

Presentation to the 2021 Joint Ways and
Means Subcommittee on Human Services

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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April 8, 2021

Presentation Outline

Today

- **Celebrating significant milestones!**
- **Empowering and working with Oregonians with disabilities**
 - What is VR?
 - Mission and Vision
 - Who We Serve
- **Developing pathways to achieve well-being of clients**
 - Equity, inclusion and resiliency efforts
 - Partners with the communities we serve
- **Serving Oregonians with disabilities through four program areas**
 - VR Core Services
 - Employer Services
 - VR Youth Services
 - VR Supported Employment
- **Where We are Now**
- **Where We are Going**

Celebrating a VR Legacy!

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) expands inclusion and equity, building community well-being by working alongside those with disabilities.



2020 marked the 100th anniversary of the first federally funded VR program.



2020 marked the 30th anniversary of the The Americans with Disabilities Act.



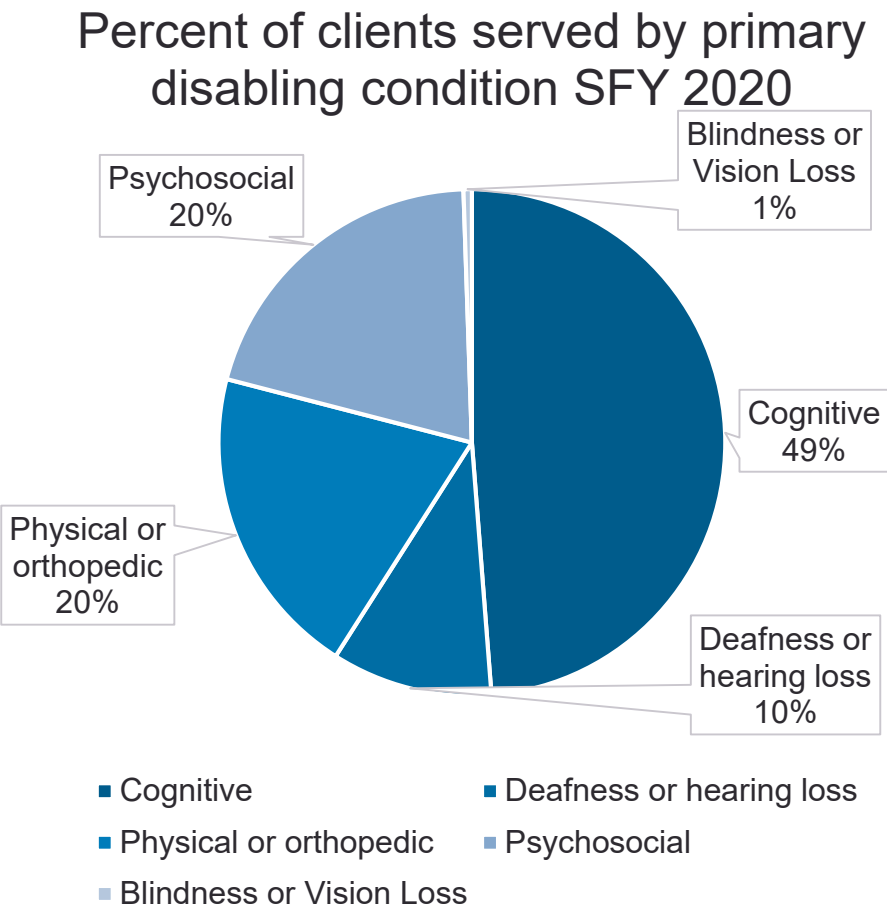
2020 marked the 30th anniversary of The Oregon Youth Transition Program.

What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

- **Our Mission:** Assist Oregonians with disabilities to achieve, maintain and advance in employment and independence.
- **Our Vision:** Every Oregonian with a disability who desires to work is given the means and opportunity.
- **VR is** a federal-state program that helps people who have physical or mental disability get or keep a job.
- **VR is** committed to helping clients achieve competitive integrated employment.
- **VR staff** provide a variety of supports to ensure successful outcomes for clients.
- **Funds are supplied jointly by the federal and state governments with an 80/20 match.**

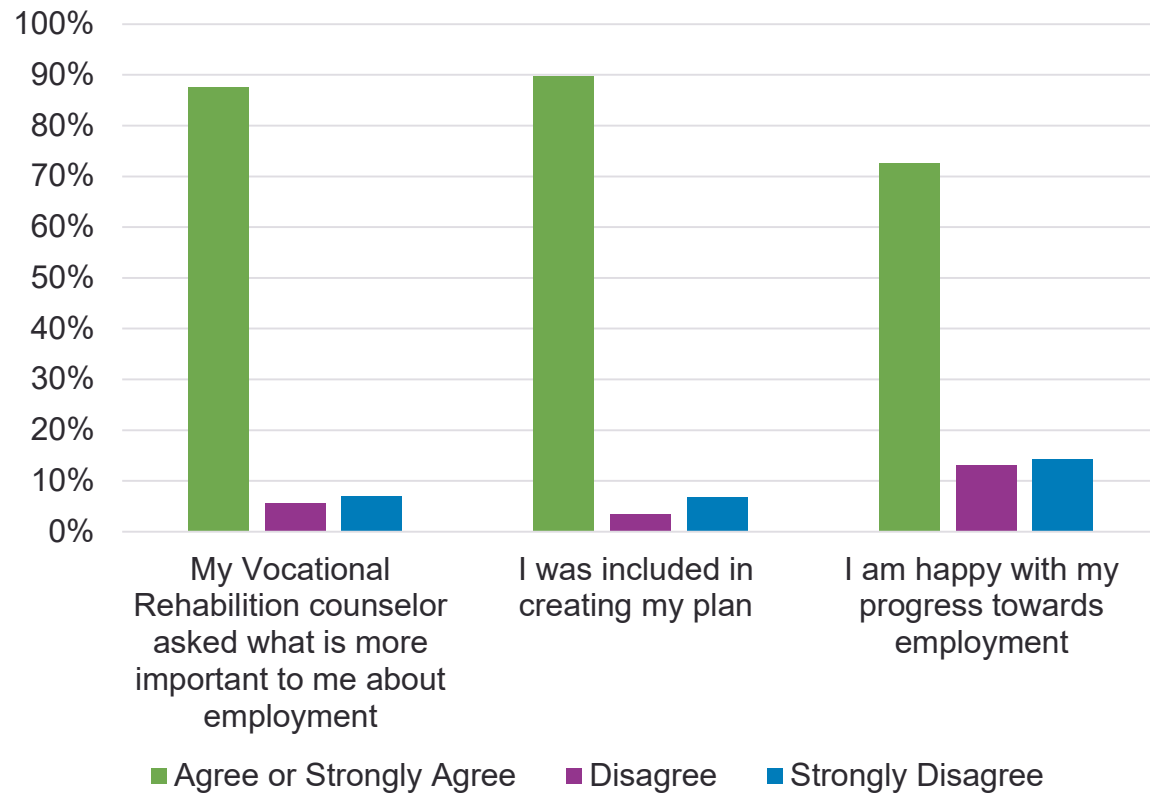


Who We Serve

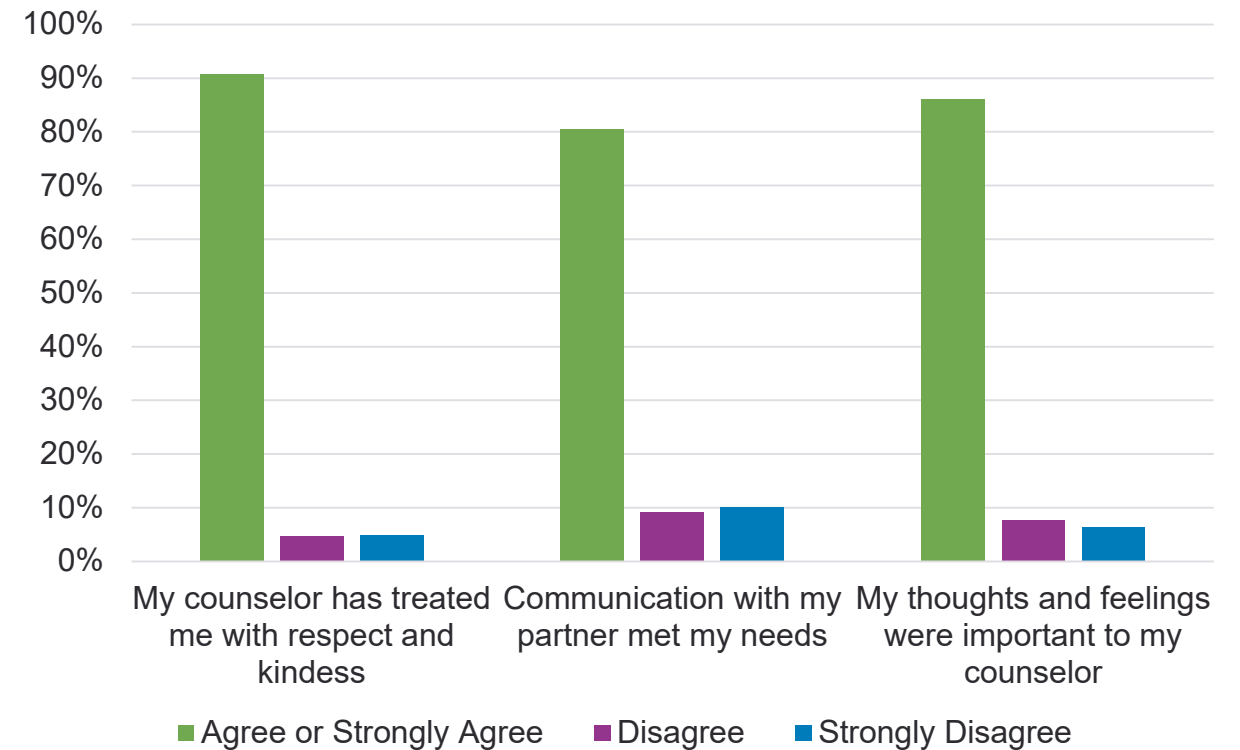


Consumer Feedback

Person Centered Service



Client Partnerships





Developing pathways to achieve the well-being of clients

1. Equity, Inclusion and Resiliency Efforts
2. Partners with the Communities we serve

Promoting Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The compounding impact of systemic racism and discriminatory behaviors presents additional barriers for people with disabilities

- We serve clients and employers with a dual customer model:
 - Help clients reach employment
 - Educate and support employers
- Provides clients better access when seeking services at WorkSource centers
- VR works with Tribal Nations to provide culturally responsive services
- VR is engaging in conversations with communities of color, who have traditionally been underserved



VR Partners in the communities we serve

Community partners differ depending on needs, participating businesses, and client interests.

- **Partners include:**

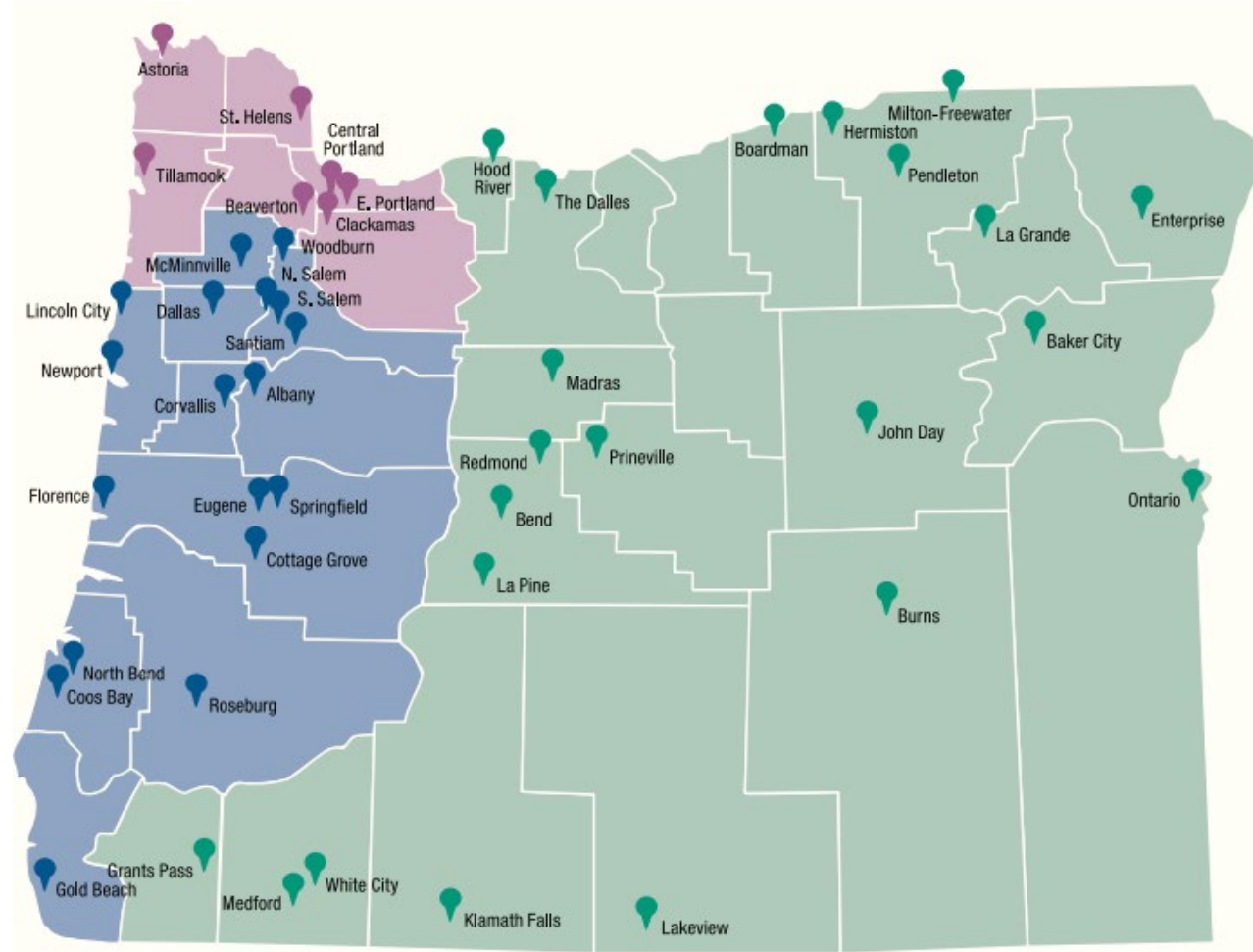
- Private Businesses
- Non-profits
- Community Based Organizations
- Tribal Nations
- WorkSource Oregon
- Independent Living Center
- Local Workforce Development Boards
- Job Placement Contractors
- Job Coaches



We serve all 36 counties in Oregon

Region 1: includes
ODHS Districts 1, 2,
15, 16

Region 2: includes
ODHS Districts 3,
4, 5, 6, 7



Region 3: Includes
ODHS Districts 8, 9,
10, 11, 12, 13, 14

Serving Oregonians with disabilities through four program areas

1. VR Core Services
2. VR Youth Services
3. Supported Employment
4. Employer Services

Meet Amy

- Was working as a Certified Prosthetist/Orthotist in a busy healthcare environment but her hearing loss was negatively impacting her job.
- VR helped her upgrade her cochlear implant processors and provide assistive technology.
- Amy's confidence grew as she was able to communicate more effectively on her job with better technology and equipment.
- She successfully obtained her dream job of Cranial Clinical Manager even during the pandemic.



VR Process for Job Seekers



VR Core Services

Individualized Plans may include:

- Counseling and Guidance
- Results of Disability Evaluation
- Defining Interests
- Additional Training
- Worksite Modifications
- Identifying Helpful Assistive Technology
- Transitional Services for Students
- Consultation to Employers
- Job Placement Assistance
- Job Coaching
- Other Individualized Services



Meet Tabitha

- Partnered with vendor and Office of Developmental Disabilities to help client realize her dream of living independently.
- Worked with VR counselor on two-week work assessment and career exploration showing she could pursue a job in a retail setting with the long-term support of a job coach.
- Currently working at Ross Dress-for-Less



Youth Transition Services (YTP)

- Transition services prepare students, from age 14 through 21 for work, with a focus on building skills, exploring interests and learning about community supports.
- In 2019, YTP served 1,284 students with disabilities in high schools throughout Oregon.



Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

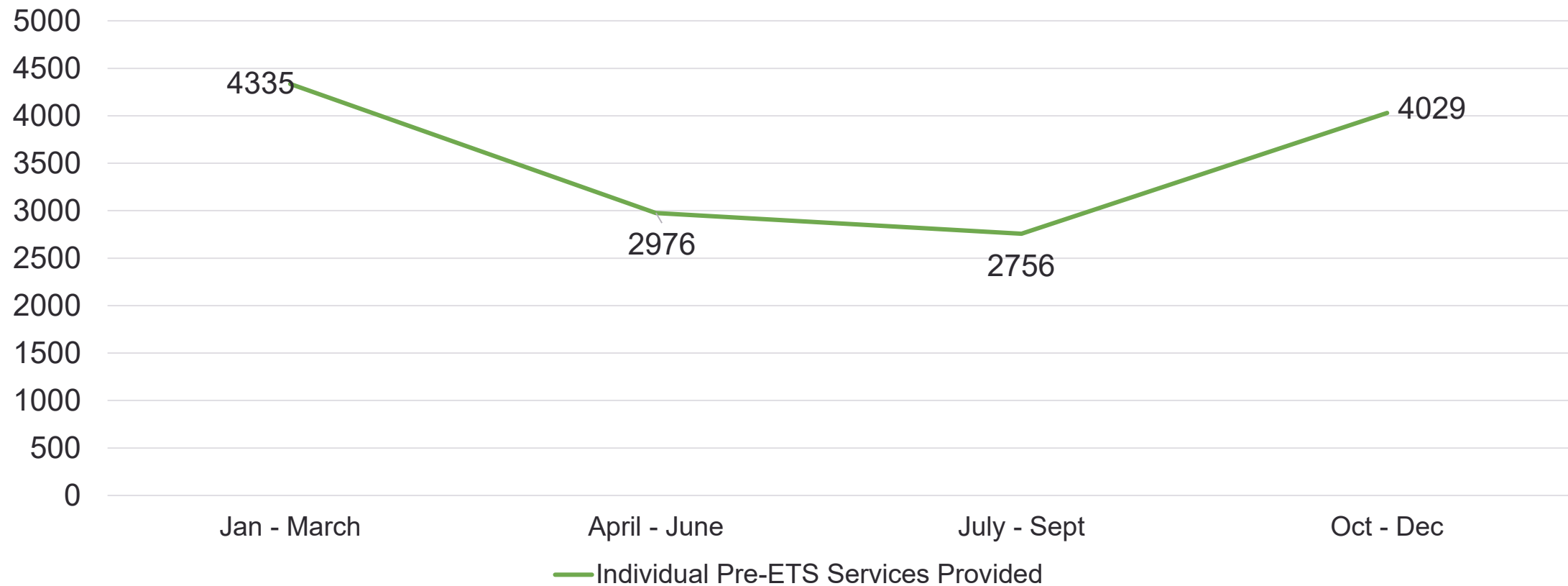
The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity act (require VR to spend 15% of federal grant on Pre-ETS)

- Pre-ETS are services designed to develop transferable employment skills and expand opportunities for students with disabilities.
- Pre-ETS are:
 - Job Exploration and Counseling
 - Work-based learning experiences
 - Counseling on postsecondary education and transition programs
 - Workplace readiness training
 - Instruction in self-advocacy
- For current Oregon students in secondary or post-secondary education



Pre-ETS

14,096 Individual Pre-Employment Transition Services Provided in 2020



Supported Employment

- Supported Employment is a strategy where agencies collaborate to provide employment services for participants with the most significant disabilities.
- Provides services for:
 - Individuals who experience serious mental illness
 - Individuals diagnosed with intellectual impairment or developmental disabilities.



Testimony from Employment Specialist, Chris Poor

“I have so many amazing stories about VR coming through for our clients. Every year they have played a crucial role in helping people get jobs and keep them.”

- Chris, his colleagues and community partners have helped clients:
 - Find assistive technology for client with dyslexia to read better online
 - Funding to get professional clothing for work interviews
 - Quickly transitioned to assisting people over the phone throughout the pandemic



Services to Employers – Dual Customer Model



Diversity and inclusion
education information
and resources



Recruit and refer
qualified applicants
to your business



Provide help with
accommodation
needs



Establish long-term
business relations and
supports



Training and technical assistance:
Provide disability awareness,
etiquette and tailored trainings



Assistive Technology



On the Job Training
Agreements

Successful VR Client Employment

Committed to meeting inclusive hiring goals

Regionally recruiting VR clients





Where We Are Now

1. COVID-19 Pandemic and Wildfire Response
2. 2019-2021 Biennium Budget Actions
3. Key Performance Metrics (KPM)

COVID-19 Pandemic and Wildfire Response

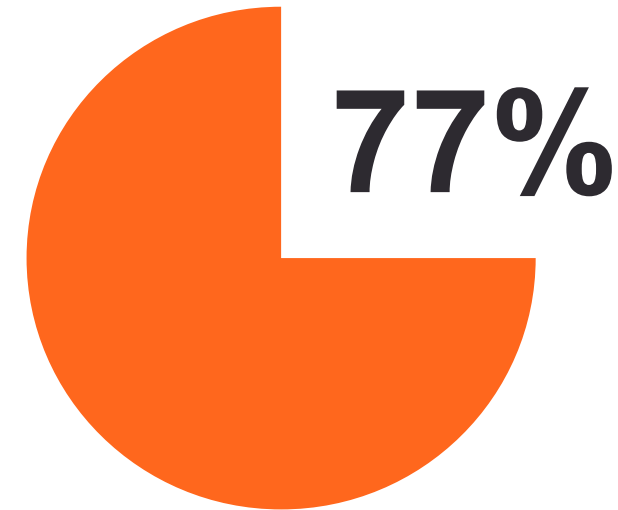
- **During COVID-19:**
 - Online intake
 - Virtual operations to support clients
 - COVID-19 resources web page
 - Developed and implemented Zoom staff training
 - Created innovative at-home activities for youth to safely simulate work experiences
- **Wildfire response:**
 - Counselors reached out to impacted individuals to refer them to other services
- **Looking forward:**
 - VR anticipates being a vital resource for those who are ready to get back into the workforce
 - Centering equity in reemployment efforts



2019-2021 Biennium – Budget Actions

Accomplishments:

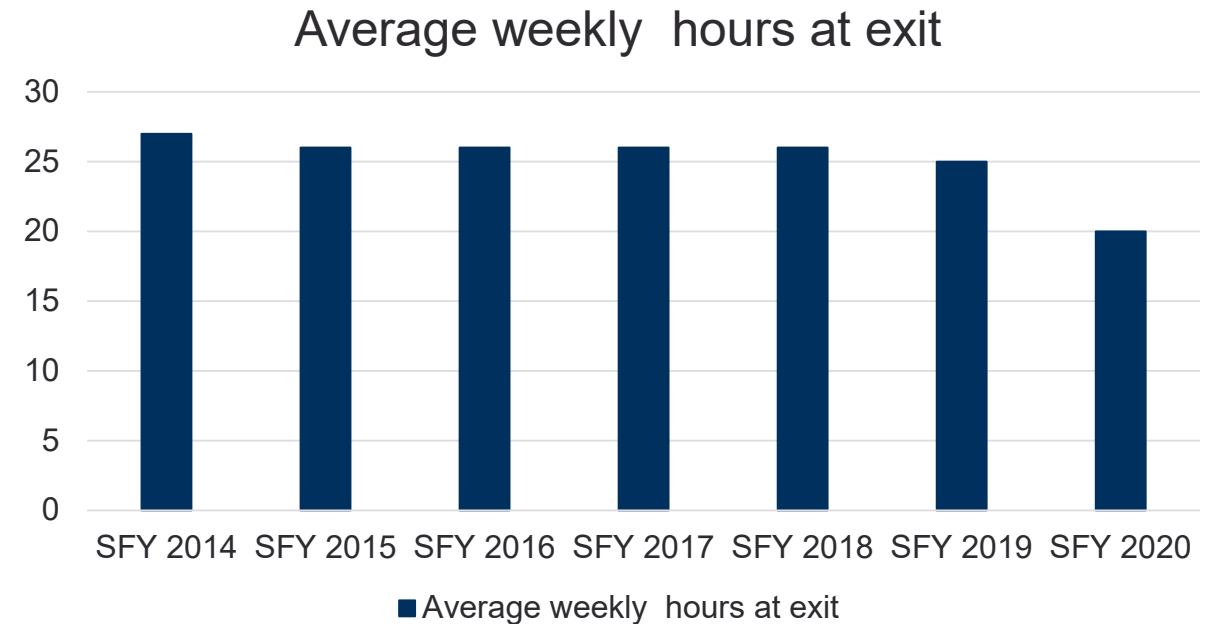
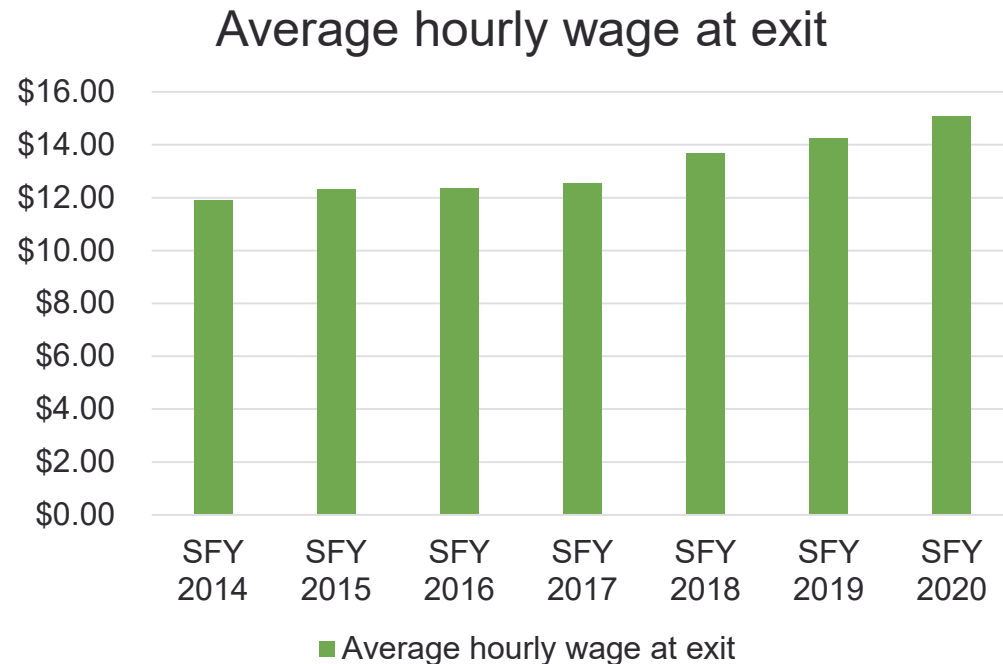
- Served more clients and more people are retaining jobs at a 57% retention rate – SRC Data
- Pivoted to virtual and remote service delivery
- Employer Tax Incentives:
 - Work opportunity Tax Credit
 - Disabled Access Credit



Percent of clients who say their VR experience met their expectations.

Competitive employment for clients served - KPMs

- Increase in average hourly wage at exit of program over the years
- Decrease in average weekly hours at exit of program over the years
- Competitive integrated employment



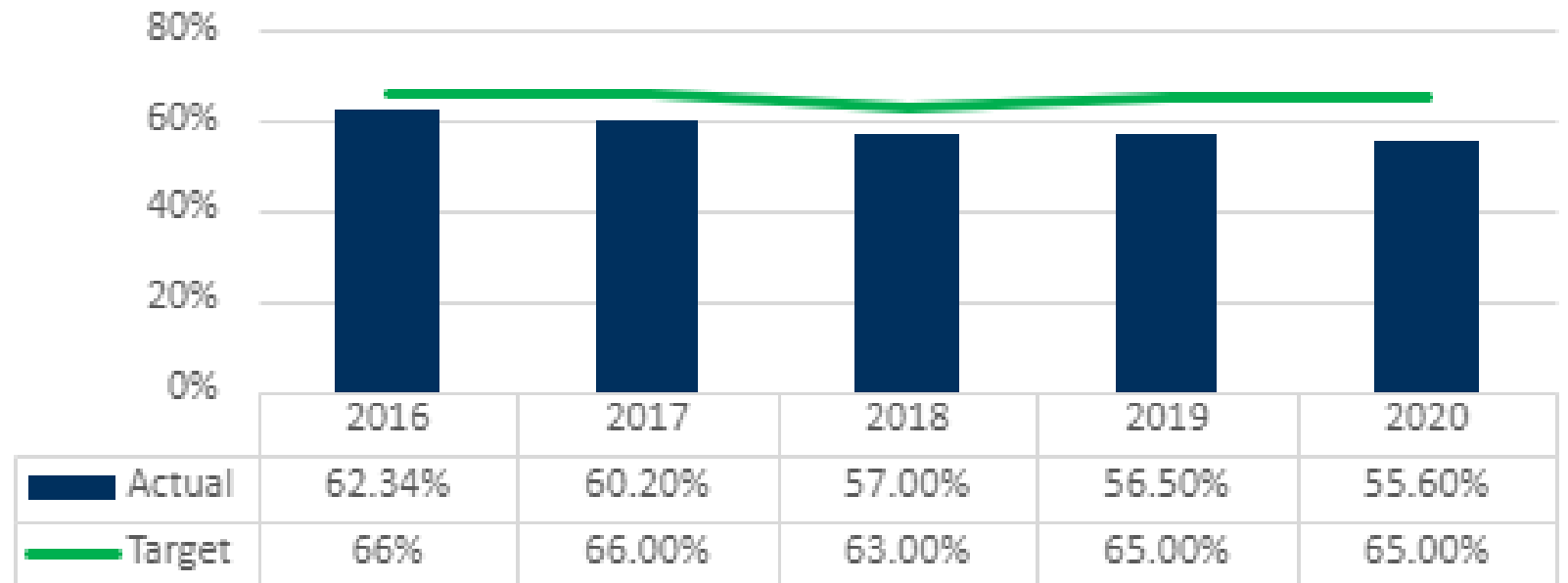
KPM 17: Successful Employment

VR helps thousands of Oregonians find employment each year.

- The number of clients who have been employed at program exit has been increasing every year since 2016, except 2020.
- We anticipate a substantial demand for our services as the economy reopens and people begin seeking employment.

KPM #17 OVRs Consumers who are Successfully Employed at Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation consumers with a goal of employment who are employed at program exit. Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30



KPM 18: Continued Employment - Second Quarter

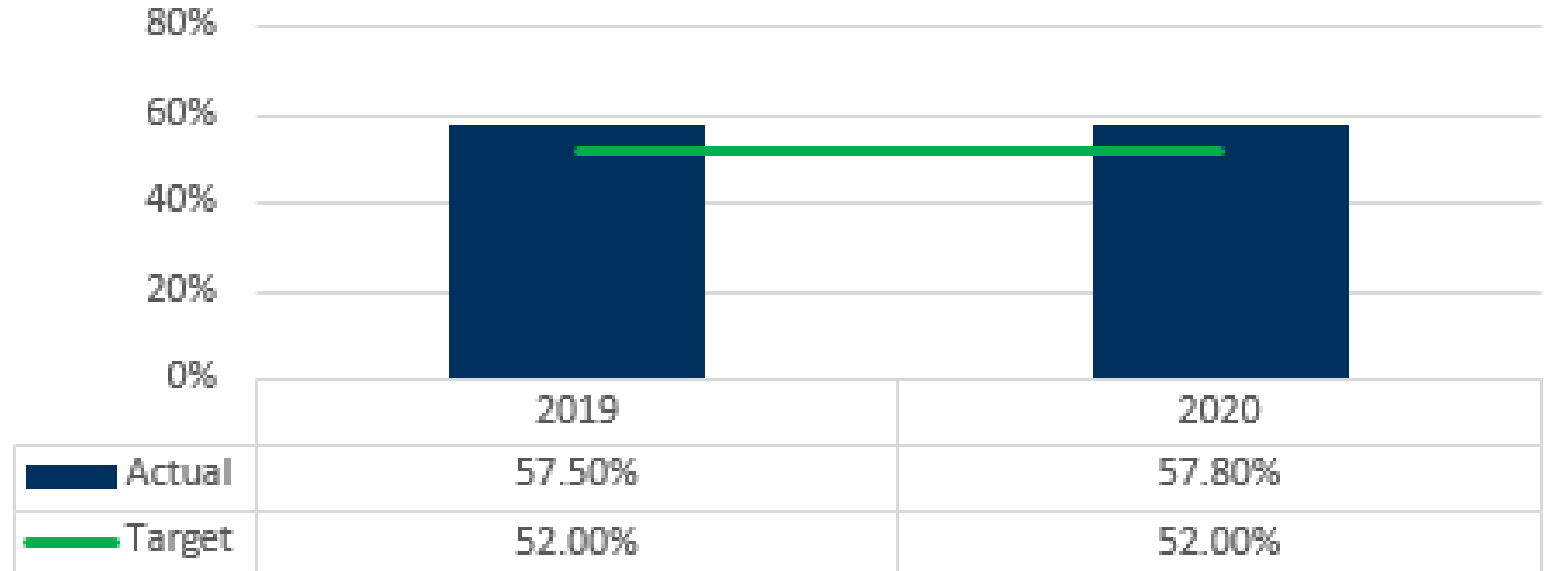
Our VR clients are a reliable part of the workforce.

- Through informed choice counseling our clients want to go to work.
- We continue to meet this KPM and we foresee improvement in this area because of the forecasted demand for services.

KPM #18 OVRs Consumers Employed in Second Quarter Following Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation clients closed from plan who are employed during second quarter following program exit.

Data Period Oct 01 - Sep 30



KPM 19: Continued Employment - Fourth Quarter

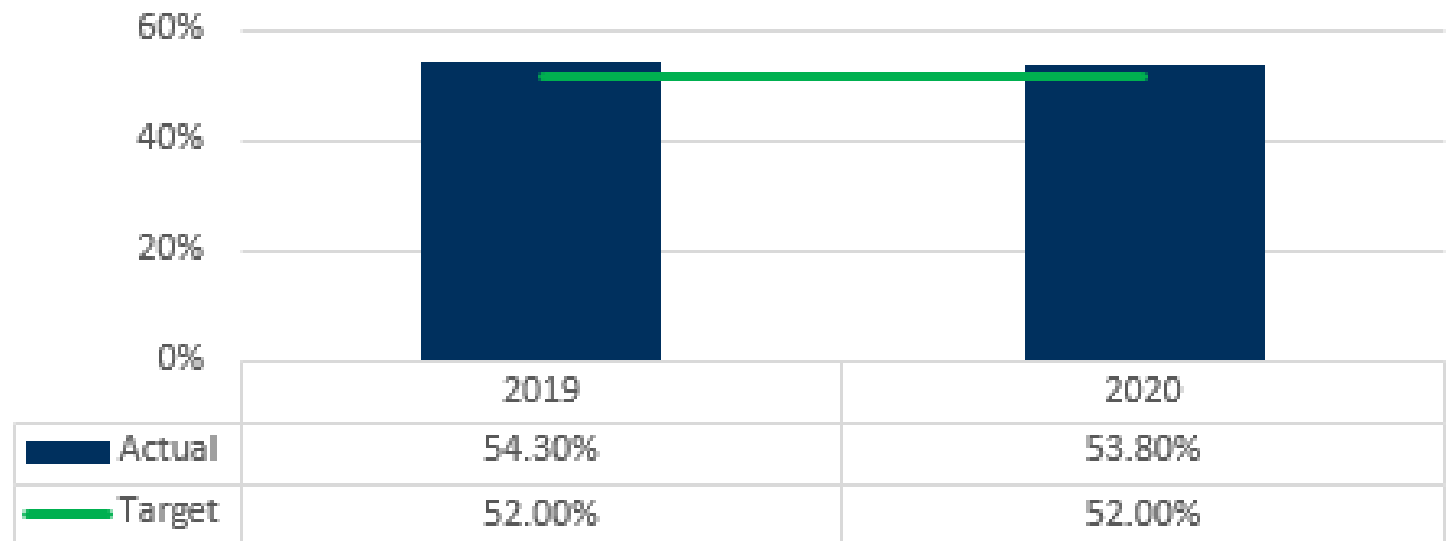
VR outcomes lead to long term success for our clients.

- Through person centered planning with our clients the employment outcomes are long standing.
- Our clients are dependable and our employer partners can rely on their workforce.
- VR can provide interventions after our client exits the program to support them with Post Employment Services.

KPM #19 OVRs Consumers Employed in Fourth Quarter Following Program Exit

The percentage of Vocational Rehabilitation clients closed from plan who are employed during fourth quarter following program exit.

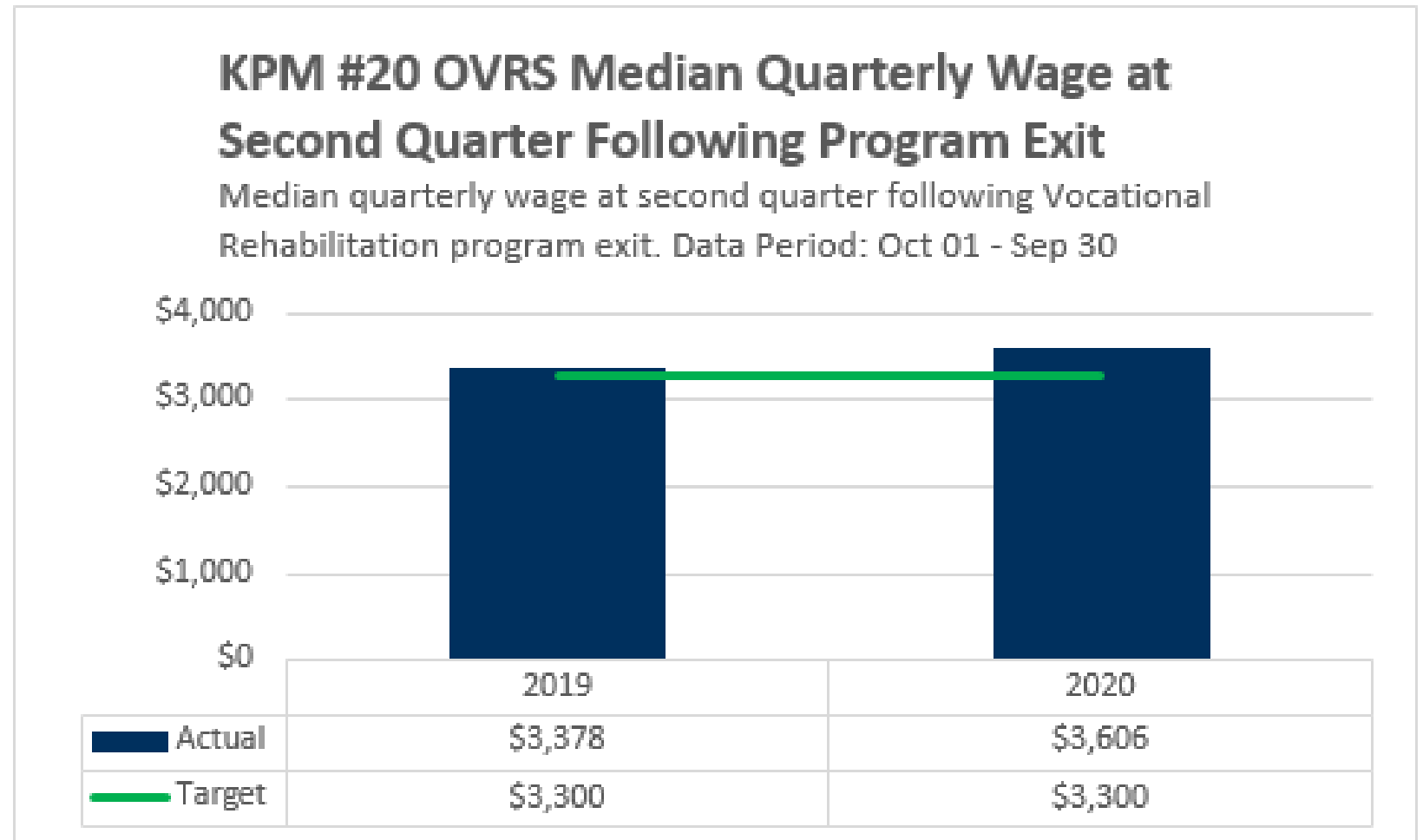
Data Period: Oct 01 - Sep 30



KPM 20: Median Wage

Competitive wages and appropriate placement are the hallmarks of VR success.

- VR's highly qualified staff develop Individualized Plans for Employment that incorporate extensive Labor Market Research to match our clients preferences and skills to living wage jobs.



Where We Are Going

1. What's ahead for VR?
2. Strategic Goals for 21-23 Biennium
3. 2021-2023 Biennium Budget

What's ahead for VR?

- VR has a role in supporting people with disabilities who may have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.
- Post-Pandemic → increased need to place people in employment and don't want to leave people with disabilities behind.
- Need to do work with clients through equity lens as a core of what VR does.
- Support employers in adapting during the balance of the pandemic.



Strategic Goals for 21-23 biennium

- **Maintain FTE and funds to be able to meet goals of 21-23 biennium**
 - Anticipate services will be more critical than ever post-pandemic
- **Strategic Goals:**
 - VR program supports communities with more placements
 - Continue delivering high quality services for employers and clients
 - VR staff are skilled and engaged
 - Quality Assurance in service delivery
 - Develop greater access to career pathways
 - Respond proactively to consumer feedback for programmatic improvements



Budget 21-23 Biennium

Key Priorities

- Maximize our impact statewide.
- Expand VR reach through more effective communication.
- Ensuring equitable reemployment of people with disabilities when jobs again become available.
- Leveraging WIOA Workforce Partners in Oregon

Key Barriers

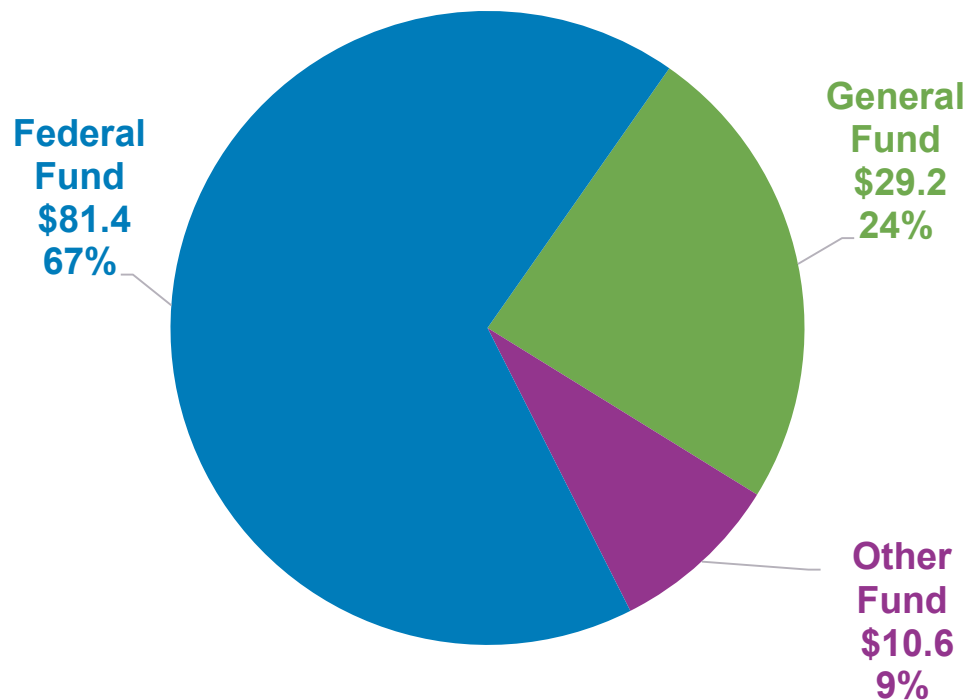
- Program cost increases.
- More people with higher support needs.
- Cost for assistive technology.
- Changing labor market.
- Having VR staff with specific skills to support people experiencing disabilities in the changing economic and jobs landscape that resulted from COVID-19 pandemic.

10% Reduction Exercise outcomes

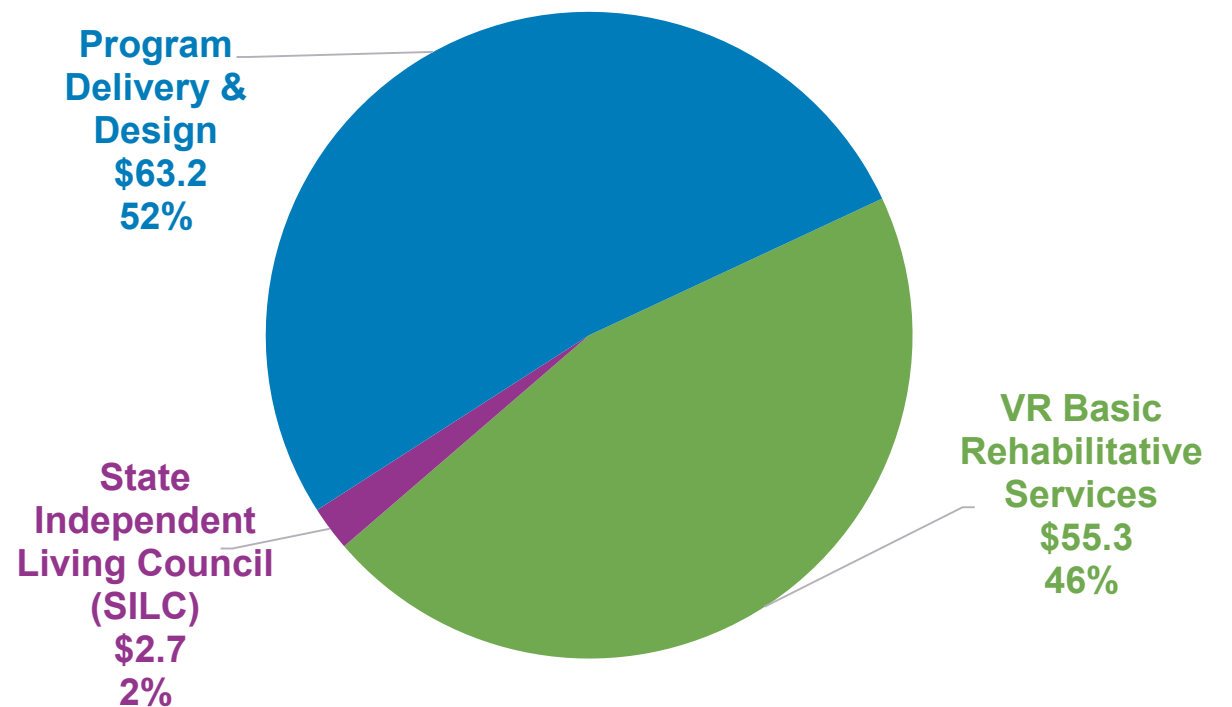
- Eliminate positions vacant over 6 months (13 positions).
- Eliminate S&S Inflation.
- Increase Vacancy Savings to 3%.
- Reducing GF and offsetting that with OF

Budget 21-23 Biennium

**VR BASIC REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
TOTAL BY FUND TYPE
\$ 121.2 MILLION**



**VR BASIC REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
TOTAL BY PROGRAM
\$ 121.2 MILLION**



Meet Michael and Jenny – ODHS employees!



“People don’t treat me like I’m autistic here. They treat me like I have skills and appreciate my value.”

April 8, 2021



“I am so glad I got this job. What surprises me is how much information I have learned over the course of 9 months I’ve been here. I have come such a long way, but I also became much more, deep down.”

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