeting August 12, 2026**

**SILC and the Centers (CILs)** are still providing interim services for the Progressive Independence (P.I.) catchment area. P.I., remains closed until the appeal process runs its course (we were told that could be 5 years). Those Part B funds (\$55,968.40) are being divided between the centers. The Director of the Office of Independent Living Programs (OILP) will be getting us the information on the remaining Part C dollars that the Centers can also utilize. There is currently a 'no-cost extension' in place so the Part C funds aren't lost. That extension expires 9-26-2026. These are the remaining funds from FY23. I will get in touch with our Project Officer and the Director of OILP for further instructions now that the extension expiration is coming up.

**NASILC (National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils)** – SILC Congress is being held in San Diego for 2027.

**ARPIL (Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living)**– The next annual conference is October, 2026 and will be in Niagara Falls, New York. OKSILC still has a strong presence on the Executive Committee as the Treasurer for the organization.

**Independent Living Stakeholder** meetings with the Administration on Community Living (ACL), the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), the National Association of Statewide Independent Living Councils (NASILC), and the Office of Independent Living Programs (OILP) continue to meet. The latest meetings have been about making revisions to the Program Performance Reports (PPRs), the proposed language from OMB Uniform Guidance on attending conferences and paying due to membership organizations utilizing Federal funding.

Sidna Trimmell was asked to join and be a part of the Yang-Tan Institute on Employment and Disability and the Worker Institute at Cornell University's 'Making Work Work' Project Advisory Committee. The committee is comprised of Ms. Trimmell from Oklahoma, two members from New York, and three members from Washington. This initiative will explore how meeting the needs of care workers with disabilities can help them to remain employed and support the employability of care recipients who require assistance with personal care. The research focuses on professional home care workers (with disabilities) and people with disabilities who utilize home care services to access employment, considering the perspective of both the home care recipients and the home care providers on what enables employment for both the care provider and the recipient. The hope is to influence the policies and the practices of unions, apprenticeship programs, and agencies so that they can better meet the needs of care workers who will as a result be better able to provide high-quality care. This is a three-year project.

Sidna Trimmell presented to students in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program at Langston University. The presentation was on Independent Living, the SILC and its duties, and the Centers for Independent Living's duties and services provided.

Our annual SILC Program Performance Report (PPR) was submitted by the deadline, and we have received notice that ACL/OIPL has accepted and approved our report.

With the loss of Rachel Allen (Delaware Nation) SILC is also currently looking for a member who would fulfill the 121 Program (tribal VR) vacancy on the Council. While the requirement of having a 121 Program was removed, SILC still finds the importance and added value of continuing to have a tribal representative onboard. The individual will have to submit an application to the Governor's Appointment Secretary and be vetted through their office.

Through Ms. Trimmell, SILC has a seat on the National Coalition on Accessible Voting and is also part of the grassroots startup of REV UP Oklahoma (Register, Educate, Vote, Use Your Power). SILC, being a 501c3 will be the fiduciary agent for a stipend from the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) for the REV UP program. This is a national movement to increase civic engagement and accessibility of elections for people with disabilities. The REV UP Oklahoma has just started, but is off to a great start!

#### **SILC members discussed at the last SILC meeting (July 31):**

- **Virtual CIL Launched:** Dynamic Independence & Ability Resources are providing virtual services to the 5-county OKC area (Canadian, Cleveland, McClain, Oklahoma, Pottawatomie) while Progressive Independence's federal funding appeal is pending – which could take up to five years.
- **Disability Benefits Reform:** The council will advocate for federal SSI/SSDI reform to eliminate the "forced poverty" trap, proposing a system where earned income must be double the benefit amount before benefits are reduced.
- **DRS Leadership Transition:** DRS has a new Director (Sterling Zierle)
- **State Plan (SPIL) Due:** The next State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is due June 30, 2027. Workgroup meetings will begin after the September 25 meeting.

#### **Topics**

##### **Disability Benefits Reform Advocacy**

- **Problem:** The current federal SSI/SSDI system creates a "forced poverty" trap, discouraging work by reducing benefits (including Medicaid) dollar-for-dollar as income rises.
- **Impact:** This forces individuals to choose between a career and essential benefits, as exemplified by council-member Aracely Baeza's experience needing Medicaid for a \$32k wheelchair.
- **Proposed Solution:** Advocate for a new system where earned income must be double the benefit amount before reductions begin.
- **Strategy:** Frame reform as a long-term cost-saver for the federal government by improving health outcomes and reducing dependency.

#### **CIL Operations & Updates**

- **Virtual CIL (OKC Area)**
  - **Purpose:** Provide services to the 5-county OKC area (Canadian, Cleveland, McClain, Oklahoma, Pottawatomie) during Progressive Independence's federal funding appeal.
  - **Operators:** Dynamic Independence (Bartlesville) & Ability Resources (Tulsa).
  - **Process:** Services are delivered virtually via Zoom. The CIL Suite database is set up to track calls, and all data will be handed over to the permanent CIL once established.
- **Ability Resources (Tulsa)**
  - The Veterans Directed Care Program is growing faster than anticipated, requiring an additional staff hire.

- **Dynamic Independence (Bartlesville)**
  - Two staff attended the NICL conference and returned highly motivated to implement new ideas.
- **Sandra Beasley IL Center**
  - Katrinka Kuzniar is the new Executive Director, currently organizing operations and attending training (e.g., grant writing).

#### **DRS & ORC Updates**

- **DRS (Dept. of Rehabilitation Services)**
  - **Leadership:** Sterling Zearley is the new Interim Director
  - **Legal:** The Governor is appealing a district court ruling that upheld the current DRS commission structure, arguing against legislative appointment power.
  - **Operations:** The agency moved to a new headquarters at 7301 NW Expressway. The focus is on year-end grant closeout and modernizing administrative rules.

#### **SILC Governance & Administration**

- **Executive Committee Vacancies:**
  - **Openings:** Secretary and one Member-at-Large.
  - **Action:** Members should volunteer or nominate candidates for the September 25 election.
  - **Priority:** A candidate with a relationship to the Governor's office is needed, as the Governor makes all appointments. A tribal representative is also desired.
- **PPR Revisions:**
  - **Status:** The PPR revision workgroup is finalizing changes for public comment in spring 2027.
  - **Timeline:** The current PPR remains in effect until Dec 31, 2026.
  - **Concern:** Two SILC directors are on the revision workgroup, which is seen as overstepping the SILC's non-service-providing role.

The next SILC meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Sidna Trimmell



# Hiring Committee Report





## **Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services**

### **Hiring Committee Report and Recommendation for Appointment of Executive Director**

**Committee Meeting Date:** Thursday, July 30, 2026

**Commission Meeting Date:** Wednesday, August 12, 2026

#### **Hiring Committee Members**

Commissioners Lindsay Hanna, Kelsey Lee and Noel Tyler

#### **Background and Committee Review**

The Hiring Committee met to evaluate the Executive Director recruitment process and determine the most appropriate path forward for the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS).

Following its initial review, the Committee paused moving forward with CLA Talent Solutions in order to gather additional information regarding the agency's current operational status, leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, and future direction before making a recommendation to the Commission.

As part of this evaluation, the Committee met with Interim Executive Director Sterling Zearley to discuss the agency's priorities, accomplishments, challenges, strategic direction, and vision for the future. The Committee also considered the progress made during the leadership transition, the agency's operational stability, employee confidence, stakeholder relationships, and the leadership demonstrated during this period.

Based on this comprehensive review, the Hiring Committee determined that the information gathered provided a clear basis for moving forward with a permanent appointment. The Committee found that Interim Executive Director Sterling Zearley has demonstrated exceptional leadership through integrity, transparency, accessibility, sound judgment, timely decision-making, and a strong commitment to the mission of the Department.

The Committee further believes that Mr. Zearley's leadership has strengthened organizational stability, increased employee confidence, fostered positive relationships with stakeholders, and enhanced the agency's credibility with the Governor's Office and the Oklahoma Legislature.

7301 N.W. Expressway, Suite 200, Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
o: 405-951-3400 | f: 405 951-3529 | [Oklahoma.gov](http://Oklahoma.gov) | [okdrs.gov](http://okdrs.gov)

Interim Executive Director Sterling Zearley  
Commissioners Janet C. Barresi, DDS, Wanda Felty, Lindsay Hanna,  
Kelsey Lee, Lance Robertson, Noel Tyler and Kevin Wallace



### Hiring Committee Recommendation

After careful evaluation and unanimous agreement, the Hiring Committee recommends that the Commission appoint Sterling Zearley as the permanent Executive Director of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, effective immediately.

The Committee believes this recommendation is in the best interest of the agency and the people it serves. Appointing Mr. Zearley as Executive Director will provide continuity of leadership, maintain the agency's positive momentum, support ongoing organizational improvements, and demonstrate responsible stewardship of public resources by eliminating the need for an extended executive recruitment process.

### Committee Conclusion

The Hiring Committee believes this recommendation reflects a thoughtful, informed, and transparent evaluation process. The Committee entered this process prepared to determine the best approach for identifying the agency's long-term leader. After completing its review, the Committee concluded that the agency has identified a demonstrated leader who has exhibited the qualities necessary to guide DRS forward.

The Committee is confident that appointing Sterling Zearley as the permanent Executive Director positions the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services to continue strengthening its services, supporting its employees, maintaining the confidence of stakeholders and legislators, and fulfilling its mission of empowering Oklahomans with disabilities to achieve employment, independence, and an enhanced quality of life.

### Hiring Committee

The undersigned members of the Hiring Committee affirm their participation in the review process and support the recommendation presented in this report.

|                                                                                 |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <u>Lindsay Hanna</u><br><small>Lindsay Hanna (Aug 4, 2026 15:22:14 CDT)</small> | 08/04/26 |
| Commissioner Lindsay Hanna                                                      | Date:    |
| <u>Kelsey Lee</u>                                                               | 08/04/26 |
| Commissioner Kelsey Lee                                                         | Date:    |
| <u>Noel Tyler</u><br><small>Noel Tyler (Aug 5, 2026 06:19:35 CDT)</small>       | 08/05/26 |
| Commissioner Noel Tyler                                                         | Date:    |

# Hiring Committee Report

Final Audit Report

2026-08-05

|                 |                                               |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Created:        | 2026-08-04                                    |
| By:             | Kathleen Arrieta (kathleen.arrieta@okdrs.gov) |
| Status:         | Signed                                        |
| Transaction ID: | CBJCHBCAABAaKOaER1pwwPkqTckFMebYPnXB0d08iG4V  |

## "Hiring Committee Report" History

-  Document created by Kathleen Arrieta (kathleen.arrieta@okdrs.gov)  
2026-08-04 - 7:08:32 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Lindsay Hanna (lindsay.hanna@ok.gov) for signature  
2026-08-04 - 7:08:37 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Kelsey Lee (kelsey.lee@ok.gov) for signature  
2026-08-04 - 7:08:37 PM GMT
-  Document emailed to Noel Tyler (noel.tyler@ok.gov) for signature  
2026-08-04 - 7:08:38 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Noel Tyler (noel.tyler@ok.gov)  
2026-08-04 - 7:08:57 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Lindsay Hanna (lindsay.hanna@ok.gov)  
2026-08-04 - 7:09:01 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Kelsey Lee (kelsey.lee@ok.gov)  
2026-08-04 - 7:13:31 PM GMT
-  Document e-signed by Kelsey Lee (kelsey.lee@ok.gov)  
Signature Date: 2026-08-04 - 7:18:47 PM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: IMAGE
-  Document e-signed by Lindsay Hanna (lindsay.hanna@ok.gov)  
Signature Date: 2026-08-04 - 8:22:14 PM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: TYPE
-  Document e-signed by Noel Tyler (noel.tyler@ok.gov)  
Signature Date: 2026-08-05 - 11:19:35 AM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: MOBILE\_DRAW
-  Agreement completed.  
2026-08-05 - 11:19:35 AM GMT



Adobe Acrobat Sign