

Trends

No Data Available

Legend:

↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, ↔ Steady

Key Performance Areas

No Data Available

Productivity

No Data Available

Legend:

↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening,

↔ Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to [www.vaperforms.virginia.gov/agencylevel/index.cfm](http://www.vaperforms.virginia.gov/agencylevel/index.cfm)

Background & History

The mission of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD or The Board) is to create a Commonwealth that advances opportunities for independence, personal decision-making and full participation in community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.

VBPD advises the Governor, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and the General Assembly on policies that impact people with disabilities. The Board was created as a separate state agency in 1985 by Section 51.5-31 of the Code of Virginia. It serves as the federally authorized Commonwealth Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council (DD and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-402)).

The major publication of the Board is its triennial *Assessment of the Disability Service System*, a research-based document divided into chapters covering education, employment, Medicaid, transportation, housing and other services. This work results in recommendations for systemic change directed at state government officials and other policymakers. This information, coupled with public input, also affects the Board's 5-year federal state plan aligning activities with goals and objectives.

Since 1984, the Board has invested approximately \$18.6 million in 276 grants and contracts and trained 694 advocates through two programs, the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) and Partners in Policymaking (PIP). Beginning in 2006, the Board began a renewed focus in the policy arena and began tracking its policy recommendations; since that year, 157 formal policy recommendations/public comment statements have been made.

Primary Product & Services

Developmental Disabilities (DD) councils, such as VBPD, work with and for people with DD and their families to identify needs and develop or improve policies, programs and services that will meet these needs. The VBPD accomplishes this by promoting change and helping to build community capacity through investments, policy work, and training.

During SFY13, investments in 6 contract and grant projects of more than \$420,000 impacted more than 2600 people, programs, and policies. Investments have focused on critical need areas including employment, education, health care, housing, and transportation. The Board leveraged an additional \$42,991 from grantees.

The Board's efforts—policy recommendations, its triennial *Assessment of the Disability Services System*, work on state level workgroups or taskforces, collaboration with other agencies and organizations, and investments in grants and contracts—has led to changes in services, systems, policies, procedures, laws and regulations affecting citizens throughout Virginia.

Board training programs have produced a cadre of advocates able to work on behalf of change in their community, region, or state. These programs have also increased public awareness of the needs and abilities of individuals with disabilities and their valuable role in the community.

Flat federal funding for a decade has impacted Board activities. Advocacy training programs have increased in cost. Researching and tracking policy impact continues to be a complex task, yet is critical to the Board's purpose. In some years, the Board has not issued competitive grants due to insufficient funding or staff resources needed for other key obligations such as developing the triennial *Assessment*.

Customer Base

Ongoing assessment of the service delivery system and identification of the unmet needs of citizens with disabilities is vital to

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facilitating system change and redesign. The Board has a statutory requirement to engage in this initiative and considers it a critical component of its current and future direction.

By working with the Board's customers (state agencies, legislators, consumer and advocacy organizations, state/regional/local service providers, and citizens with and without developmental disabilities), the Board can show how the lives of individuals with DD are improved. Raising awareness via communications and outreach activities is one way that consumer and advocacy organizations benefit. These groups need information about legislation, programs, and policies across Virginia.

Influencing public perception and attitudes regarding people with developmental and other disabilities is part of the Board's public awareness role. The Board remains flexible in how it educates and informs stakeholders. One of the Board's broad state plan goals focuses on full inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas as a civil right. The Board has utilized video and other forms of communication to reach legislators and citizens about this topic.

Serving Virginians with disabilities (without direct services) occurs through Board grants as well as Board communications. The Board's work to impact policy and invest in projects and programs that improve the lives of Virginians with disabilities will continue as the population ages and more individuals experience disabilities.

### Customer Listing

No Data Available

### Key Agency Statistics

Graduates of the Board's leadership and advocacy training programs total nearly 700. Some graduates have gone onto careers in the disability arena; others are active in their community or in state level activities. Many have gone on to serve on local, regional and state boards and commissions, including VBPD.

These two training programs have different focus areas. Partners in Policymaking is an 8 month program for up to 30 individuals who are adults with developmental disabilities (DD) or parents of children with DD. Partners receive a broad exposure to the history of people with disabilities, information about person-centered planning, and hear state + national speakers who provide information on housing, community supports, employment, and other factors that impact the lives of people with disabilities.

The Youth Leadership Forum brings 25 high school juniors and seniors together for one week. Students learn about disability history and teamwork. One day is devoted to the impact of advocacy via personal testimony to a mock legislative panel in the Capitol. Teaching leadership skills, increasing independence and developing short and long term goals are key YLF components.

The Board is an independent advisor; its opinions and recommendations are non-partisan. Measuring impact in the policy arena can be a challenge. Policy change can take years and the work is collaborative. In 2006, the Board advocated against the rebuilding of the state's training centers. It took a Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation plus the hard work of numerous advocacy and disability organizations and individuals to move forward. In 2012, the DOJ settlement agreement with the Commonwealth was signed; VBPD was specifically identified as a participant in developing critical housing plans of the service system.

The grants and contracts of the Board impact thousands of Virginians, both with and without disabilities.

### Finances

The Board's primary source of funding is its grant award from the Administration for Community Living, an agency under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The grant award (allotment) represents 87% or \$1,434,852 of the agency's total budget. The Board's state general fund appropriation is \$177,927 and represents 13% of the agency budget and is used as the match for the federal funds. The agency budget for FY13 is \$1,459,801.

Each federal fiscal year VBPD receives an allotment from the DHHS and is given 3 years to expend the funds. This allotment is based on: the population of the state; the extent of need for services for individuals with developmental disabilities; and the financial need of the state. The Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights (DD) Act requires that no more than 30% of an allotment may be used for administrative costs and VBPD's administrative cost is 28% of its allotment.

The agency also receives an annual donation from the Department of Education (\$16,100) to the Youth Leadership Forum, a training program for rising junior and senior high school students. This donation is used in direct support of the Youth Leadership Delegates to

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attend this one week leadership training held at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

### Fund Sources

No Data Available

### Revenue Summary Statement

The Board's only revenue is its federal funds allocation under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act of 2000.

### Key Risk Factors

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Over the next six years, 40% of the staff will be eligible for retirement with full benefits. Retaining existing staff in a small (10 FTE) agency is challenging as there is little opportunity for advancement. Options for addressing staffing issues include reorganization, re-writing job descriptions (and appropriate training), and contracting out specific services due to staff constraints. In order to do the work of the Board in an efficient, effective manner, it is critical to evaluate processes regularly and implement some of the limited options.

Graduates of Board training programs self-report their activities via webforms and surveys. Typically, graduates are most active in the initial year or two after program participation. Tracking accomplishments and impact of these individuals remains challenging. Some graduates move out of state and use their skills elsewhere; others prefer to not maintain contact and move on, especially students. The Board should constantly find touchpoints and refine its data collection systems so as to build a stronger connection with those who are familiar with its mission and vision.

Systems change, one of the key purposes of Federal developmental disabilities (DD) councils, does not happen quickly nor easily. Tracking broad brush work in policy impact, and the resulting change within the disability service system, requires institutional knowledge, good data collection systems, and continued involvement in state initiatives. Maintaining positive and collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders is critical.

### Performance Highlights

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Key metrics for the Board include policy recommendations and dollars awarded via grants and contracts. In its publication the *2011 Assessment of the Disability Service System of Virginia*, the Board made 43 recommendations impacting services in the Commonwealth. Areas include transportation, housing, community services, employment, education, health, Medicaid, and early intervention. Produced triennially, the *Assessment* serves as a resource for policymakers, service providers, and people with disabilities and their families. The Board's standard of engagement on impacting state policy is a long-term outcome of the *Assessment*.

Additionally, distribution of Federal monies through grants and contracts that impact people with disabilities (and the systems that deliver those services) is a measure of the Board's performance. There are some years in which the Board does not issue Requests for Proposals for competitive grants. This is due to federal funds availability (based in part on the 3 year funding cycle and in part in how much money has been allotted to investment initiatives in a particular year) combined with the need at times to redirect staff resources to other priorities such as development of the triennial *Assessment* or the Five Year State plan.

### Performance Measures

### Management Discussion & Analysis

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#### General Information about the Ongoing Status of the Agency

The Board's focus is full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in community life. By impacting systems, change will occur, albeit over

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decades. For example, Virginia is changing the way people with significant disabilities are supported as state training centers reduce their census in anticipation of closure. In its first *Assessment* in 2006, the Board recommended that funds be redirected toward community living instead of funding institutions. By 2020, that shift will be near completion as a result of the Commonwealth's commitment to developing a community-based system, the DOJ settlement, and the work of state and local officials and advocates.

Creativity in providing consumer-directed and person-centered supports is necessary as existing systems are transformed. The Board will continue to fund projects and activities to support community capacity and help broaden understanding by the public of the rights of individuals with developmental and other disabilities to full inclusion in society.

Demand for accessible, affordable housing and transportation in both rural and urban areas will increase. Providers will be needed to meet the growing demands in employment, education and healthcare. Access to assistive technology will be critical as will support to families and aging caregivers.

Tracking and engagement of alumni of Board training programs should be strengthened. New communication and other technological tools will allow staff to keep abreast of advocates in action. Collecting data is one metric; the impact of advocacy is harder to quantify. Initiatives that showcase alumni success stories and raise awareness of people with disabilities and their families will assist in this effort.

### Information Technology

The Board is a member of the Disability Services Agency (DSA) group which includes the Department of the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), Department for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH), Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI) and Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC). IT services are provided by VITA/NG and oversight for these IT services and management of VITA/NG for the agency is provided by the IT staff located at the DARS and WWRC headquarters facility. The DSA consortium shares not only common back office IT applications, staff and data, it also shares back office fiscal processes—accounts payable, grants, payroll and general services—as well as Human Resources.

Currently, the Board pays 19% of its general fund allocation to the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA). Although this percentage is similar to other state agencies, it is a larger amount in a smaller agency due to the smaller budget.

As the Board increases its efforts to raise awareness using social media and original content video, staff time and equipment may change as these technologies require faster equipment and specialized skills. Better use of technology, including low cost tools such as social media, have already impacted the Board's reach during FY12-13. As more consumers have access to the Internet and access it through mobile devices, the Board needs to invest its information technology funds appropriately to better reach its audience members.

### Workforce Development

The Board's small staff is aging, and in a decade, the institutional knowledge will be limited due to pending retirements of key personnel. Within six years, 40% of staff will be eligible for retirement with full benefits. Key among them are the Grants Manager and the Research, Policy & Program Manager. Planning for succession now would allow a more strategic approach towards balancing institutional knowledge with needed skill sets that are not part of existing job descriptions.

While the Board has a highly motivated and skilled workforce, it is still a small agency with limited growth opportunities. This presents both recruitment and retention challenges. Salaries for positions requiring comparable educational and skill levels are higher in larger agencies and in the private sector which negatively impacts agencies with a small workforce. Similar difficulties are anticipated for future vacancies as each position requires expertise in multiple areas.

As a small agency with a flat organizational structure, continued funding challenges and increasing workload, few realistic opportunities exist for cross training of employees. VBPD will continue to use the agency's employee recognition program, salary administration plan and the Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Learning Management System as tools for staff development, retention, recruitment and training. The Board will continue to refine job descriptions and support professional development.

### Physical Plant

Rental costs for the Board continue to increase. However, the Board has received additional state support for this expense. A search for accessible office space in 2011-12 led to the conclusion that the current lease is below market rate.

The Board will continue to increase interaction with consumers via internet, video teleconferencing, social media and other computerized conveniences to reduce need for travel by both the consumer and agency staff. Long term, this increased use in technology promotes more opportunities for staff to telework, lessening carbon footprint and the need for expanded office space.