

2018-20 Executive Progress Report

Commonwealth of Virginia
Secretary of Health and Human Resources
Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

At A Glance

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.

Staffing 10 Salaried Employees, 0 Contracted Employees, 10 Authorized, and 3 Wage Employees.

Financials Budget FY 2019, \$1.97 million, 12.59% from the General Fund.

Trends ↑ Advocacy efforts to help people with disabilities

Key Perf Areas

➔ Policy recommendations

↑ Active advocates//leaders

Legend ↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, ➔ Steady

Productivity

➔ Grant matching funds expended

Legend

↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening, ➔ Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov

Background and History

Agency Background Statement

The mission of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (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. The Board envisions a Commonwealth in which Virginians with developmental and other disabilities direct their own lives and choose how they live, learn, work, and play. The Board serves as Virginia's Developmental Disabilities Council, authorized by the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (42 U.S.C. §15021-15029) and the 1985 Virginians with Disabilities Act (Va. Code §51.5-31 through §51.5-33).

The Board conducts three primary activities to advance systemic change that meets the needs of people with disabilities. These activities include (i) serving as a policy advisor; (ii) providing competitive grants, contracts, and other investments to advance systemic change and capacity building; and (iii) preparing people with disabilities and their family members, through training, to be leaders in the advocacy community. The Board does not provide direct services to people with developmental and other disabilities. It does provide information and referrals, and educates constituents, on issues of importance through newsletters, social media, and other communication venues.

Major Products and Services

- The Board's major publications are annual assessments of the disability service system, which serve as the basis for the Board's policy recommendations and priorities. In 2016, the General Assembly changed the format of its assessment from one assessment of nine service areas every three years, to one assessment of at least two key service areas each year. The Board will also periodically produce supplemental policy briefs on critical or emerging issues.
- The Board serves as a policy advisor on issues affecting people with developmental and other disabilities through legislative testimony, formal and informal comments on policies, regulations, and budget actions, and participation in numerous inter-agency workgroups.
- The Board provides competitive grants, contracts, and other investments for public and private projects that promote independence, self-determination, and inclusion of people with developmental and other disabilities. The Board prioritizes projects that meet the goals and objectives in its federally-mandated five-year state plan.

- The Board trains people with disabilities and their family members to be leaders in the advocacy community through the (i) Youth Leadership Academy, which currently focuses on high school juniors and seniors with disabilities, and (ii) Partners in Policymaking program, which trains adults with developmental disabilities and parents of young children with developmental disabilities.
- The Board began implementing an Alumni Development Program in 2016 to engage alumni of its two training programs with each other, the Board, and other disability organizations in order to advocate for systemic change on the local, state and federal levels.

Customers

Customer Summary

The number of people with developmental disabilities is expected to increase as Virginia’s overall population, and the reported prevalence of developmental disabilities within the overall population, continue to increase. Virginia’s population is expected to increase by about 274,000 people between 2018 and 2020, or three percent, according to the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. The prevalence of developmental disabilities in children ages 3 to 17 increased by 21 percent between 2014 and 2016, according to the latest study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The increased prevalence has been attributed to improvements in the identification of developmental disabilities and increased risk of developing a developmental disability.

The number of people with developmental disabilities seeking services is expected to increase as the number of people with developmental disabilities increases, Virginia continues to shift people with disabilities from institutional to community-based settings, and people become more aware of available community-based disability services. People’s ability to live independently in the community depends on access to services such as housing, transportation, and competitive employment. However, the Board expects that the number of people with disabilities it serves, and other stakeholders it serves, will remain stable due to flat or declining federal and state funding

Customer Table

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Consumer	Consumer/Advocacy Organizations (based on subscriber database; potential is unknown)	128	300	Stable
Developmentally-Disabled	Virginians w/ DD (number served based on Board requirement that at least 60% served through grants have DD)	2,087	133,826	Stable
Federal Agency	Federal Administration on Developmental Disabilities and Other DD Councils (based on subscriber database)	19	56	Stable
General Assembly	General Assembly Members and legislative branch agencies (based on subscriber database)	178	178	Stable
Governor	Governor and executive branch agencies (based on subscriber database so may include multiple people from the same agency; potential unknown)	421	1,000	Stable
Non-Profit Agency (Boards/Foundation),	State, regional, and local service providers, agencies, colleges and universities (based on subscriber database so may include multiple people from the same agency; potential unknown)	772	1,000	Stable

Finance and Performance Management

Finance

Financial Summary

The Board’s primary source of funding is its federal grant award from the Administration for Community Living, an agency under the Department of Health & Human Services. The grant award represents 87% or \$1,725,350 of the agency’s fiscal year 2019 annual budget. These funds are allocated annually based on the state’s population, the need for services for individuals with developmental disabilities, and the state’s financial need. These funds must be obligated within two years, which means that the Board has two grant awards available for obligation during any given year. The Commonwealth contributes the other 13% of the Board’s budget, or \$248,542, from the state General Fund.

The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act requires that no more than 30% of an allotment may be used for administrative costs. The Board’s administrative budget attributed to its federal award for state fiscal year 2019 is approximately 25% of its federal fiscal year 2018 federal allotment.

The agency was also awarded additional, time-limited federal funding from the Administration for Community Living through the Board's sub-contract with the Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University for Project Living Well, a Project of National Significance. This funding amounts to \$45,000 per year for federal FYs 2018-22.

The agency also receives donations from other state agencies to support participants of the Youth Leadership Academy, an in-house leadership program for rising high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The Youth Leadership Academy operates every other year, including July 2018 and July 2020. The Virginia Department of Education awards \$500 per participant, which is used to directly support the students' attendance at the four-day leadership training program. Starting in 2018, the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired also awards \$500 per participant who is blind or vision impaired, and the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services awards \$500 per participant excluding participants for whom the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired provides funding. These donations are not guaranteed and depend on available funding.

Fund Sources

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2019	FY 2020
01000	General Fund	\$248,542	\$254,977
10000	Federal Trust	\$1,725,350	\$1,725,350

Revenue Summary

The Board's only consistent annual revenue is its federal fund allocation under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 and the state general funds.

Performance

Performance Highlights

The Board's key performance metric is the number of formal policy recommendations presented to state, local, and federal officials. In state fiscal year (SFY) 2018, the Board presented 45 formal policy recommendations on several topics including transportation and housing. This is substantially more than the 27 recommendations the Board presented in SFY 2017, due to natural fluctuation in response to the state's constantly changing policy priorities. The Board's 45 formal policy recommendations in SFY 2018 is also substantially more than most of the years prior to SFY 2017. This increase is due to the Board switching from publishing one assessment of nine disability service areas every three years prior to SFY 2017, to publishing one assessment of at least two disability service areas every year starting in SFY 2017. This change has resulted in a consistently higher number of recommendations in recent years.

Another key performance area is the Board's training programs for people with disabilities and their family members. The Board's two long-standing training programs, the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) and Partners in Policymaking (PIP), are highly rated. The Board also began implementing a relatively new Alumni Development Program in federal fiscal year (FFY) 2017 to enhance YLA and PIP graduates' advocacy efforts for systemic change and capacity building. The Board is already beginning to see the benefits of this new Alumni Development Program. Due at least in part to the program, the Board was able to substantially increase the number of training program graduates who report being engaged in advocacy or leadership activities from 25 and 22 in FFYs 2015-2016, respectively, to 73 in FFY 2017.

In addition to policy and training programs, the Board's activities include numerous grant projects. The Board is restructuring its performance measures related to grants for the current biennium, in order to better reflect performance, and therefore anticipates being able to discuss its performance on these measures in the next strategic plan.

Selected Measures

Measure ID	Measure	Alternative Name	Estimated Trend
60645002.001.001	Number of formal policy recommendations presented to state, local, or federal officials	Policy recommendations	Maintaining
606.0001	Number of graduates of Board Training programs who are engaged in advocacy or leadership activities	Active advocates//leaders	Improving
606.0005	Amount of matching funds expended per \$1,000 of grant/contract expenditures	Grant matching funds expended	Maintaining

Key Risk Factors

Flat or declining federal and state funding, combined with increasing operational expenses, could limit the Board's ability to carry out its activities as effectively as possible. Insufficient funding could reduce the resources available for staff salaries, grants and contract awards, training programs, information technology to accommodate people with disabilities, the agency's physical plant, and other operational costs. Limited funding in recent years led the Board to conduct its two training programs, the Youth Leadership Academy and Partners in Policymaking, biennially rather than annually. Limited funding also led the Board to refrain from awarding competitive grants in 2015.

A new federal interpretation of regulations regarding the period of performance could also limit the Board's ability to carry out its activities as effectively as possible. The Board and other Developmental Disability Councils have operated under a long standing (30 year) interpretation by the federal government that Councils had two years to obligate its federal funds and an additional third year to liquidate those funds. The Administration on Community Living (ACL) has changed that interpretation, informing Developmental Disability Councils that that the third year is only to pay for expenditures incurred during the two-year obligation period. The result is that grant activities cannot extend into the third year and Councils can no longer pay for activities obligated in earlier years with year three money. This will affect the manner in which the Board obligates its funds and may result in different procedures for awarding and funding grants. The new interpretation continues to be under discussion at the federal level. While the Administration for Community Living has been unequivocally informed that the new interpretation will affect the ability of Developmental Disability Councils to effectively serve people with developmental disabilities, ACL has advised at present that Councils, including the Board, will need to come into compliance with the federal fiscal year 2019 award.

The Executive Director is eligible for retirement with full benefits. She has over 25 years of first-hand experience with disability policy. Her substantial institutional knowledge has been particularly important given turnover over the last 5 years at the agency. Succession planning will be integral to continuing the agency's success moving forward. New staff are knowledgeable, committed and have significant substantive expertise to continue to move the agency forward.

Effecting and overseeing systemic change is increasingly challenging for a small agency. Systemic change rarely happens quickly, nor easily, and often requires ongoing efforts over many years. Staff workloads have increased in order to monitor an increasing number of wide-reaching state initiatives underway, participate in numerous inter-agency workgroups guiding the initiatives, and evaluate the Board's progress in compliance with more intensive federal reporting requirements. Effecting and overseeing systemic change requires substantial policy expertise, continuous involvement in state initiatives, collaborative relationships with diverse stakeholders, and good data collection to track impact.

Complying with the state's evolving procurement requirements is increasingly challenging for a small agency. The Board has extensive procurement needs to support its functions, and in particular its three training programs. However, the Board's administrative unit is substantially smaller than that of other agencies. Thus, a larger portion of the Board's workload is spent on procurement compared to other agencies. These responsibilities have limited the amount of time the Board can spend on other operations and have resulted in an ongoing re-evaluation of resource utilization, priorities, and activities.

Agency Statistics

Statistics Summary

In addition to the performance measures presented earlier, the statistics in the following table illustrate the breadth and depth of the Board's efforts to-date to advance systemic change for people with disabilities:

Statistics Table

Description	Value
Agency funds awarded through grants and contracts to advance systemic change since 1984	20,180,011
Number of grants, contracts, and other investments since 1984:	299
Number of people served through grants and contracts in federal FY 2017	3,478
Graduates of the Board's Youth Leadership Academy (formerly Youth Leadership Forum) and Partners in	51
Number of inter-agency workgroups the Board participated in in federal FY 2017	22
Number of views of the Board's social media posts in state FY 2018	386,442

Management Discussion

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

The Board's focus continues to be advancing systemic change so that people with developmental and other disabilities can be independent, make their own decisions, and fully participate in community life. To this end, the Board will continue its primary activities of serving as a policy leader and advisor; providing competitive grants, contracts, and other investments; and preparing people with disabilities and their family members to be leaders in the advocacy community.

The Board will continue implementing a new format for its policy assessments of the disability services system, which is the Board's major product. Instead of producing one assessment of nine service areas every three years, as it did through 2016, the Board is now producing one assessment of at least two key service areas each year along with periodic, supplemental policy briefs on critical or emerging issues. The new format offers several advantages, including (i) improving timeliness by allowing more frequent publishing and giving the Board the flexibility to focus on issues that are most relevant in a given year; (ii) improving readability by shortening the documents; and (iii) improving accuracy by including less description of the current service system because these descriptions quickly become outdated as the system undergoes numerous changes. The Board has used this new format to produce four assessments thus far, covering the areas of employment, education, housing and transportation, and plans to address the remaining five areas of community living, institutional supports, early intervention, long-term services and

supports, and traditional Medicaid in the 2018-20 biennium.

The Board's policy priorities will continue to evolve to account for findings and recommendations from *Project Living Well*. *Project Living Well* is a Project of National Significance for which the Board is a sub-contractor in conjunction with several other organizations including the Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University and the Disability Law Center of Virginia. The project aims to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, both those using home- and community-based services and those waiting for services, to live a life of their choosing in an environment that promotes independence, health, and healthy relationships. The Board's role is expected to include participation in collaborative inter-agency leadership meetings, recruitment of people with disabilities to provide peer-to-peer supports, policy advocacy, and information dissemination. The annually renewable project will be implemented over five years, federal FYs 2018-22.

The Board will continue to prioritize investments that meet the goals and objectives in its federally-mandated state plan for federal FY 2017-21. These goals and objectives include (i) increasing integrated and affordable housing options, (ii) improving transportation planning, (iii) promoting inclusive education, (iv) improving information to families about critical educational decision-making points such as employment and assessment options, (v), increasing the availability of early intervention services for infants who have been in neonatal intensive care units; (vi) increasing informational resources available to people with limited English proficiency, (vii) encouraging competitive, integrated employment, and (viii) enhancing person-centered healthcare, and (ix) strengthening an existing self-advocacy organization or program led by people with developmental disabilities. In this biennium, the Board will try to improve the quality of grant proposals through increased technical assistance, including developing a manual for aspiring grantees with tips for grant writing and assisting in the development of federal performance measure targets.

The Board will also continue to refine its training programs to better prepare people with disabilities and their family members to be leaders in the advocacy community. Ongoing recent refinements include (i) expanding its Youth Leadership Academy (formerly the Youth Leadership Forum) to include rising high school sophomores, in an effort to expand outreach, (ii) requiring Partners in Policymaking participants collaborate with other organizations on class projects, in an effort to increase program effectiveness, (iii) better connecting alumni from its two training programs with each other through virtual technology, and (iv) better informing its training program alumni about specific opportunities to advocate for policy changes throughout the year.

The Board will also continue to build on its communication initiatives in order to better educate consumers about Board initiatives, state and federal policy, and available resources. This information is communicated through a variety of avenues including the use of Board's website, social media, and e-news. It will be increasingly important for the Board to utilize these communications as the Commonwealth continues to implement numerous wide-reaching initiatives that affect people with disabilities. The Board will broaden its reach to new audiences by continuing to streamline its website, reports, and branding to improve their visibility and accessibility. The Board will also continue to reduce its printing costs when feasible, including relying more on electronic packets for its quarterly Board meetings.

Information Technology

The Board is a member of the Disability Services Agency (DSA) group which includes the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI), Department for 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 and oversight for these IT services and management of VITA 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.

The Board typically pays 32-36% of its general fund allocation each year to the Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA). Although the cost is similar to other state agencies, it is a larger percentage of the Board's general fund budget given that it is a relatively small agency. Without additional general fund allocations, it will become increasingly challenging to cover IT-related costs, particularly for new services and supports.

As the Board increases its efforts to raise awareness using social media and original content video, equipment and staff time 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 FY17. 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 in a manner that is also accessible to people with disabilities.

As the Board explores opportunities to further maximize its limited state and federal funds, additional use of technology may be required. For example, the Board may consider holding meetings via web conferencing tools, to the extent that these tools can accommodate people with disabilities and are cost-effective. In exploring additional options, the Board will try to utilize existing technology at no- or low-cost to the Board whenever possible.

Workforce Development

The Executive Director is eligible for retirement with full benefits. She has over 25 years of first-hand experience with disability policy. Her substantial institutional knowledge has been particularly important given turnover in other staff positions over the last 5 years. Succession planning will be integral to continuing the agency's success moving forward. New staff hired over the last 5 years have significant knowledge, expertise and skill in areas important to moving the agency forward.

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 and benefits for positions requiring comparable educational and skill levels are significantly higher in larger agencies and in the private sector, which negatively impacts agencies with a small workforce. In addition, due to the Board's limited MEL and

funding, several positions which could be full-time are part-time wage positions. It is difficult to maintain good employees in wage positions as they seek full-time employment with benefits. Similar difficulties are anticipated for any 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. Board staff have begun sharing their knowledge with each other through voluntary lunch and learn sessions. The Board will also continue to use the agency's employee recognition program and salary administration plan. The Board will also continue to review the effective use of internal and external agency resources, including staff resources, to take advantage of staff strengths and determine the most appropriate strategies for meeting agency goals with limited staff.

Physical Plant

Rental costs for the Board continue to increase, and no opportunities remain to further consolidate office space. Given flat or declining federal and state funding, increasing rental costs could limit the Board's ability to carry out its activities as effectively as possible.

The Board will continue efforts to limit the amount of in-house space needed. For example, Board staff will continue to hold meetings with external stakeholders at off-site locations including other agency buildings, when available. This eases parking constraints and frees up the Board's sole conference room for other purposes. The Board will also continue to increase interaction with consumers via internet, video teleconferencing, social media and other technologies to reduce need for travel by both the consumer and agency staff.
