

Human Services

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND

	1999-2001 Actuals	2001-03 Legislatively Adopted at Close of Session	2001-03 Legislatively Approved through Fifth Special Session	2003-05 Governor's Balanced
General Fund	\$1,416,753	\$1,302,438	\$1,234,501	\$1,191,047
Lottery Funds	0	0	0	0
Other Funds	1,969,720	2,185,200	2,955,159	2,335,880
Federal Funds	8,281,081	8,439,052	8,691,575	8,413,548
Other Funds (Nonlimited)	0	0	0	0
Federal Funds (Nonlimited)	0	0	0	0
Total Funds	\$11,667,554	\$11,926,690	\$12,881,235	\$11,940,475
Positions	51	51	55	44
Full-time Equivalent	49.73	49.73	52.73	41.33

Overview

The Commission for the Blind is the administering agency of programs for the blind in Oregon. The agency provides vocational rehabilitation services, blind vendor management training and assistance, and employment experience through its work activity center and the Industries for the Blind. The agency is broken into five program units:

- The Administrative Services program provides central oversight, accounting, and human resource services for the agency's other programs.
- The Rehabilitative Services program provides training, counseling and guidance, and technology services for eligible legally blind clients who want to go to work or maintain their job. In addition to basic vocational rehabilitation services, this unit includes the teaching of independent living skills and the provision of transitional programming for students before they leave school. The program unit also includes services for the Older Blind that are intended to maintain their independence.
- The Business Enterprises program provides opportunities for the blind to become self-employed and obtain management experience. The blind vending program involves training in vending management. Clients who successfully complete the training then apply to manage a vending site. After placement, the blind vendors continue to receive technical assistance from the agency and are required to pay a percentage of their income into a fund, which pays for training and improvements for vendors.
- The Industries for the Blind program unit provides work experience through sheltered workshops and work activity centers. Contracts with Multnomah County provide most of the funding for the program. Clients who use the centers are blind and often have another disability. Work Activity Center staff are not state employees.

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- The Orientation Center for the Blind program provides skills training for newly blind adults so they may remain as independent as possible. It also operates a Summer Work Experience Program for students to gain work experience and to provide an opportunity for students to have an independent living experience.

Balanced Budget

The Governor's balanced budget for the agency is \$11,940,475 total funds. This is a 7.3 percent decrease from the 2001-03 Legislatively Approved Budget through the Fifth Special Session. The balanced budget includes a 3.5 percent reduction of General Fund and a 3.2 percent decrease in matching Federal Funds. To achieve these reductions, the agency will eliminate seven positions, reduce two positions to half-time, and reduce available funds that assist clients with obtaining employment. A further reduction of four positions (3.40 full-time equivalent) and related Other Funds expenditure limitation is due to one-time program enhancements that never received funding in 2001-03.

Revenue

A General Fund appropriation and part of the agency's Other Funds are used to match Federal Funds. The principal source of Federal Funds for the agency is the Section 110 grant under the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These funds are matched at a 21.3 percent state funds to 78.7 percent federal funds rate. Funds for the Older Blind programs and in-service training grants are matched at a 10 percent state funds to 90 percent federal funds rate.

The agency receives Other Funds from a contract with Multnomah County for operation of the Industries for the Blind program, highway vending income, cooperative agreements with school districts, transfers from the Business Enterprise set-aside fund, donations, and interest gained from those donations.