

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Maryland State Department of Education

Division of Rehabilitation Services

DORS: 1929-2019

Celebrating 90 Years of Helping Marylanders with disAbilities

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

2019 was a special year for the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (MSDE DORS) as we celebrated our 90th Anniversary.

On April 2, 1929, Maryland Governor Albert C. Ritchie signed SB 174 into law, creating the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) under the Maryland State Board of Education. The new law provided a budget of not more than \$5,000 for each of the first two years, nor more than \$15,000 for any year thereafter to provide for the vocational rehabilitation (VR) of the physically disabled. In its first year of operation DVR had two employees, Director Dr. R.C. Thompson, who also served as the VR counselor, and a secretary. DVR's first reported rehabilitation was on June 30, 1930.

DORS has come a long way since those humble beginnings. Today our two main programs, the VR program and the Disability Determination Services, have a combined staff of approximately 625, and we provide services to more than 90,000 Marylanders through an operating budget of over \$120 million.

The national VR program, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), celebrates its 100 anniversary in 2020. Over the years, changes to law and RSA policy have helped DORS evolve to better serve Maryland. In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) broadened the Division's focus to address issues of independence, access, discrimination and inclusion, and

we were re-named the Division of Rehabilitation Services to reflect these changes.

Most recently, the 2014 Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) formalized and expanded our collaborations with workforce partners, the Departments of Labor and Human Services and local workforce agencies. DORS also worked to continue our collaboration with the Behavioral Health Administration, Developmental Disabilities Administration, the Department of Disabilities, MSDE's Division of Early Intervention/ Special Education, local school systems, and community rehabilitation providers. The "no wrong door" philosophy embodied in these partnerships helps us all better serve people with disabilities, as well as Maryland businesses seeking qualified employees.

Another essential resource is the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council. The Council provides invaluable insight and guidance regarding DORS' programs, policies, and processes.

We are proud of all that has been accomplished the past 90 years and look forward to continuing to fulfill our mission of providing leadership and support in promoting the employment, economic self-sufficiency and independence of Marylanders with disabilities.

Scott Dennis, Assistant State Superintendent

The Numbers

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Total \$109,925,083

- Federal Matching Funds: \$48,474,856
- Federal Non-Matching Funds: \$43,786,015
- State Funds: \$14,894,917
- Special Funds: \$2,769,295

EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS: Total \$109,925,083

- Disability Determination Services: \$35,066,621
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services: \$33,689,978
- Case Services - Vocational: \$16,997,545
- Administration: \$12,259,266
- Case Services - Pre ETS: \$7,753,358
- Business Enterprise Program for the Blind: \$2,710,311
- Way2 Work: \$1,448,004

PERSONS REHABILITATED BY OCCUPATION AT CASE CLOSURE: Total: 1,256

- Clerical, Sales: 456
- Service: 429
- Professional, Technical, Managerial: 192
- Production, Construction, Operating, Material Handling: 158
- Miscellaneous: 13
- Other: 8 (Farming, Fishing & Forestry - 4, Vending Operator/Worker - 4)

APPRENTICESHIP THINK TANK UPDATE

- Building on the 2018 Apprenticeship Think Tank partnership, DORS' Workforce & Technology Center (WTC), the Maryland Department of Labor and Department of Disabilities, the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), and community partners GRACE, Project Jumpstart, and TranZed provided an April 2019 training on apprenticeship opportunities in Maryland. More than 40 staff, vendors, transition coordinators, and evaluators attended.

- CCBC Randallstown held an apprenticeship open house during National Apprenticeship Week (November 11—17). More than 60 people attended and learned about careers as electricians, plumbers, HVAC technicians, welders, and carpenters.
- Heritage Mile One (a state-wide business partner and WTC Automotive Services Advisory Board member) began the process of becoming an apprenticeship sponsor site for the WTC Automotive Service and Auto Body Shop Technician training programs.
- WTC expanded a partnership with TranZed to connect DORS' consumers to I.T. apprenticeship programs.
- CVS Health became an official Registered Apprenticeship sponsor and in June 2020, a 20-week CVS Pharmacy Technician Program will begin at WTC. The training is designed to serve as a pathway to state and national certification via Registered Apprenticeship with CVS.

DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES (DDS)

DDS is the part of DORS that evaluates the eligibility of Marylanders who apply for Social Security disability programs and benefits. DDS strives to provide education about the application process and access to disability benefits.

As part of these efforts, DDS Medical Relations Director, Caroline Mason, appeared on the Montgomery Municipal Cable talk show, *Social Security...Securing Today and Tomorrow* to discuss the Disability Determination Process. She also represented DDS at more than 20 outreach events, including:

- Baltimore County Child & Adolescent Behavioral Resource Fair
- Baltimore County Health Fair
- Charles County Public Schools Annual Special Education Expo
- Maryland Speech Language Association
- Maximus
- National Alliance on Mental Illness Maryland's Annual Conference
- School Health Interdisciplinary Program

DDS moved to Hunt Valley in 2019, and even with all the disorder of managing the move, DDS adjudicated 61,286 disability claims and the Scheduling Unit generated 47,955 cases.

MORE & MORE DORS CONSUMERS ARE YOUTH/STUDENTS

In FY 2019:

- 42% were between 14 and 24 years of age
- 7,479 students received services
- DORS spent \$8,458,193 on services for youth/students
- 8.6% of DORS Workforce & Technology Center consumers were 16 to 19 years of age, and 40.3% were 20 to 29.

Additionally, the number of students receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) has again increased, from 3,778 in Fiscal Year 2018 to in Fiscal Year 2019.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) changed and improved how DORS, and other workforce system partners, assist Marylanders.

For job seekers, this means:

- Help with immediate job placement and/or supportive services.
- No wrong door; Marylanders receive assistance at any workforce partner agency.
- Getting career path guidance to find employment and fulfill career goals.

DORS and WIOA workforce partner staff will strive to:

- View each person with a holistic, broad perspective.
- Collaborate on efforts to help Marylanders go to work.
- Serve Marylanders better by working as an integrated system.
- Help Marylanders find employment/careers to achieve self-sufficiency.

The State WIOA Partnership will help Maryland businesses:

- Better understand workforce system resources, services and benefits.
- Find and hire people who are ready to meet employers' needs.

Maryland's WIOA partners include:

- The Governor's Workforce Development Board
- DORS
- The Department of Labor
- The Department of Housing and Community Development
- The Workforce Association
- The Department of Human Services

Larry Hogan, Governor
Justin M. Hartings, Ph.D., President, Maryland State Board of
Education

Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Schools
Scott Dennis, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of
Rehabilitation Services, Maryland State Department of Education

DORS Administrative Office & Headquarters, Office of Field
Services, Office for Blindness & Vision Services and the Workforce
& Technology Center are located at:

2301 Argonne Drive
Baltimore, Maryland 21218-1696
Phone: 410-554-9442
Toll-free: 1-888-554-0334
Video Phone: 1-866-371-3614 / 443-798-2840
dors@maryland.gov

DORS field and OBVS counselors are located in over 20 field
offices throughout Maryland. To find the nearest one, contact
DORS headquarters or visit dors.maryland.gov.

Disability Determination Services:

PO Box 1810
Cockeysville, MD 21030-1810
Phone: 410-308-4500
Toll-free: 1-800-492-4283
md.dd.timonium.dds@ssa.gov

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Division of Rehabilitation Services.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion or disability in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs.

The Vocational Rehabilitation program receives 78.7 percent of its funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal fiscal year 2019, the total amount of grant funds awarded were \$47,197,460. The remaining 21.3 percent of the costs \$12,773,900 were funded by State appropriations.

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

December 16, 2019

As Chair of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC), it is an honor to serve the people of Maryland. The MSRC is the people's champion for employment of Marylanders with disabilities, for enhanced awareness of the capabilities of students, youths, and adults with disabilities, and for promotion of State and national policies that support those goals.

The MSRC is appointed by the Governor of Maryland, in compliance with federal law, to monitor, advise and oversee the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). Established in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Council reports its findings annually to the U.S. Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration, the Governor of Maryland and, most importantly, the people of Maryland.

For the fiscal year 2019:

- **State Education Agreement**
DORS leadership worked closely with the Maryland State

Department of Education's Division of Early Intervention/ Special Education Services (DEISES) to craft a new agreement that is reflective of the changes that are articulated in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014). The agreement focuses on transitioning services for students and the services that each organization will be providing. In addition, the leadership of each organization meets on a quarterly basis to discuss issues and do joint planning. Both DORS and DEISES will be working together with the local school systems to develop the local educational agreements.

- **Quality Assurance**

Quality case management is something that both DORS and MSRC want to see with every client's case. DORS has developed and implemented an in-line case management tool that is used to ascertain the quality of services being delivered by the agency. The Quality Review team reviews cases at different stages in the rehabilitation process to look at the timeliness and the services being provided to the consumers. Trends are reviewed both from a local office and a Statewide perspective to determine if there are training needs or policy changes that are needed.

- **Waitlist**

The primary driver in the growth of the waitlist in the increase in the number of Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) students who applied to DORS during the year. WIOA requires that a minimum of 15% of each state's VR grant be allocated to Pre-ETS, and that providing Pre-ETS is prioritized. At the end of FY18, DORS had 3,773 Pre-ETS Students. By the end of FY19 that number had grown to 5,737, an increase of nearly 2,000 over the previous fiscal year. Pre-ETS will continue to be a factor in the DORS waitlist in the coming year,

as the Pre-ETS program will continue to grow and expand as more parents and transitioning students become aware of this new opportunity.

In closing, I would like to commend DORS for its commitment to the employment needs of people living with disabilities and also for its transparency to the people of Maryland through its partnership with the MSRC.

Sincerely,

Anil Lewis, Chair, Maryland State Rehabilitation Council

By The Numbers

In 2019, the Division of Rehabilitation Services:

- Provided services to 23,121 individuals with significant disabilities.
- Prepared 7,479 students with disabilities to move from high school to employment, higher education or career training through vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. The agency's Pre-Employment Transition Services program has an additional 5,737 students. Forty-two percent of the individuals served by DORS are between the ages of 14 and 24.
- Personnel and programs helped 1,256 Marylanders with significant disabilities to become successfully employed in competitive integrated environments. This number reflects changes related to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

- DORS Business Services staff provided 3,598 direct services to Maryland businesses, including recruitment assistance, disability training, and information and technical assistance on hiring and tax incentives.