

State of Alaska FY2002 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Vocational Rehabilitation
Budget Request Unit

Vocational Rehabilitation Budget Request Unit

Contact: Duane French, Director

Tel: (907) 465-2814 **Fax:** (907) 465-2856 **E-mail:** Duane_French@labor.state.ak.us

BRU Mission

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist individuals with disabilities to overcome barriers to employment and to maintain suitable employment.

BRU Services Provided

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is a combined federal/state program under the authority of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998. The services provided to accomplish individualized goals of each person with a disability include a full array of vocational rehabilitation services, independent living services, support and assistance in employment, assistive technology, and referrals. In partnership with other state agencies, private sector businesses, vendors, and non-profit organizations, individuals are assisted and encouraged in realizing their potential and personal independence as full participants and citizens in their community. Employers are provided trained and willing workers able to do the job. The division also provides training to employers on hiring practice changes and training and assistance regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The division adjudicates claims on behalf of the Social Security Administration for Title II and Title XVI applicants for disability benefits and provides referrals for services. In addition, the division is the agency responsible for executive branch compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Administrative Order #129. The division also administers a federal grant to improve local programs or systems that assist students with disabilities as they transition from school to a community based living, learning and working environment.

BRU Goals and Strategies

1) PROVIDE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES THAT WILL ENABLE 520 INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES TO GET JOBS.

* The division will deliver direct vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities through a statewide structure of regional and branch offices.

*Access to information and services provided by the Division will be available on the Internet.

* Offices will also be co-located with other agencies providing employment services including the Employment Security Division, Job Training Partnership contractors, the Division of Public Assistance, and other non-profit organizations in "one-stop" job centers in Ketchikan, Juneau, Anchorage, Wasilla, Eagle River, Bethel, Kenai and Fairbanks.

* Services for Native Alaskans will be coordinated with Native organizations including Bristol Bay Native Association, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Tlingit-Haida Central Council, Cook Inlet Native Association, Kodiak Island Native Association, Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, and the Association of Village Council Presidents (Bethel).

2) EXPAND THE EXPERTISE AND SKILLS OF REHABILITATION PERSONNEL.

* Training programs will be designed and provided which will enable personnel to function in their jobs with improved knowledge of disability issues and which will correct identified deficiencies.

3) ENABLE ALASKANS WITH DISABILITIES TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY IN THE COMMUNITY OF THEIR CHOICE.

* The division will deliver independent living services statewide through grant agreements with private non-profit independent living centers and specialized service providers.

* Specialized independent living services will be provided to older individuals who are blind through regional grants in Southeast, Gulf Coast, Anchorage/Mat-Su/Southwest, and the Northwest regions.

4) ENABLE ELIGIBLE ALASKANS WITH DISABILITIES TO RECEIVE SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS.

* The division will adjudicate claims for Social Security benefits by obtaining medical and vocational evidence for claimants which will provide adequate information to determine eligibility for benefits.

5) PROVIDE SERVICES THROUGH SPECIAL PROJECTS, WHICH WILL ENHANCE AND SUPPORT THE GENERAL MISSION OF THE DIVISION AND MEET THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.

* Using Supported Employment funding, the division will place and train severely disabled individuals in competitive employment positions.

* Sign language interpreter services will be provided through three regional grants to non-profit organizations that will respond to requests for interpreter referrals for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.

* The Alaska Transition Initiative will provide grant funding to non-profit organizations and to the University of Alaska Affiliate Program to provide services which will improve local systems and programs to assist students with disabilities as they transition from school to a community based living, learning and working environment.

* Through the Alaska Works Project, Resource Specialists will be located in One-Stop offices in Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage to assist individuals with disabilities who want to return to work but who need to maintain health insurance. A Business Development Specialist will work with employers to assist them in developing strategies to increase the presence of individuals with disabilities in their workforce. The Alaska Works Project will be supplemented with a new federal grant award: Alaska Work Incentives. With the award the division will enhance the employability, employment and career advancement of people with disabilities through enhanced service delivery in the One-Stop delivery system established under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

* The Economic Development Alliance Project will assist businesses with grants to purchase equipment or for other purposes in exchange for creating jobs for individuals with disabilities.

6) ENABLE ACCESS TO ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES WHO RESIDE THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

* The division will provide grant funding for an Assistive Technology Alliance.

7) ASSURE COMPLIANCE OF ALL AGENCIES IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF STATE GOVERNMENT WITH TITLE I AND II OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

* Training programs will be provided for program managers. Updated information will be provided on the status of state facilities audited for ADA compliance.

Key BRU Issues for FY2001 – 2002

* Provide greater capacity in the One-Stop delivery system to effectively serve people with disabilities;

* Continue to support counselors in meeting the federal requirements of a Masters Degree;

* Increase efficiency and effectiveness under the Unified State Plan prompted by the Workforce Investment Act; and

* Continue the advancement of Informed Choice in all facets of Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Major BRU Accomplishments for FY2000

- * Provided services to 522 Alaskans with disabilities that enabled them to go to work and earn an average of \$20,084 per year;
- * Increased the involvement of the 4,021 individuals with disabilities served in FY 2000 in taking a lead role in their rehabilitation services;
- * Modified the homes of 5 people with disabilities to make them accessible, furthering their ability to go to work and function more independently at home;
- * Expanded the presence of Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation staff in Alaska Job Centers throughout the state;
- * Incorporated more accessible technology to determine the aptitudes and interests of people with disabilities in their career planning and employing community based job assessments; and
- * The Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation has successfully transitioned into the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and is collaborating with other employment program partners.

Status of FY2001 Performance Measures

	<i>Achieved</i>	<i>On track</i>	<i>Too soon to tell</i>	<i>Not likely to achieve</i>	<i>Needs modification</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of clients who return for services under a new Individual Plan for Employment within one year after receiving services from the division that resulted in employment. • The percentage of eligible Alaskans requesting services who are served by the division. 		X			

Vocational Rehabilitation
BRU Financial Summary by Component

All dollars in thousands

	FY2000 Actuals				FY2001 Authorized				FY2002 Governor			
	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total Funds
Formula Expenditures												
None.												
Non-Formula Expenditures												
Client Services	3,135.8	7,539.9	171.9	10,847.6	3,172.2	8,655.5	215.0	12,042.7	3,173.4	8,662.9	382.3	12,218.6
Federal Training Grant	5.6	27.3	0.0	32.9	5.6	50.7	0.0	56.3	5.6	50.7	0.0	56.3
Voc Rehab Administration	166.2	927.6	27.3	1,121.1	168.6	1,198.4	0.0	1,367.0	168.6	1,258.5	20.2	1,447.3
Independent Living Rehabilatat	586.9	499.4	160.3	1,246.6	586.9	595.8	162.8	1,345.5	586.9	770.8	142.5	1,500.2
Disability Determination	0.0	3,474.4	137.9	3,612.3	0.0	4,892.6	100.9	4,993.5	0.0	4,888.9	199.6	5,088.5
Special Projects	82.9	791.8	348.9	1,223.6	82.9	1,553.2	154.5	1,790.6	85.8	2,615.8	154.1	2,855.7
Assistive Technology	0.0	349.5	96.0	445.5	0.0	468.7	96.0	564.7	0.0	469.3	96.0	565.3
Americans With Disabilities	0.0	0.0	144.6	144.6	0.0	0.0	192.4	192.4	0.0	0.0	192.0	192.0
Totals	3,977.4	13,609.9	1,086.9	18,674.2	4,016.2	17,414.9	921.6	22,352.7	4,020.3	18,716.9	1,186.7	23,923.9

Vocational Rehabilitation

Proposed Changes in Levels of Service for FY2002

Changes in funding/service levels include additional federal funds for two projects:

- 1) Alaska Work Incentives Project to enhance the employment and career advancement opportunities of people with disabilities through expanded service delivery in the One-stop System; and
- 2) Access to Alaska Project designed to ensure that Alaska's tourism industry focuses on the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

An increase in the authority for the Business Enterprise Program funds is budgeted in anticipation of a contract with Ft. Wainwright to operate the food services on the base.

Vocational Rehabilitation

Summary of BRU Budget Changes by Component

From FY2001 Authorized to FY2002 Governor

All dollars in thousands

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2001 Authorized	4,016.2	17,414.9	921.6	22,352.7
Adjustments which will continue current level of service:				
-Client Services	1.2	-10.4	0.2	-9.0
-Voc Rehab Administration	0.0	60.1	20.2	80.3
-Independent Living Rehabilitat	0.0	175.0	-20.3	154.7
-Disability Determination	0.0	-3.7	-0.5	-4.2
-Special Projects	2.9	-227.4	-0.4	-224.9
-Americans With Disabilities	0.9	0.0	-0.5	0.4
Proposed budget decreases:				
-Americans With Disabilities	-0.9	0.0	0.1	-0.8
Proposed budget increases:				
-Client Services	0.0	17.8	167.1	184.9
-Disability Determination	0.0	0.0	99.2	99.2
-Special Projects	0.0	1,290.0	0.0	1,290.0
-Assistive Technology	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.6
FY2002 Governor	4,020.3	18,716.9	1,186.7	23,923.9