



# Annual Report

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
Program Year 2022  
(July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)

State Rehabilitation Council of Kansas

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# Kansas Department for Children & Families (DCF)

- **Mission:** To protect children, promote healthy families and encourage personal responsibility.

## Kansas Rehabilitation Services (KRS)

**Mission:** Working in partnership with Kansans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independence, and self-reliance.

Principles: The following core principles will be infused into VR operations:

- Competitive, integrated employment is key component to reaching self-reliance, independence, inclusion, economic equality, and integration into society for people with disabilities.
- All people with disabilities, including those with the most significant disabilities, are presumed to be capable of engaging in gainful employment.
- KRS, its consumers, providers, and partners will be accountable for the achievement of employment and the effective use of resources.
- KRS expects and encourages meaningful involvement of people with disabilities, public/private partners, employers and other stakeholders in KRS programs, services, and activities.
- KRS promotes the use of evidence-based practices in VR service delivery to empower Kansans with disabilities to maximize employment and economic self-reliance.
- KRS emphasizes employer engagement activities that market the skills and abilities of qualified workers with disabilities have to contribute to the success of Kansas business and industry.



*Unless otherwise noted, information in this report is based on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Program Year 2022 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023)*

## Note from the Director – Dan Decker

We've expanded our Pre-Employment Transition Services team as we continue to serve youths with disabilities in the state of Kansas from age 14-21. We continue to, with the assistance of our SRC, standardize services across the state for all individuals we serve by enacting policies and providing clarification to our statewide system of vendors on the policy changes as they occur. As we continue to move farther away from the COVID pandemic and in the face of economic influences, we have gotten legislative budget approval to increase our direct service payments by 10% and increase our funding of our Centers for Independent Living by 20%. This is in line with the value we place upon our system of providers that work hand-in-hand with our participants on a daily basis. In this annual report, you will get the opportunity to view some of the great stories from across our multitudes of programs and regions and our expectations and excitement for the year moving forward.



# State Rehabilitation Council Members

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Representing:</b>	<b>Employer:</b>	<b>Email:</b>	<b>Term Start Date:</b>
Mike Burgess (Chair for Year 2022)	CAP Representative	Disability Rights Center Director of Policy & Outreach	<a href="mailto:mike@drckansas.org">mike@drckansas.org</a>	May serve more than two consecutive full terms.
Tami Allen (Co-Chair)	Families Together	Families Together (Program Director)	<a href="mailto:Tami@famieliestogetherinc.org">Tami@famieliestogetherinc.org</a>	01/01/2022
LaVonne Geiss	Community Rehab Program Service Provider	Program Manager DSNWK	<a href="mailto:Lavonne.giess@mysnwk.org">Lavonne.giess@mysnwk.org</a>	01/01/2022
Deb Scheibler	Labor	Workforce One Executive Director	<a href="mailto:deb@workforceone.org">deb@workforceone.org</a>	01/01/2022
Stacy Fuller	Community Rehab Program & Disability Advocacy Group	Envision Inc. Director of Rehabilitation Service & Support Programs	<a href="mailto:Stacy.fuller@envisionus.com">Stacy.fuller@envisionus.com</a>	01/01/2022
Tawnie Larson	Business Industry of Labor	Kansas AgrAbility Project Coordinator	<a href="mailto:Tawnie@ksu.edu">Tawnie@ksu.edu</a>	01/01/2022
Christi Reif-Fuhrman	Person w/Disability	N/A	<a href="mailto:Creif.fuhrman@rcec610.com">Creif.fuhrman@rcec610.com</a>	01/01/2022
Tom Page	Disability Advocacy Group	National Federation for the Blind	<a href="mailto:topage@swbell.net">topage@swbell.net</a>	01/01/2022
Sarah Cowen	VR-Tribal Representative	Prairie Band Pottawatomie	<a href="mailto:sarahcowan@pbpnation.org">sarahcowan@pbpnation.org</a>	01/01/2022
Stacie Martin	State Educational Agency	Education Program Consultant  Special Education & Title Services	<a href="mailto:smartin@ksde.org">smartin@ksde.org</a>	01/01/2020
Neelima Parasker	State Workforce Investment Board	Founder, President & CEO at SnapIT Solutions  Co-Founder Lotus TMS	<a href="mailto:neelima@snapit.solutions">neelima@snapit.solutions</a>	01/01/2022
Shanti Ramcharan	Statewide Independent Living Council	Adult System of Care Administrator  Aetna Better Health of Kansas	<a href="mailto:ramcharans@aetna.com">ramcharans@aetna.com</a>	01/01/2022
Dan Decker	Ex-Officio Non- Voting Member	Dept. for Children & Families Director of RS	<a href="mailto:Daniel.decker@ks.gov">Daniel.decker@ks.gov</a>	01/01/2022
Tom Anderson	Statewide Independent Living Council			

These are our active participating members.  
We are currently awaiting governor approval for several of our SRC board members.

# Annual Summary

## **Review of Rehabilitation Services (RS)**

At each quarterly meeting, one of the RS Regional Program Administrators for VR presents information about their operations. Among the topics are staffing, outcomes, challenges, business development in the region, unemployment, size of communities and success stories. These presentations give council members a better feel for how VR services are carried out at the local level. These presentations are also an opportunity for questions-and-answers about regional operations.

## **Data Report**

Data Administrator: Deanna Lowe

RS provides a quarterly performance data report that hones in on key areas of interest to the council members. This report includes number of persons served, number of persons employed, average hourly wage, average hours worked per week, highest full-time hourly wage, percent of persons employed who report their own income as their primary source of support, number of transition youth served and employed, number of counselors, and average caseload size. The report also includes performance on timeliness of eligibility determination and development of Individual Plans for Employment. Finally, the report includes the number of persons rehabilitated by type of disability.

The regional presentations, data report and reports from administrative staff on key initiatives give council members the opportunity to stay informed about RS operations and to evaluate/guide the agency's performance.



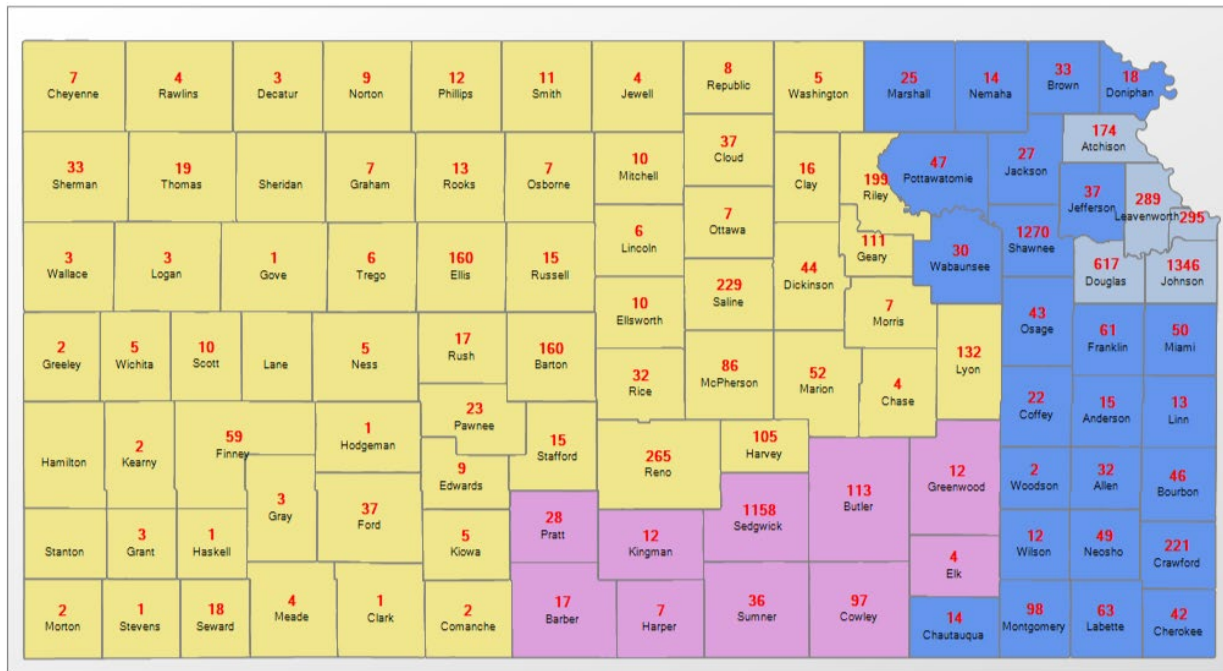
# RS Program Overview & Outcomes

## Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

VR provides services for Kansans with disabilities to obtain, maintain or regain employment in the competitive and integrated workplace.

- To be eligible for services, a person must have a physical or mental disability which results in a substantial impediment to employment, and they must require VR services in order to get a job.
- Services are provided by qualified VR counselors stationed in DCF offices and in partnership with private contractors and service providers.
- Services are individualized according to each person’s rehabilitation needs and employment objective. Services may include vocational assessment, counseling and guidance, job-related training, job coaching, supported employment, assistive technology, physical/mental restoration services, transition services for youth, and job placement.
- Basic VR funds are 78.7% federal, authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

In PY 2022, VR provided services for 8,556 Kansans with disabilities who were at various stages in their preparation for employment. As the map below illustrates, the VR program has statewide impact.



TOTAL NUMBER SERVED: 8,556

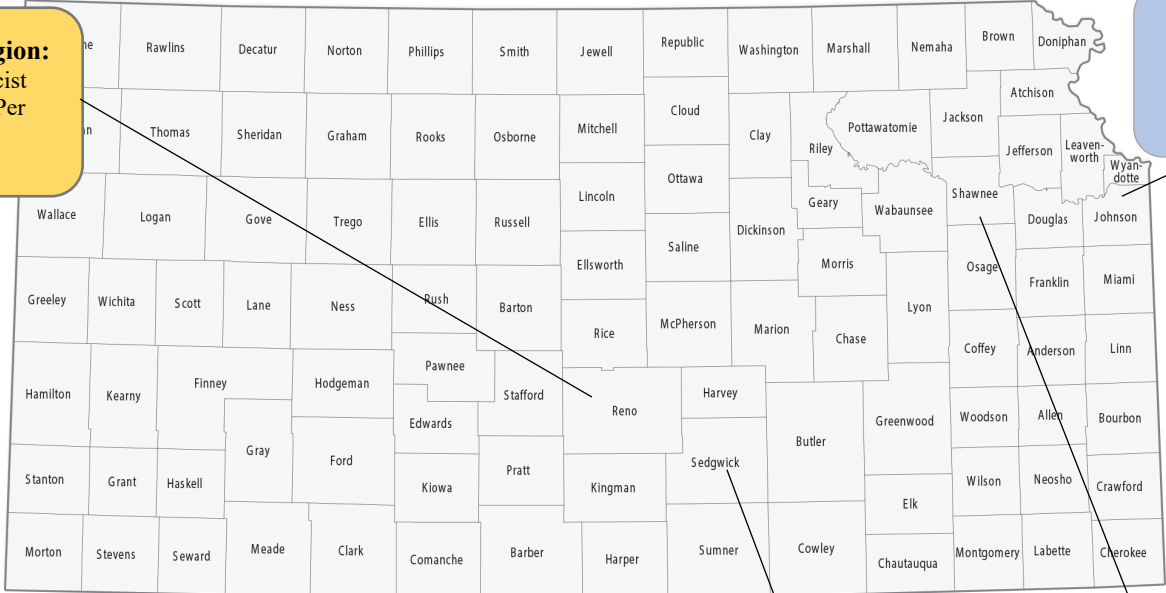
A total of 905 persons achieved competitive integrated employment in PY 2022. Their average earnings were \$14.69 per hour, and they worked an average of 28 hours per week. A total of 76% of persons successfully employed reported their own income as their primary source of support at VR case closure, representing a significant milestone toward self-sufficiency.

Subsequently of those achieving employment, 31% were youth with disabilities who therefore began a lifelong path focused on self-sufficiency rather than reliance on public benefits.

**VR staff statewide are working hard to facilitate timely access to services and this work is paying off. PY 2022 the average timeframe from application to eligibility is 28 days and the average timeframe from eligibility to IPE development is 48.**

**West Region:**  
Pharmacist  
\$48.08 Per Hour

**KC Region:**  
Director of Finance  
\$62.50 Per Hour



**Kansas City Region Consists of the Following Counties:**  
Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson, Douglas

**Wichita Region:**  
Principal  
\$49.77 Per Hour

**East Region:**  
Self-Employed Insulator  
\$183.83 Per Hour

**East Region Consists of the Following Counties:**  
Doniphan, Brown, Nemaha, Marshall, Pottawatomie, Jackson, Jefferson, Wabunsee, Shawnee, Osage, Franklin, Miami, Coffey, Anderson, Linn, Allen, Bourbon, Chautauqua, Cherokee, Crawford, Labette, Montgomery, Neosho, Wilson, Woodson

**West Region Consists of the Following Counties:**  
Cheyenne, Clay, Cloud, Decatur, Dickinson, Ellis, Ellsworth, Geary, Gove, Graham, Jewell, Lincoln, Logan, Mitchell, Morris, Norton, Osborne, Ottawa, Phillips, Rawlins, Republic, Riley, Rooks, Russell, Saline, Sheridan, Sherman, Smith, Thomas, Trego, Wallace, Washington, Barton, Chase, Clark, Comanche, Edwards, Finney, Ford, Grant, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Harvey, Haskell, Hodgeman, Kearney, Kiowa, Lane, Lyon, Marion, McPherson, Meade, Morton, Ness, Pawnee, Reno, Rice, Rush, Scott, Seward, Stafford, Stanton, Stevens

**Wichita Region Consists of the Following Counties:**  
Barber, Butler, Cowley, Elk, Greenwood, Harper, Kingman, Pratt, Sedgwick, Sumner



## **Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) Highlights**

Pre-ETS Program Administrator: Tracie Flowers

The Council maintains a strong focus on how to empower youth with disabilities to pursue post-secondary education, achieve employment and become self-reliant. Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) are discussed at each meeting. The Pre-ETS program offers job exploration, counseling on post-secondary education, self-advocacy training and other services to help young adults prepare for employment and self-reliance.

A major area of emphasis is the provision of summer paid work-based experiences through which youth (second semester junior year and up) can learn the basic skills necessary to succeed in the workplace and experience the benefits of earned income. To carry out this component, Rehabilitation Services has established innovative partnerships with most KANSAS WORKS one-stop workforce centers as well as some Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and recently opened the opportunity to vendors/providers in an effort to serve more students, especially in rural areas. These partnerships leverage the expertise to provide work readiness training and develop opportunities for paid work experiences. The services are funded through Rehabilitation Services provider agreements. KRS is building service provider capacity to ensure statewide access for paid work-based learning experiences. Research published in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation shows that youth employment is a strong predictor of successful employment as adults, and therefore an important milestone toward self-reliance. This past summer Pre-ETS kicked off our second summer experience and it was a success!

In addition, Rehabilitation Services has established a partnership with the Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEA). “Empower Me” workshops are conducted statewide to help high school students plan for post-secondary education and employment. During the workshops, students participate in activities focused on job exploration, resume building, work readiness training, self-advocacy skill building, mock interviews and post-secondary educational options. An important aspect of each virtual event is a panel presentation by people with disabilities who discuss their life and employment experiences.

**KRS and KYEA partnered to present ten Empower Me Workshops in PY 2022, with a total of 155 student participants. According to students, the workshops are a valuable experience, and they live up to the “empower me” goal.**

- **Requested Services: 2,096**
- **Students in Plan: 1,946**
- **Receiving Services: 1,826**
- **Moved into Receiving Services 815**
- **VR/Pre-ETS Cases to Date: 707**
- **VR/Pre-ETS Cases Currently Active: 273**
- **Total Services Provided: 9,957**
- **Most Provided Service: Workplace Readiness: 3,301**

## **Coordination with other Disability Organizations**

One major purpose of the Council is to facilitate coordination among disability and service provider organizations. The Department of Education, the Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, the client assistance program, the Parent Training and Information Center, the Statewide Independent Living Council, and the Kansas Advisory Committee for the Blind and Visually Impaired each have designated times on the agenda to present about their organizations. Other members representing service providers, VR consumers, advocacy organizations, business/industry and the workforce development board all have opportunities to share information, announce opportunities for collaboration, or raise issues to further consideration.

## **Training Department**

Training Administrator: Lara Bowen

The Training department participates in the quarterly Council meetings where we provide information on the variety of trainings that were offered to all staff during the past quarter. Training spends a significant amount of time training new VR Counselors, Program Specialists and Pre-ETS Specialists. In PY 2022, we trained 17 new VR counselors, three Program Specialists, 11 Pre-ETS Specialist, two new managers, one Program Administrator, and one VR Intern. Our new hire trainings are completed in groups across the state using the Teams platform. This detailed training covers topics like VR policies and procedures, as well as how each area serves our clients, students, and youth with disabilities. We cover in-depth information on federal and state policies, how each area performs their jobs, and we include hands-on practices of a variety of scenarios using KMIS Train (which mirrors the live KMIS record keeping system). New staff also completes a variety of online courses offered through YesLMS when they are on-boarded, and we encourage continued learning for all staff using this valuable tool throughout the year. We provide monthly trainings that are required for all staff called Charting the VR Course. These meetings cover a variety of VR-related topics such as policy and procedure updates, tools for working with individuals of different ages and disabilities, and topics like caseload management skills, to name a few. To help ensure staff is educated on current resources, tools, and other services available, we provide a variety of Lunch and Learns which are optional meetings that staff can attend as needed and interested. Finally, we provide quarterly trainings with VR Support Staff who are an invaluable resource to all our teams and clients across the state. These trainings are based on needs identified by our Support Staff Supervisors and Managers/Program Administrators from each region.

## **Community Engagement and Provider**

Community Engagement and Provider Manager: Chris Zuercher

Kansas Rehabilitation Services got approval for a 10% increase for direct services with our provider agreements which went into effect July 1, 2023. There are currently eighty-eight providers who were impacted positively by the current rate increase.

We had twenty-five providers made unique changes to their individual agreements to enhance provider services. Majority of the amendments were requests to add services and or counties to expand services, which in many cases were requests from the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors to meet the need of the individual(s) served. Besides the current providers we work with there were approximately forty-three unique enquiries regarding how to become a new

provider. Out of those forty-three, five completed the process and were approved to become a “new” provider in PY2022.

As for the specific provider data for PY 2022, the current Kansas Management Information System shows the average wage worked was \$14.68 and the average weekly hours worked came to 28. Approximately 525 people were successfully closed reaching their goals in PY 2022 using provider services.

In addition to, I have organized and provided quarterly provider meetings across the state based on the demand of leadership and their agendas.

To end, I currently participate and represent Rehabilitation Services on the:

- Assistive Technology Council of Kansas (ATK)
- Governors Behavioral Health Services Planning Council -Vocational Subcommittee (GBHSPC)
- The National Employment Team (NET)
- Kansas Department of Disability and Aging services as the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics -Kansas Rehabilitation Services Liaison for Individual Placement Supports.

## **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**

RS Management Staff

Under the WIOA, VR is a partner in the state’s workforce development system, along with adult basic education, labor exchange services, and workforce centers. As partners, these programs develop goals, strategies, and performance measures to address the needs of Kansas employers and job seekers. A combined state plan is updated every two years and submitted to the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education.

WIOA also incorporates significant changes to the VR program through amendments to the Rehabilitation Act. Pre-ETS, described previously, was established.

In addition, VR must provide Career Counseling, Information and Referral Services for the 1,311 Kansans with disabilities employed at subminimum wage in sheltered workshops. The goal is to provide information about competitive integrated employment options and the services available to help them secure such jobs in the integrated labor market.

## **Disability Determination Services (DDS)**

DDS Deputy Director: Randy Krueger

Kansas DDS makes medical disability determinations for the U.S. Social Security Administration on most Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) claims filed or reviewed in Kansas. Kansas DDS is responsible only for the medical adjudication, and the Social Security Administration determines whether to award benefits. Kansas DDS also works with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the KanCare Clearinghouse to assess medical documentation for Kansans who apply for medical assistance on the basis of disability. Kansas DDS is virtually 100% federally funded. In SFY 2022, 29,157 Kansans filed disability claims (all types). The Kansas DDS was responsible for processing 23,999 of those claims. For SFY 2023 Kansas DDS, the average claim processing time for SSI claims is 174 days and for SSDI claims is 180 days. Kansas DDS is recognized

nationally as one of the best for quality determinations with an accuracy rate of 97.5% for SFY 2023.

### **Independent Living (IL)**

RS Independent Living Grant Manager: Jennifer Graber

RS administers the independent living program, which includes grants to a network for Centers for Independent Living (CILs). CILs provide information/referral, peer counseling, independent living skills training, advocacy, and deinstitutionalization services for people with disabilities. In addition, RS oversees grants with community-based organizations to carry out the independent living program for older (age 55+) individuals who are blind (OIB). Services include independent living skills training, assistive technology, and orientation/mobility training. Services are intended to help persons served live in their own homes and communities rather than more costly institutional settings.

RS is also required to provide support for the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILCK), in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act and implementing regulations.

In August 2022, RS hired a new Independent Living Grant Manager, Jennifer Graber. Jennifer has 15 years of experience in VR and Pre-ETS. One of the first things the new Grant Manager wanted to do was get out to each Independent Living Center in person to see the facilities and meet the staff. In person visits were made to all 9 of the CIL's who receive state issued grants as well as meeting the SILCK Executive Director in person. On-site visits were also made to Alphapointe and Envision, two of the state's OIB providers. Another priority was updating the monitoring manual and begin conducting on-site monitoring reviews starting in the spring of 2023. The monitoring reviews are to ensure core IL services are being provided and Centers are operating in compliance with the Federal regulations in order to continue receiving grant funds. So far, three in-person site visits have been completed with 4 remaining visits for the late summer into fall.

All of the Independent Living Centers continue to see an increase in numbers served as the pandemic ends as well as seeing a greater need to serve consumers with multiple disabilities and more complex barriers. For PY 2023, Centers for Independent Living provided services to 11,296 people with disabilities in all 105 counties. Services ranged from Information and Referral, Independent Living Skills Training, Physical Restoration Services and Assistive Technology.

### **Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH)**

Director: Robert Cooper

KCDHH is established in 1982 by K.S.A. 75-5391 and is overseen by a board of commission members appointed by the Governor. KCDHH offers advocacy, technical assistance, information/referral, registration for sign language interpreters and other communication access services providers, and coordination of communication access services, including the interpreting services. In FY2023, KCDHH expanded its staff to 4, by adding two new FTEs, one Program Manager for Communication Access Services and another Community Collaborative Professional.

- KDCHH staff receive between 500-800 contacts every month (mostly phone calls or email messages) involving many issues on accessibility of services, service needs or specific resources for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH).
- KCDHH maintains a registration list of over 400 sign language interpreters in Kansas and is developing other registration process involving other communication access services as authorized by 2022 Legislature amending and adding KCDHH statutes, which also added regulation authority in K.S.A. 75-5393a through 75-5393d. Other communication access services (CAS) include captioning (CART) and support providers for persons who are deaf-blind (SSP/CN).
- KCDHH provides an annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Day at the Capitol event every March attracting 200 to 300 visitors, including state legislators.
- KCDHH is continuing to monitor the full implementation of the Language Assessment Program (LAP) with Kansas School for the Deaf (KSD) for persons who are D/HH, ages 0-8.
- KCDHH has initiated a pilot Communication Access Fund (CAF) in FY2024 to provide assistance to attorneys, especially in rural areas, in providing communication access to D/HH and two other initiatives addressing communication access gaps in other areas of need. KCDHH is working on expanding CAF budget for FY2025 to also include several other initiatives, which will push for better statewide coordination of access in Courts and court-related services and to create a single point of contact for all local and state emergency management officials to deploy communication access services wherever they are needed during disaster response and also during the recovery period. This is to ensure distribution of access resources are proportional to the need, not to create disparities, especially the rural areas already with limited resources.

### **Business Enterprise Program (BEP)**

Program Administrator: Matthew Miller

VR also includes a specialized program for persons who are legally blind. BEP offers them the opportunity to manage food service and vending operations in public/government facilities, including state office buildings, the State Capitol, military food service operations, highway rest areas, and four private entities. BEP uses funds generated by its operations, rather than state general funds, to match Federal VR funds.

BEP has 11 certified or licensed blind operators at 106 sites across the state, including vending machines, snack bars, micro markets, and cafes/cafeterias. BEP also has contracts to operate dining halls on two military bases, Fort Riley and Fort Leavenworth. COVID-19 was an overwhelming challenge for BEP in SFY 2020 with the program taking a 45% decrease in net profits. BEP operators made progress in SFY 2021 with a 16% increase in average earnings. The average annual earnings of BEP blind participants in SFY 2023 was \$28,765. This is an improvement of 16% over SFY 2022.

### Statewide: Successful Closures

	<b>PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)</b>	<b>PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)</b>
<b>Total Successful Closures</b>	1113	905
<b>Average Hourly Wage</b>	\$13.19	\$14.69
<b>Highest Hourly Wage</b>	\$114.60	\$183.83

### Statewide: Job Placement Successful Closures

	<b>PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)</b>	<b>PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)</b>
<b>Total Successful Closures</b>	756	525
<b>Average Hourly Wage</b>	\$11.33	\$14.68
<b>Average Hours Worked</b>	25	28

### Statewide: Supported Employment Successful Closures

	<b>PY 2021 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)</b>	<b>PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)</b>
<b>Total Successful Closures</b>	203	151
<b>Average Hourly Wage</b>	\$10.50	\$14.68
<b>Average Hours Worked</b>	19	28

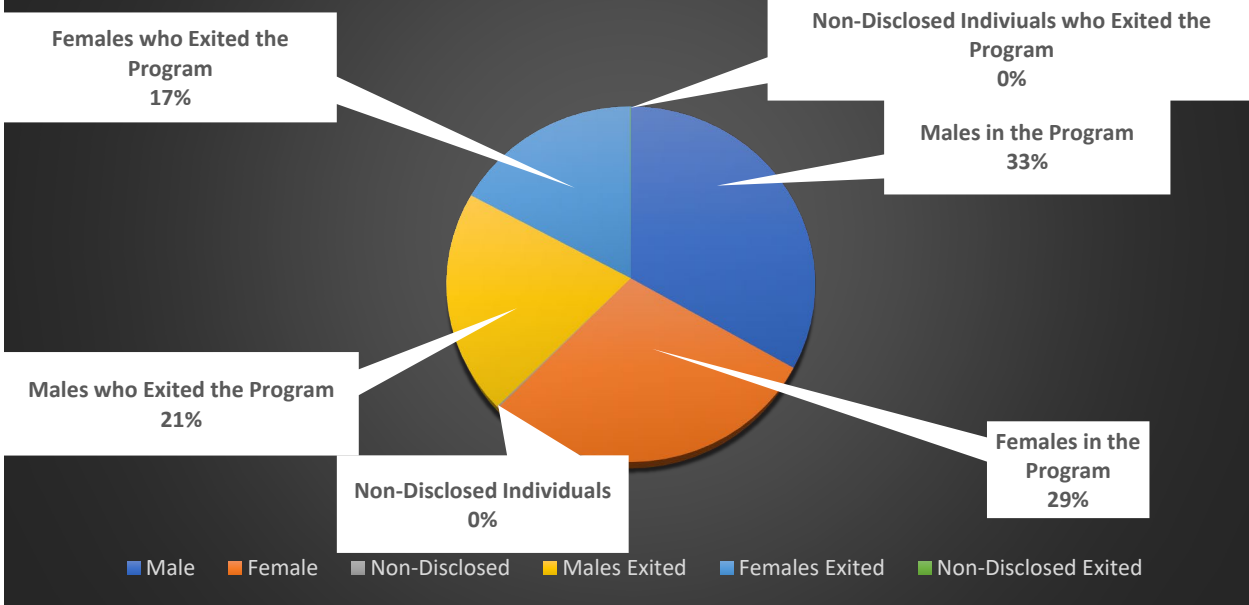
### Disabilities of Persons Rehabilitated

<b>Impairment</b>	<b>PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)</b>
Mental Illness	27
Orthopedic/Neurological Impairments	119
Other Cognitive Impairments	2
Learning Disabilities	27
Intellectual Disabilities	27
Other Physical Impairments	235
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	114
Blindness and Other Visual Impairments	71
General Physical Debilitation	102
Other	155
TBI as the cause of disability	10
Autism Spectrum as the cause of the disability	16
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>905</b>

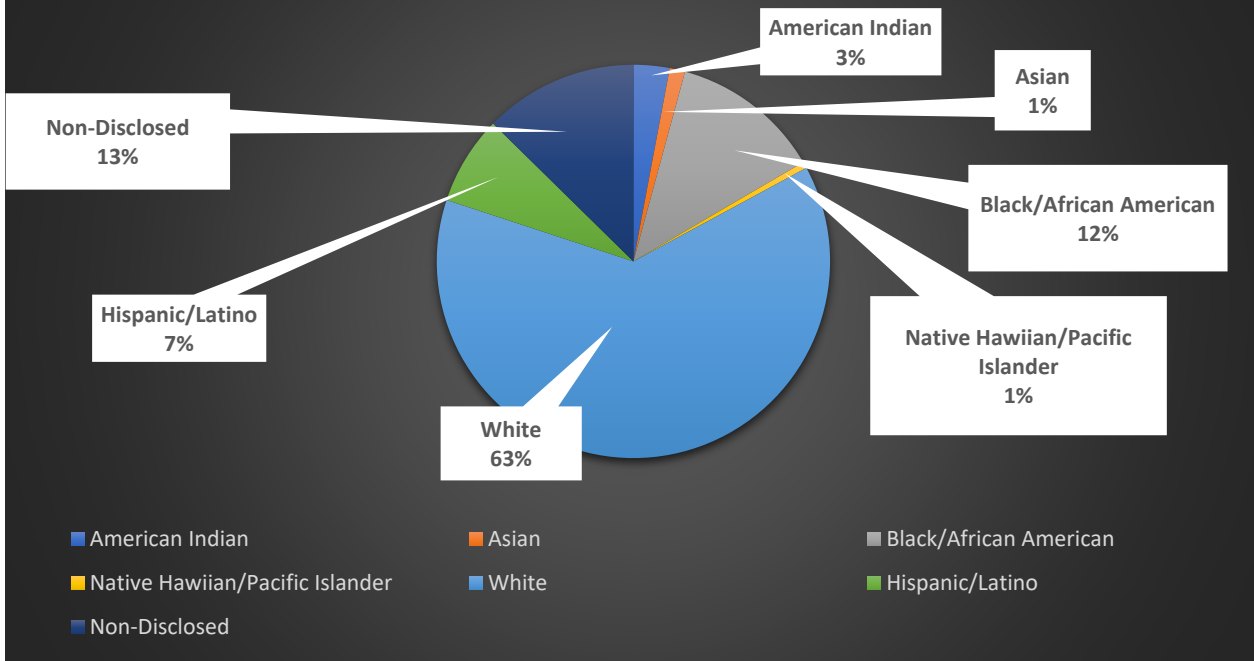


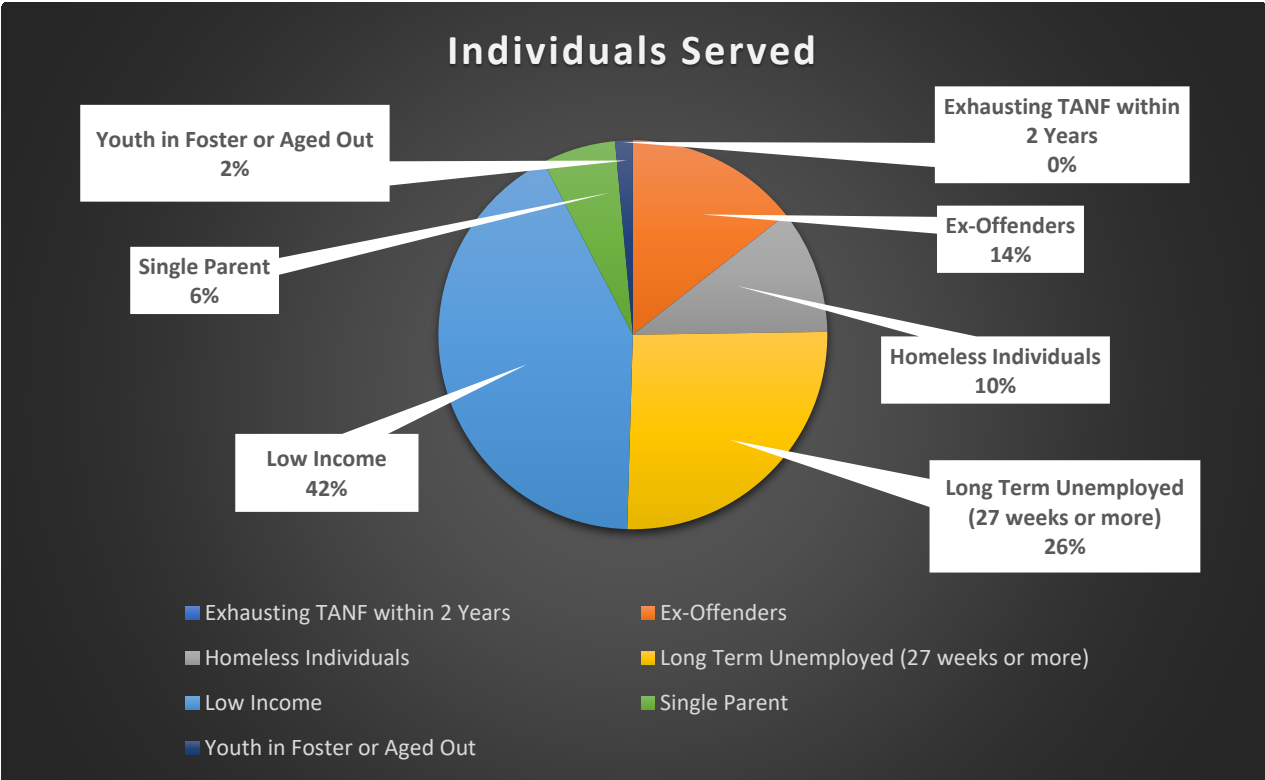
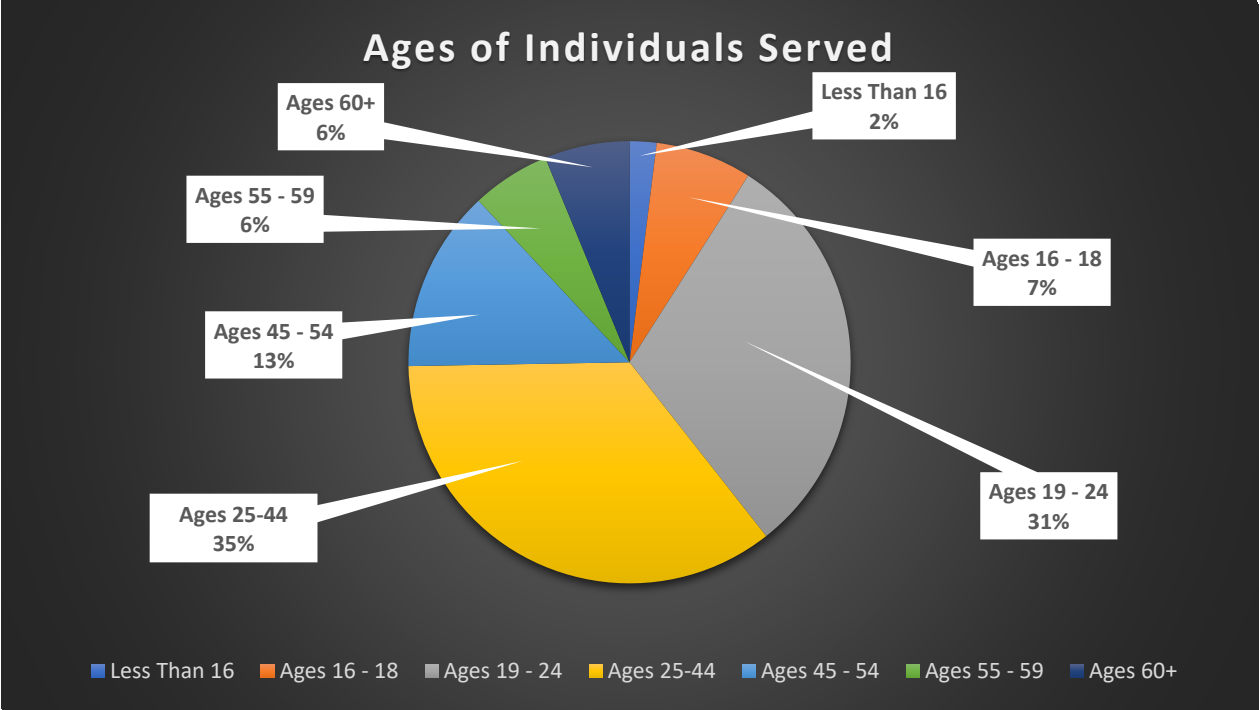
## Demographics of Individuals Served

### Individuals Served & Those Who Exited the Program



### Race of Individuals Served







# Customer Satisfaction Surveys

This PY KRS implemented customer satisfaction surveys that are sent out to VR and Pre-ETS consumers. KRS is conducting the surveys to collect responses from current and previous consumers to see how KRS can improve services.

Customer satisfaction surveys are sent out to VR consumers with cases that have been closed in which they provided email addresses for on their application during the previous quarter; VR consumers that currently have opened cases in which we have email addresses for; Pre-ETS consumers that currently have opened cases in which we have email addresses for and Pre-ETS consumers that have been closed during the previous quarter in which we have email addresses for on their application. Any consumer that did not provide an email address – 5% of those consumers will be contacted via phone call by a KRS staff member.

All survey responses are collected online via Microsoft TEAMS. Both the email and phone calls will provide the option for the consumers to participate in the survey. The consumers that are called will have the option to participate in the survey via phone call or provide their email address and participate in the survey electronically.

The surveys will take no more than nine minutes; often less, depending on individual circumstances. All respondents will be asked the same questions; all closed cases will have the same questions and all open cases will have the same questions for both VR & Pre-ETS consumers. Majority of the questions have options where the consumers can rate their experience on a satisfactory scale. There are a couple questions at the end where consumers have the option(s) to provide more detail/ feedback that they wish to share. Respondents will be given the option to provide their name and contact information if they want someone to contact them to further discuss their experience. If they do not wish to receive this follow up; their responses will remain anonymous.

Quarterly reports summarizing customer satisfaction survey responses will be provided to the Director, Deputy Directors to review. After the Director and Deputy Directors have reviewed the information; the results will be sent out to field management to share with field staff.

## **Instruments Used:**

- TEAMS (survey/survey dashboard)
- Microsoft Word
- Outlook
- Phones
- Microsoft Excel

Survey responses are shared in the quarterly SRC meeting; and is also shared with management and field staff on a quarterly basis via email from the data administrator/deputy director. The results that are sent out will be in a PDF document and the data will be from the previous quarter. The results will also be posted on the intranet for staff to go back and look at.



## **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) Open Cases (Pre-Employment Transition Services)**

**I understand the services that are available through Pre-ETS can help assist me to gaining employment skills.**

- Strongly Agree: 25%
- Agree: 46%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%
- Disagree: 22%
- Not Sure: 4%

**My transition specialist provides/provided me with support and encouragement to gaining pre-employment skills.**

- Strongly Agree: 23%
- Agree: 55%
- Strongly Disagree: 5%
- Disagree: 12%
- Not Sure: 4%

**Overall, how satisfied are you with Kansas Pre-Employment Transition Services so far?**

- Very Satisfied: 22%
- Satisfied: 32%
- Somewhat Satisfied: 20%
- Neutral: 18%
- Somewhat Dissatisfied: 3%
- Dissatisfied: 5%
- Very Dissatisfied: 0%

**Pre-ETS Transition Specialists responded in a timely manner to my questions and requests.**

- Strongly Agree: 29%
- Agree: 60%
- Strongly Disagree: 3%
- Disagree: 8%

**How likely is it that you would recommend Pre-ETS to a family member, friend, or colleague?**

- Definitely Yes: 36%
- Mostly Yes: 49%
- Mostly No: 10%
- Definitely No: 5%



## **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) Closed Cases (Pre-Employment Transition Services)**

**My transition specialist provides/provided me with support and encouragement to gaining pre-employment skills.**

- Strongly Agree: 19%
- Agree: 67%
- Disagree: 13%
- Strongly Disagree: 2%

**Overall, how satisfied are you with Kansas Pre-Employment Transition Services?**

- Very Satisfied: 20%
- Satisfied: 30%
- Somewhat Satisfied: 14%
- Neutral: 23%
- Somewhat Dissatisfied: 7%
- Dissatisfied: 2%
- Very Dissatisfied: 4%

**Did Kansas Pre-Employment Transition Services meet your expectations?**

- Exceptional: 12%
- Exceeds Expectations: 12%
- Meets Expectations: 53%
- Improvement Needed: 16%
- Unsatisfactory: 8%

**Pre-ETS responded in a timely manner to my questions and requests.**

- Strongly Agree: 15%
- Agree: 52%
- Disagree: 6%
- Strongly Disagree: 6%
- Not Sure: 22%

**Based on my experience, I would recommend Pre-ETS to a family member, friend, or colleague.**

- Definitely Yes: 28%
- Mostly Yes: 48%
- Mostly No: 2%
- Definitely No: 4%
- Not Sure: 19%



## **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) Open Cases (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)**

**I understand the services that are available through VR can help assist me to become employed.**

- Strongly Agree: 48%
- Agree: 40%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%
- Disagree: 4%
- Not Sure: 4%

**Were you involved in choosing your employment goal?**

- Strongly Agree: 50%
- Agree: 38%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%
- Disagree: 3%
- Not Sure: 6%

**Are you satisfied with the employment goal in your plan?**

- Strongly Agree: 50%
- Agree: 38%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%
- Disagree: 3%
- Not Sure: 6

**VR responded in a timely manner to my questions and requests?**

- Strongly Agree: 37%
- Agree: 34%
- Strongly Disagree: 12%
- Disagree: 11%
- Not Sure: 5%

**My VR counselor listened to my needs and concerns.**

- Strongly Agree: 43%
- Agree: 27%
- Strongly Disagree: 7%
- Disagree: 8%
- Not Sure: 4%

**Overall, how satisfied are you with Vocational Rehabilitation so far?**

- Very Satisfied: 41%
- Satisfied: 11%
- Somewhat Satisfied: 12 %
- Neutral: 4%

- Somewhat Dissatisfied: 7%
- Dissatisfied: 8%
- Very Dissatisfied: 5%

**How likely is it that you would recommend VR to a family member, friend, or colleague?**

- Definitely Yes: 48%
- Mostly Yes: 34%
- Mostly No: 12%
- Definitely No: 6%



## **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) 08/30 Closures (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)**

**My Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor provided me with information about Vocational Rehabilitation Services to determine whether this program is a good fit.**

- Strongly Agree: 23%
- Agree: 43%
- Disagree: 10%
- Strongly Disagree: 13%
- Not Sure: 11%

**When I applied for Vocational Rehabilitation services, I had the opportunity to explain my story.**

- Strongly Agree: 23%
- Agree: 43%
- Disagree: 13%
- Strongly Disagree: 10%
- Not Sure: 11%

**Did you receive information about community resources that might be available and/or helpful?**

- Yes: 45%
- No: 40%
- Not Sure: 15%

**What is the reason you did not pursue services?**

- I obtained employment on my own: 33%
- I was not eligible for services: 3%
- The process to receive services took too long: 25%
- After I learned more about the program, it was not a good fit: 5%
- Other: 35%

**Overall, how would you rate the experience you had with Vocational Rehabilitation Services?**

- Very Satisfied: 18%
- Satisfied: 30%
- Somewhat Satisfied: 11%
- Neutral: 11%
- Somewhat Dissatisfied: 7%
- Dissatisfied: 11%
- Very Dissatisfied: 11%

**Based on my experience, I would recommend Vocational Rehabilitation Services to a family member, friend, or colleague?**

- Definitely Yes: 30%

- Mostly Yes: 34%
- Mostly No: 13%
- Definitely No: 9%

**Were you contacted by Vocational Rehabilitation Services before your case was closed?**

- Yes: 49%
- No: 18%
- Not Sure: 18%



## **Customer Satisfaction Survey Results PY 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) 26/28 Closures (Vocational Rehabilitation Services)**

**My Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor provided me with support and encouragement to obtain employment.**

- Strongly Agree: 44%
- Agree: 36%
- Disagree: 8%
- Strongly Disagree: 5%
- Not Sure: 7%

**My VR counselor involved me in decision making throughout my case and helped me understand the pros and cons of my options.**

- Strongly Agree: 47%
- Agree: 31%
- Disagree: 10%
- Strongly Disagree: 5%
- Not Sure: 7%

**The services I received, helped decrease or remove challenges I had related to employment?**

- Strongly Agree: 39%
- Agree: 35%
- Disagree: 14%
- Strongly Disagree: 7%
- Not Sure: 5%

**Did your VR counselor help in connecting you with people and services you need to reach your job goal?**

- Strongly Agree: 38%
- Agree: 34%
- Disagree: 12%
- Strongly Disagree: 7%
- Not Sure: 8%

**VR responded in a timely manner to my questions and requests.**

- Strongly Agree: 44%
- Agree: 37%
- Disagree: 10%
- Strongly Disagree: 5%
- Not Sure: 3%



**Overall, how satisfied are you with your overall VR experience?**

- Very Satisfied: 43%
- Satisfied: 21%
- Somewhat Satisfied: 6%
- Neutral: 11%
- Somewhat Dissatisfied: 7%
- Dissatisfied: 4%
- Very Dissatisfied: 7%

**How likely is it that you would recommend VR to a family member, friend, or colleague?**

- Strongly Agree: 50%
- Agree: 30%
- Disagree: 4%
- Strongly Disagree: 8%
- Not Sure: 9%

## **Regional Information and Highlights**

### **KC Region:**

The Kansas City Region consists of 5 counties with 5 service centers: Johnson, Wyandotte, Lawrence, Leavenworth, and Atchison. Counselors are in each office.

- County Population: JO: 619,195 (most populous county in Kansas) WY: 165,746, DG: 119,964, LV: 82,892, AT: 16,108.
- Community Developmental Disability Organization: 5 (one for each county).
- Community Independent Living Centers: The Whole Person (Jo, Wy, and Lv), Independence Inc (DG), and Three Rivers (AT).
- MHC: 4: Bert Nash, The Guidance Center, Wyandot Mental Health, Johnson County Mental Health.

### **Unique Demographics:**

- Large population of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, large number of referrals from Kansas School for the Deaf, which serves ages 3-21. In 1866, it became the first school for the deaf established in the state of Kansas, and it is the only one in KS. Kansas State School for the Blind is in Kansas established in 1867.
- Diverse community with urban and Rural counties
  - Transportation difficulties for these counties.
- Total Number served: Currently at 1,805 consumers currently, up about 45 from this time last year.

### **Staff in KC Region:**

- VRCS and Program Specialists: Average Tenure about 4 years. We currently have three VRC positions vacant.
- VR Managers: Average Tenure about 6 months.
- PA Tenure: 8 years.
- Clerical: 3 support staff to support counselors with disabilities, 4.5 other clerical helping other offices in the region, however most of these are vacant.

### **Outcomes in KC Region:**

- The KC Region has achieved a total of 220 successful closures for SFY 2022 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022). The highest hourly wage for the region was \$62.50 – that individual is working as a Finance Director. There are a total of 457 individuals who are currently in employment (status 22).
- Average days from application to eligibility is 29.9 days. We are near the state average (29.01 days) and want to continue to decrease this number through our strategies to lower the time from application to service.
- Average days from eligibility to plan is 86 days. We have received training from technical assistance and will continue to address this area.
- Average wage for the region is \$15.39, an increase by \$1.39 this time last year.

### **Focus of KC Region :**

- **Quicker Service Delivery:** The quicker an individual can receive Vocational Rehabilitation services, the more likely there will be employment success. Therefore, a major goal of RS is to facilitate expedited processes for applications, eligibility determination, development of individual plans for employment and delivery of services. A variety of actions will be undertaken. Counselors are scheduling initial interviews (intakes) as quickly as possible. We send letters to potential applicants (and/or providers with releases of info) to help them understand vocational rehabilitation eligibility. We encourage them to bring supporting documentation to their first appointments. Staff training will be provided on eligibility and assessments to assure that best practices are utilized. We are working with our active partners on this measure as well as developing new ones on our communities.
- **Provider Accountability** especially with Supported Employment Services and helping clients get connected to waiver services when possible.
- **Strengthen partnership** with our vendors, WIOA partners. Work Force center meetings at least once/year, sharing opportunities throughout programs, discussing how to apply, who is eligible. Statewide Quarterly meetings with providers and Chris Zuercher. Monthly meetings with most providers within region. Quarterly meetings with some community partners.
- **Continuing to build relationships** with referral sources including high schools, colleges trying to get into additional schools for informational meetings.
- **Reducing Status 08s** (closure before eligibility) and **Status 30** (closure before plan)
  - Case Closure Checklists are approved by managers.

### **East Region:**

#### **Demographics:**

The East Region covers 25 counties with 11 Service Centers that are located in Marysville (3,000), Hiawatha (3,000), Topeka (127,000), Ottawa (12,000), Osawatomie (4,000), Fort Scott (8,000), Chanute (9,000), Pittsburg (20,000), Independence (9,000), Parsons (10,000), and Columbus (3,000).

#### **East Region Staffing/Coverage:**

The East Region currently has 1 Manager who covers the Southeast portion of my region. And since my report last year, I now have 1 Human Services Supervisor who supervises our support staff in the region. I currently also have 15 counselors. 3 Program Specialists, and 3 Support staff spread throughout the entire region. Currently I am sitting on about a 33% vacancy rate in my region with 7 open positions currently and two more coming at the beginning of July. The majority of these vacancies are located in the Topeka Service Center. I do however have a new counselor starting in that office on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

- **Topeka:** 1 Manager (Vacant as of 7/29/2022), 8 counselors (5 vacancies), 3 support staff (1 splits their time between Topeka and Hiawatha) 2 are full-time and 1 is part-time. & I have two program specialists. (These staff serves Shawnee, Osage, Waubunsee, Marshall, & Pottawatomie Counties).
- **Hiawatha,** 1 counselor (serves Brown, Doniphan, Nemaha, Jefferson, and Jackson Counties).

- Ottawa: 2 counselors, 1 support staff (Franklin, Coffey, Anderson, and Miami Counties).
  - Fort Scott: 1 counselor (Linn, Bourbon Counties).
  - Pittsburg: 2 Counselors (Crawford & Cherokee Counties), 1 support staff (Currently Vacant).
  - Independence: 1 current support staff and 1 for Counselor (Montgomery and Chautauqua Counties). This is also the office where I am based out of when I am not up in Topeka.
  - Parsons: 1 Manager & 1 Vacancy for Counselor.
  - Chanute: 1 program specialist, 1 counselor (Woodson, Allen, Wilson, Neosho, Labette, Montgomery & Chautauqua Counties) & 1 Vacancy for Support Staff.
- 
- 48% under two years (11 Staff)
  - 22% between 2-5 years (5 Staff)
  - 13% between 5-10 years (3 Staff)
  - 3% between 10-20 years (1 Staff)
  - 13% 20+years (3 staff)
- 
- The typical reasons for the higher turnover in our region this past year has been leaving for higher wages with different employers.
- 
- We currently have 1,312 open VR cases within our region. The average caseload right now is approximately 65 cases. I am currently covering 4 vacant caseloads myself until my newer staff became more acquainted with their positions. We do not have specialized caseloads in my region, rather, everyone works with a variety of clients with different diagnosis.
- 
- In the East Region, our average days from application to eligibility is higher than the statewide average which is 29.73 days compared to 22.98 days. The average days from application to IPE's is also slightly higher than the statewide average sitting at 67.93 days compared to 64.37 days. Both averages however are lower than the 60 day and 90-day federal time frames for eligibilities and IPE's. Again, I think a huge part of this is impacted the incorporation of new counselors over the past year and the time it has taken to get them trained and up to speed with their own caseloads.

**Outcomes Achieved:**

- From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, our region has had 152 successful closures which is down significantly from the same time frame last year, with the average wage being \$16.54, which is \$2.00 higher than the same time frame last year, the average cost per successful closure is \$5,619.62 which is lower than the same time frame last year, and the highest wage from these closures was \$183.83. (Self Employed as an insulator).
- A few of our other high wage earner positions were a personal financial advisor making \$64.00 per hour, a Real Estate Agent making \$45.00 per hour, a plumber

making \$31.00 per hour, a self-employed barber making \$30.00 per hour, a training manager making \$33.00 per and finally a registered nurse making \$28.00 per hour. When looking at the services we provided for those individuals these included training, Assistive Technology Equipment, hearing aids, mental and physical restoration, and job placement services.

### **West Region:**

The West region consists of 65 counties and is divided into two regions for other programs by the Southwest and Northwest. We have 16 service centers with 8 in each of the regions for our staff to cover. We have staff in most service centers but due to vacancies we have 5 offices that we cover remotely or travel in as necessary. The region has 25 total staff in filled VR positions at this time and 16 vacancies. We currently have 16 counselors, 2 vocational evaluators, 3 support staff, 2 managers, 1 clerical supervisor, and a Program Administrator. The Pre-ETS department is fully staffed in the West at this time. We are actively recruiting to fill our positions and we are getting applicants and hiring but retention seems to be one of the more difficult tasks at this time. Many of our new hires in the last year have moved on fairly quickly to new jobs in the private sector. Our Director is doing a good job of advocating for our program and its staff so we hope for more stability in the future.

The West region had 356 successful closures for the last fiscal year. That is down some from the previous year but still a strong number considering the turnover and the continued struggle of our clients to want to return to community work. Things are looking up and we are hopeful for an increase in the next year. We had a high wage for this year of \$48.08 for a pharmacist from SW Kansas. She got her Pharmacy degree and we also supported a Masters in Business. This resulted in her also opening her own small town Pharmacy as well. We served 2,053 clients in the past year which was up from the previous year and gives us much hope moving forward. Our staff are still working some remotely depending upon the area and the need. We are seeing much more time in office which I believe helps build a stronger bond with many of our clients. On the provider side we have continued to build support in as many areas as we can. We have not added many new providers but have increased the counties served for some of our providers. This has helped fill some gaps and we will continue to try to recruit new providers as well. We continue to build community relationships and partners as well by attending meetings and job fairs in many locations.

### **Wichita Region:**

The Wichita Region consists of 10 counties with four service centers:

- Counties – Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley, Sumner, Greenwood, Elk, Barber, Harper, Kingman and Pratt.
- Service Centers are located in Sedgwick, Butler, Cowley and Pratt.
- Region population is around 665,000 with over half in Sedgwick County.
- The region has both a large urban and a large rural population.
- Other than the Wichita Metro area, transportation is a significant barrier for VR clients.

Staff in Wichita Region:

- One Program Administrator (PA) – Tenure 9 years.
- Two Program Managers and Two Pre-ETS Managers – Avg. tenure 3.5 years.

- Sixteen VR Counselor positions – Avg. tenure 4 years (4 vacancies).
- Two Program Specialist positions – tenure 5 months (1 vacancy).
- Five Support Positions – Avg. tenure 3.5 years (3 vacancies).
- Eight Pre-ETS Specialists – Avg. tenure 1 year (1 vacancy).

The Wichita Region has the largest city in Kansas the largest industries include:

- Aircraft
- Health Care
- Agriculture
- Transportation and Logistics

The unemployment rate in the region is slightly higher than the statewide rate. There are many job opportunities in the region.

The Wichita Region has served 1826 clients this past year, from 7/1/22 thru 6/30/23 there have been 177 successful closures, about the same as the previous year with an average wage of \$14.39 which is over \$1.70 higher than the average wage the previous year. Throughout the year, the number of successful closures has been increasing with over one-third of successful closures coming in the last quarter of the year. Some of the higher wage jobs Wichita VR clients have obtained this past year are:

- School Principal - \$49.77/hr
- High School Teacher - \$31.66/hr
- Software Engineer - \$30.00/hr
- CMA - \$21.53/hr
- Crane Operator - \$20.00/hr

The Wichita Region has been assisting another region with cases while they are understaffed. This year, the Wichita Region averaged over 90 applications per month, an increase of 40 per month over last year. More clients are feeling comfortable coming into the office and meeting face to face. We still offer to serve them in whatever way they are most comfortable with, such as phone, email, virtual, etc. We are increasing our outreach efforts in the community in an effort to bring more VR applications into the office. With the Pre-ETS program adding new staff in the region, this will also help keep more students involved with the vocational rehabilitation program as they transition out of high school.

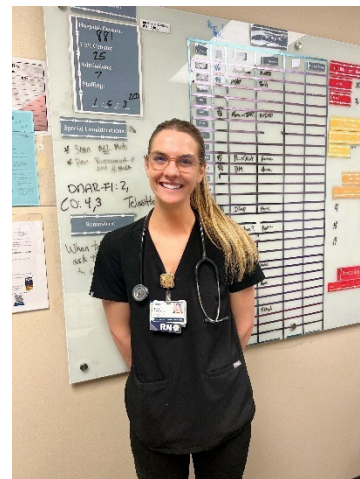
## Success Stories

### KC Region VR Success Stories:

**Success Story #1:** In October of 2021, I developed a brain lesion that caused me to lose half of my vision. At 26 years old, I was left unable to drive and struggling to read. The lack of these skills forced me to stop working as an orthopedics nurse at KU Med. I was feeling unfulfilled and lacking purpose. I was unsure what to do about my career and felt as though I may have to quit nursing forever.

Thankfully, this led me to Kansas Vocational Rehab Services. My program specialist, Stephanie, provided me with the tools I needed to go back to work. I was set up with a driving program, an assistive reading program, a C-Pen and so much more. I was feeling safe and confident again and within a few months I was back at work.

It's hard for me to fully express the gratitude I feel for Stephanie and this program. Without VR, I would truly not be where I am today. My ability to go back to work has brought me renewed feelings of purpose and optimism. I am beyond thankful to be a nurse again and to have gotten a crucial piece of my life back.



**Success Story #2:** Jen was working as a tech at mirror inc. earning \$13 an hour. She is an addict in recovery and states it is a struggle she feels daily. She is stable on her current medicine and working helps her stay stable. She enjoys working with others who are dealing with addiction; it has become her passion to help others that struggled like her. Jen wanted VR to assist her in gaining her Substance Abuse counselor license.

Jen pursued her credential through KCKCC; VR supported her with tuition, books and the cost of her test to get her permanent license. Jen really wanted to stay at Mirror inc. and work there as a counselor. It so happens a counselor did leave which opened a spot for Jen. She was able to go from a tech earning \$14 an hour to a SA Counselor earning \$25 an hour; but the most important aspect; she was able to stay at Mirror inc. where she has grown to love working with those around her; staff and patients.



## **KC Region Pre-ETS Success Story:**

Jaclynn is a student that signed up for Pre-ETS services. She was assigned to my caseload and I have enjoyed working with her. Her goal was to have a career as a worship leader. Jaclynn had never been employed but had hundreds of hours of volunteering. Jaclynn earned the Presidential Service Award for volunteering 103 hours of service. Since Jaclynn had not taken or didn't remember the outcome of an interest inventory, we took a Truity Photo Career Quiz and she discovered she was a creator and was also strong in thinking and helping. Together we worked on some workplace readiness skills like communication, time management, transportation issues and how to find job openings. We spent many hours practicing interviewing.

In the past Jaclynn thought she might like to work at a childcare center, her mother asked if there was anything they could do that would help her get employed. I recommended that Jaclynn get safety and basic first aid training as most childcare centers want their employees to have this training. I gave them options of where to find the training from. Jaclynn took the online safety and basic first aid training, by herself and without help from her mom. She passed the training with a certificate in first aid! She was able to understand the training and was resilient enough to complete it.

One day I discussed the PWBLE process and asked her if she would like to participate in which she agreed. She was unable to participate in a PWBLE at a local nursing home due to COVID restrictions, but now that things have settled down, she was able to procure part-time employment at a local grocery store, on her own. The hiring manager said Jaclynn “knocked the interview out of the park!” On Instagram at Paws Ability the manager of Hen House tells what a great job Jaclynn did in her interview. She has excelled at her employment site and has added a second part-time job with Project RISE at Children's Mercy.

Jaclynn currently just finished attending CLEAR classes at JCCC and was recently made the “poster person” for the CLEAR classes. When I was at JCCC to visit with Jaclynn, she let me know she knew her way around the campus and could find her classes on her own, which I witnessed to be true. She knew what time her class started and the importance of being on time for the class. She was accepted into the CONNECTION program at JCCC to start in August 2023.

## **East Region VR Success Stories:**

**Success Story #1:** R. is a 46-yr. old female who could no longer continue with her CNA/CMA career path. She asked that VR assist her in becoming a truck driver, wanting a job with local hauls, so she could be home in the evenings for her youngest daughter. R. has a very complicated, difficult social history, and ongoing problems with transportation (she lives rurally), but her motivation is high. With the help of VR, R. completed her truck driving training and recently earned her CDL. This was a very big step for her. She has contacted an area construction company and hopes to get hired soon, even though some of the issues that have kept her back continue to present a barrier. For now, though, we celebrate the first step towards successful employment in her new career.





**Success Story #2:** Client had a severe, opioid use disorder which resulted in a sporadic work history, difficulty maintaining healthy relationships with friends & family and also resulted in homelessness at one point. VR supported Client at Washburn Tech where he took the fast track in Machine Tool Technology. Through his training, he did obtain employment at P1 service, LLC as a Millwright and his VR case was closed successfully. Clients' starting pay was \$21.90 per hour and he works up to 50 hours a week. Client states he enjoys his job.

**East Region Pre-ETS Success Story:**

Katelyn is a 15-year-old attending Iola high school where she will be starting her Junior year this coming August. Katelyn has participated in services such as Job exploration, Self-Advocacy, Workplace Readiness, Counseling on post-secondary education and Work based learning experiences. Katelyn has grown and shown great improvement with her self-confidence and social interactions while participating in Pre-ETS. I'm excited see Katelyn grow as she shapes her goals and career interests into her future through Pre-ETS.



**West Region VR Success Story:**

Eric came to Vocational Rehabilitation to receive assistance transitioning to a job that he had had in janitorial work since 2017. He was ready to find a new job other than cleaning. Eric and his parents knew that he was capable of a higher level position, and one that was a little more challenging. Eric has an English degree from Fort Hays University but a diagnosis of autism, makes it extremely difficult for Eric to be confident in social situations, especially in self-advocacy. Eric is extremely shy, but this counselor has seen his growth and he speaks up much better now.



Eric and this counselor worked with the Hays Workforce Center. He had a job try out at Hermann Law Practice. He enjoyed this job, but we were able to discover it was not the best fit. This counselor was able to go to an interview with Eric, per his request, at Hays Med. Unfortunately, another candidate was chosen for the Medical Documentation position.

Jason Hickson, of Hays Workforce, then helped Eric to apply at Cloud Storage and discuss some of the supports for Eric with the employer that would help his success. Eric was excited about this and has a friend that is an employee there. This really helped Eric to feel more comfortable pursuing the job. Eric accepted his job with Cloud Storage and started on May 8, 2023. He worked at Dillons for a while to make sure the transition was one he enjoyed. He now loves his job with Cloud Storage and is earning \$3 more/ hour. Eric works around 20 hours per week but has been in conversation with his manager and they plan to get him full-time status soon.

Eric's KRS services closed successfully on 8/15/2023.

**Services/Comparable Benefits:** Customized Job Placement; Community Based Job Try Out & Career Counseling & Guidance

Eric had a private family insurance to cover any and all medical needs.

Partners:

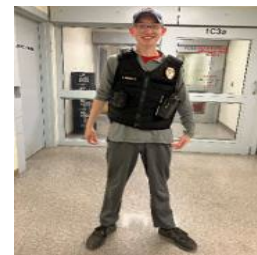
Local Area WorkforceOne, Hays Workforce, Jason Hickson

The client's views about their VR services and their employment:

Eric is really enjoying his job. He was happy to tell this counselor when he was able to provide a two week notice to his old job. He is now earning \$3/ hour and hopes to become a full-time employee soon.

**West Region Pre-ETS Success Story:**

Providing students an opportunity to learn about a job and engage with local employers is only one aspect of a Job Shadow. Ryan has a learning and development disability. He is social and thrives in environments where he can not only learn new job skills but also engage with people. Exploring jobs one day, we talked about professions we most admire, and Ryan immediately mentioned police officer. I contacted Riley County Police Department, and a job shadow was set. Providing a tour of operations, dispatch, administration, and supplies, each RCPD staff member made a point to introduce themselves to Ryan, shake hands and explain their jobs. helped Ryan identify tasks and skills he could provide in the department and most importantly, they made Ryan feel like he was a part of their team. Pre-ETS Specialists have many roles and many opportunities to make a difference in our youth and help them realize their unique differences are welcome in our communities. Spending the afternoon with Ryan and seeing him learn, grow, and be included in a profession he admires has been one of my most rewarding experiences as a Pre-ETS Specialist.



**Wichita Region VR Success Stories:**

**Success Story #1:** Amy has been a stay-at-home mom for the past eleven years. She loved raising her kids and taking care of her family. Unfortunately, Amy found herself in a situation that required her to go back to work. Her goal was to work Part-Time as a Para-Professional or a teacher's aide in her children's school. She worked hard with her JPS to develop her resume and prepare to go to work. Three months after she started in our VR program Amy had an interview scheduled for exactly what she was wanting. She was so excited. JPS worked with her on preparing for the interview and Amy did amazing. She was offered the job. She told me she loved working with the kids and really liked her job. Toward the end of the school year she had some bumps in the road and was concerned about her future. I counseled Amy on on some strategies to handle her problems and stress and reached out to her JPS so she could speak with her too. After a week I reached back out to Amy and things were going much better and she felt much more secure and happy with her position and is looking forward to her future.



**Success Story #2:** Leslie came to VR in 2019. She explained that she had been an LPN however her mental health caused her to have to quit work. She had a very hard season in her life when she was not able to leave her house. She had allowed her nursing license to lapse. She was able

to figure out how to get her nursing license re-instated through a self-paced course. Unfortunately that didn't work out, Leslie needed more structure to be able to be successful. Leslie and I worked together to determine a different option and she enrolled in the WSU tech LPN program to basically start over again. Leslie worked hard in class and maintained great grades. She overcame obstacles related to her disability including things like taking her medication and seeing her provider as indicated. She also overcame obstacles related to life stress associated with going back to school like keeping her car in running order. VR was able to help Leslie with things like car repairs, and the cost of school. I was also able to encourage Leslie along the way, and reminded her of how far she had come and how proud I was of her. Leslie graduated from the LPN program in May and is now waiting to take her nursing licensure exam.

### **Wichita Region Pre-ETS Success Story:**

Zandar is a student who has worked with Pre-ETS and is continuing to work with VR. I received a call from Zandar and his mother thanking me for helping Zandar with his future with employment and education. When he started with Pre-ETS he was unsure on what he wanted to do for a career and did not really want to go to college. Pre-ETS and Zandar worked towards job exploration and counseling in post-secondary education. Zandar and his mother called to also inform me that Zandar will be working towards an associate degree for CNC Machining at Wichita State Tech. Pre-ETS is so proud of him and all his hard work!





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