

State Rehabilitation Council

Annual Report 2017



The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

A Division of

The Connecticut Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Providing employment opportunities to

Connecticut residents with disabilities.





On the cover:

SRC 2017 Members: Thomas Boudreau, Bruce Stovall, Kristen Winkle and Kate Travis

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Message from the SRC Chairperson

Dear Friends:

As the 2017 Acting Chairperson of Connecticut's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), the past year has been an exciting and new experience for me.

This year has involved a lot of changes within the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS). One was involving the exit of our Chairperson mid-year, Marisel DeCordova. This was tough for the SRC but we were able to move forward and still experience a number of successes within the Bureau. We also said goodbye and a huge thank you to Evelyn Oliver Knight, our SRC liaison. We wish Evelyn all the best as she starts the next chapter in her life with her retirement. We are also thankful to have the support of our new SRC liaison, Kerri Fradette.



This past year, the council recruited four new members. The new members will help with help the SRC to improve the lives of BRS consumers. We also were successful in the completion of a Comprehensive State Wide Needs Assessment. The purpose of this assessment was to provide information on resources, inform in the development of the Unified State Plan and to evaluate the success in achieving the goals set by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). These results will also be helpful for the SRC in making future recommendations to BRS.

The BRS Director David Doukas has also continued to keep the SRC involved and informed on all new developments and budget limitations within the Bureau. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated Director providing information to our committee.

We are always looking to expand our SRC members and are actively recruiting, especially business representatives and individuals with disabilities. If any consumer or business partner is interested in becoming a member, please complete and submit the application at the end of this report. We welcome you to attend a SRC meeting to learn more about what we do in supporting the Vocational Rehabilitation mission.

Gary E. Prushko, Acting Chairperson

Mission, Goals, Functions

Mission

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) provides assessment, advice and recommendations to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and others regarding coordination and effectiveness of programs and strategies which promote community-based competitive employment for persons with disabilities.

Goals

- ◆ To assess the effectiveness and delivery of vocational services provided by BRS to individuals with disabilities.
- ◆ To improve the coordination of vocational services among BRS, state agencies and public and private entities for the benefit of BRS job seekers.
- ◆ To make recommendations to BRS, the Governor, the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and others for developing and improving strategies for the employment of, and vocational services for individuals with disabilities.

Functions

- ◆ To review, analyze, and advise BRS regarding its performance in carrying out its responsibilities as the state agency designated to administer the public Vocational Rehabilitation Program.
- ◆ To provide input to BRS in preparing the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment, as well as other plans, reports, needs assessments and evaluations.
- ◆ To provide input to BRS regarding the Bureau's coordination of activities with Connecticut's workforce investment system.
- ◆ To review the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with, the performance of the Bureau and other public and private agencies in providing vocational rehabilitation services to Connecticut residents with disabilities.
- ◆ To prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor of Connecticut and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).
- ◆ To coordinate with other advisory councils in the state which oversee services to individuals with disabilities.
- ◆ To perform other functions as appropriate to the mission of the Council.

Business Partnership Committee

Purpose:

The purpose of the Business Partnership Committee is to foster collaboration among all the related service providers and employers (public and private, for-profit and nonprofit). To encourage coordinated training and orientation of employers, employees and co-workers and to determine and address the employment needs of business and industry.

Chairperson: Kate Travis

Members: Shannon McCann , Andrea Richardson (Volunteer), Warren Stamp, Joe Wendover, and Kristen Winkle

Review of 2017 Accomplishments:

- ◆ Finalized research, drafted and obtained quotes for a postcard that will allow businesses to scan a QR code and be brought directly to the success stories from other employers.
- ◆ Continued working with BRS to develop a system to allow BRS to report back to the subcommittee on growth of business connections.

Goals for 2018:

- ◆ Monitor business and industry needs as they relate to employment opportunities for BRS consumers.
- ◆ Continue to educate employers and Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) about the benefits of working with BRS, specifically by distribution of the planned postcard.
- ◆ Continue to monitor growth in business connections as an outcome of new goals identified in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- ◆ Determine any other ways that this Committee may be an additional resource to BRS and businesses.

Consumer Satisfaction Committee

Purpose:

The purpose of the Consumer Satisfaction Committee is to assess consumer viewpoints of their satisfaction with vocational rehabilitation services and the effectiveness of BRS in assisting consumers to obtain and maintain competitive employment.

Chairperson: Patrick Melfi

Members: Tom Boudreau

Review of 2017 Accomplishments:

- ♦ Reviewed and provided feedback to surveys and proposed recommendations to be used in the 2017 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA).
- ♦ Monitored policy changes that meet new goals defined in WIOA
- ♦ Continued to encourage members to attend BRS regional staff meetings to gain better understanding about vocational rehabilitation and the issues encountered by BRS counselors daily.

Goals for 2018:

- ♦ Recruit new members to this Committee.
- ♦ Continue to monitor outcomes of the 2017 CSNA and changes BRS may need to implement to address findings.
- ♦ Monitor policy changes that meet new goals defined in WIOA and seek consumer feedback.
- ♦ Continue to monitor BRS progress to improve office signage and accessibility based on SRC findings from the 2012 SRC visits and surveys.
- ♦ Implement survey for consumers exiting BRS services.

Intercouncil Coordination/Nominations Committee

Purpose:

The purpose of the Intercouncil Coordination/Nominations Committee is to provide linkage with agencies and councils that oversee or have input/knowledge regarding the provision of rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. Assist in training SRC members to foster effective council teamwork. Recruit potential members.

Chairperson: Bruce Stovall

Members: Patrick Melfi

Review of 2017 Accomplishments:

- ◆ Continued efforts to recruit potential candidates (recruited three) in accordance with Title I, Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973, as amended for appointment to the SRC from the Governor.

Goals for 2018

- ◆ Recruit new SRC members targeting specific outreach to fill historically vacant categories of membership on the SRC.
- ◆ Recruit new members and a sitting chair to the Intercouncil Coordination/Nominations Committee.
- ◆ Participate with orientation of new members and the ongoing learning process of being active and involved SRC members.
- ◆ Seek opportunities to collaborate with other councils like BESB and the State Independent Living Council (SILC).

Legislation, Policy & Planning Committee

Purpose:

The purpose of the Legislation, Policy and Planning Subcommittee is to assist in developing the BRS section of Unified State Plan and strategic plans for vocational rehabilitation services; to stay updated on federal and state regulations related to employment of persons with disabilities.

Chairperson: Thomas Boudreau

Members: David Morgana, Gary Prushko , Pat Melfi, Melissa Taylor (Volunteer), Andrea Richardson (Volunteer) and Linda Rammler (Volunteer).

Review of 2017 Accomplishments:

- ♦ Reviewed elements of the WIOA and school age transition activities related to Level Up.
- ♦ Attended the BRS annual meeting with a robust conversation related to organizational effectiveness of the agency and strategic plan for vocational rehabilitation services.
- ♦ Discussed the following elements: work tolerance, communication, mobility, self-direction, work skills, interpersonal skills, and self-care as related to most significant disability/significant disability/non-significant disability, related to job retention and global assessment impact.
- ♦ Discussed the potential negative impact on the 2017 Tax Bill in congress for people with disabilities.

Goals for 2018

- ♦ Continue outreach to other committees to discuss joint legislative efforts.
- ♦ Monitor WIOA changes as needed.

State Rehabilitation Council Scholarship

Christopher Fraser is the SRC's 2017 Scholarship Recipient from the Connecticut Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). Christopher graduated from Amity High School in Woodbridge, CT in 2016. He plans to achieve a Master of Science degree in Special Education and Elementary dual certification from Southern CT State University where he is currently attending.

The SRC wishes Christopher continued success with his future endeavors and congratulates the Fraser family on his achievements!



John Gentile, YLF President, Christopher Fraser and Stephanie Barksdale, YLF Executive Director

The YLF is sponsored by the Connecticut Youth Leadership Project (CTYLP). It empowers young people with disabilities to identify and develop their leadership potential. Through self-awareness and team building activities, these students explore leadership styles and develop and implement team and personal leadership plans.

The goal is to help youth with disabilities meet the challenges of the future, overcome obstacles and become leaders so that they can make a positive difference in their communities and for others with disabilities.

The YLF is a week-long training program for high school sophomores and juniors. The SRC has helped to fund this training and provided a \$1,000 scholarship each year since 2009 for former delegates pursuing their education beyond high school.



David Doukas, BRS Director, Christopher Fraser and Thomas Boudreau, SRC Vice Chair

National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) for the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) is a member of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). The NCSRC strives to cultivate the strengths and necessary expertise of local SRCs so they become effective, viable partners in the vocational rehabilitation (VR) program. While SRCs in each state collaborate with their local VR program to address state issues, members of the NCSRC share best practices and strategies to address common concerns. The NCSRC gives a national voice to jobseekers with disabilities as it works on issues that impact the VR program on the national level.

Mission: On behalf of people with disabilities, our national membership coalition will advocate for and work in partnership with the national public vocational rehabilitation system's continual quest for excellence.

Vision: NCSRC will be the premiere national organization of the consumer voice to enhance the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities through the public vocational rehabilitation system.

The NCSRC currently consists of 53 SRCs of states and territories that provide public VR services. In addition to conference calls every two months, the NCSRC hosts two training conferences each year that coincide with the national meetings of the Council of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) in collaboration with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Former SRC Liaison Evelyn Oliver Knight attended the Spring Training Conference in Bethesda, MD and the newest SRC Liaison Kerri Fradette attended the Fall conference in Greenville, NC.

For more information about the NCSRC, please visit www.ncsrc.net/node/21.



State Rehabilitation Council Photos



New applicants attending an SRC training: Linda Rammler, Linda Mizzi, Andrea Richardson and Melissa Taylor



SRC 2017 Scholar recipient Christopher Fraser with Thomas Boudreau



David Doukas, Thomas Boudreau and DORS Commissioner, Amy Porter



Kate Travis and Warren Stamp at the BRS Annual Meeting



Bruce Stovall and David Doukas



SRC Volunteer Melissa Taylor



SRC guest and volunteers: Jennifer Jenkins, Linda Mizzi and Linda Rammler



Bruce Stovall at the BRS Annual Meeting

Message from the BRS Director

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to share the 2017 Annual Report of Connecticut's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The report is a great opportunity to highlight and share the accomplishments of our Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program within the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS).

We have a strong partnership with the SRC that continues to build and thrive. Together this past year, we have faced a number of uncertainties and changes on both the State and Federal levels. In addition to a state budget deficit that has resulted in a reduced appropriation of consumer service funds, the implementation of various aspects of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) have required a significant reallocation of funding and personnel. The retirements of several key staff, coupled with tremendous budgetary circumstances and adjustments to insure compliance with federal requirements have also limited the availability of programmatic resources.



Throughout these particularly challenging times the SRC has been a helpful partner and a valued sounding board related to a variety of issues and concerns. The collective insight of the SRC members has proven invaluable in assisting our VR program leadership to fully understand the potential impact that policy and procedural changes will have on our consumers, service providers and the communities we serve. The year ahead promises to provide several critical decision points that will provide opportunity to impact the future course of the program and we expect to leverage our excellent working relationship and collaborating with the SRC as we move forward.

I greatly appreciate the contributions of the SRC and the time and energy the members invest. Your commitment and support to the VR program continues to help the SRC fulfill its mission of providing the voice of the consumer and the voice of our partners.

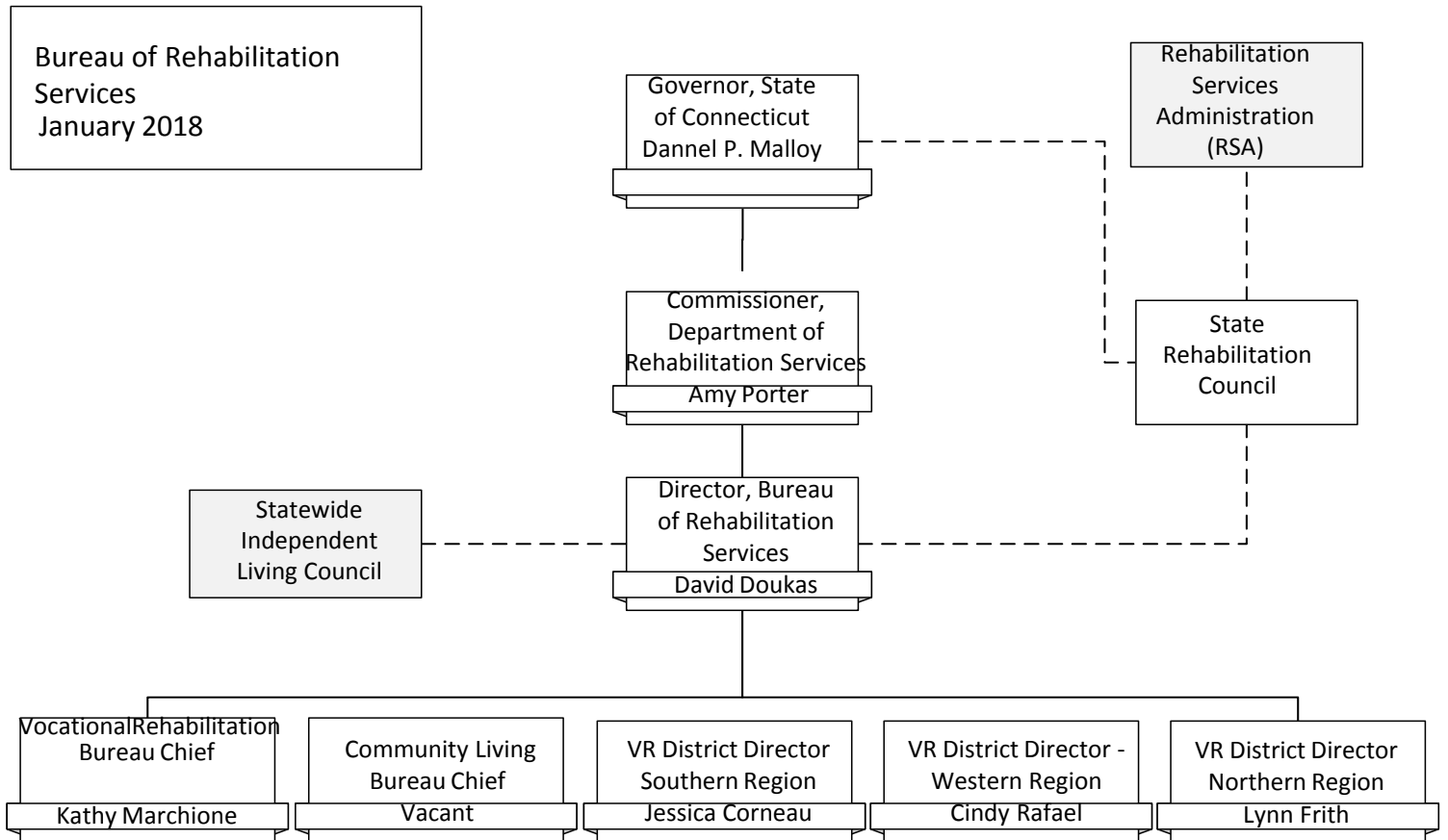
Through all the changes and challenges, you have effectively collaborated with us while fulfilling your obligations to assess the VR program and, making thoughtful recommendations, to help us plot our new direction. We thank you for your service and look forward to another successful year in partnership with you.

Sincerely,

David F. Doukas, Director

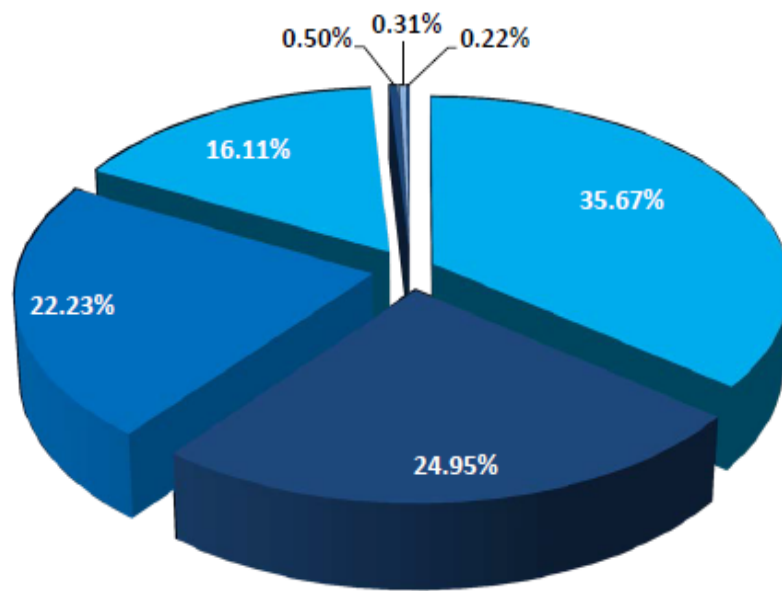
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

BRS Organizational Chart



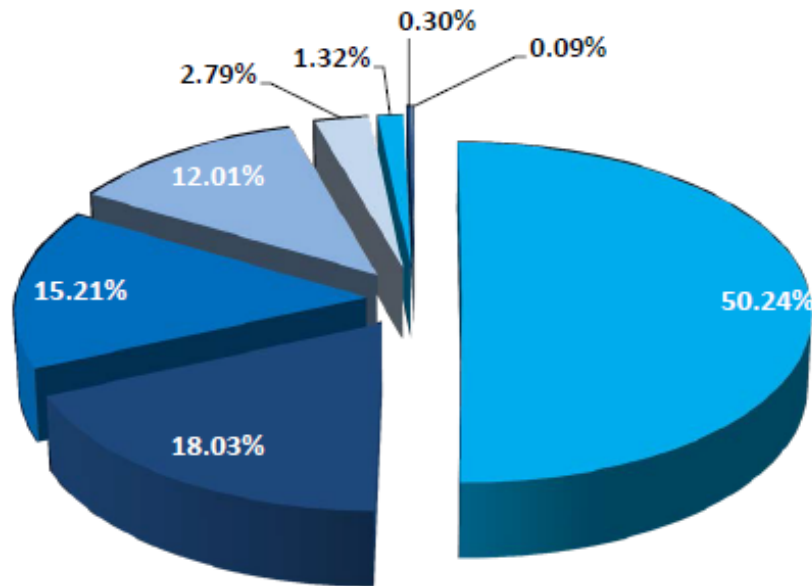
BRS Statistics

Primary Disability Type of Job Seekers
BRS Assisted 8,639 Job Seekers with
Various disabilities in
Federal Fiscal Year FFY 2017



- 35.67% Mental and Emotional Disabilities
- 24.95% Cognitive Disabilities
- 22.23% Hearing Disabilities
- 16.11% Physical Disabilities
- 0.50% Communicative Disabilities
- 0.31% Visual Disabilities
- 0.22% No Disabilities

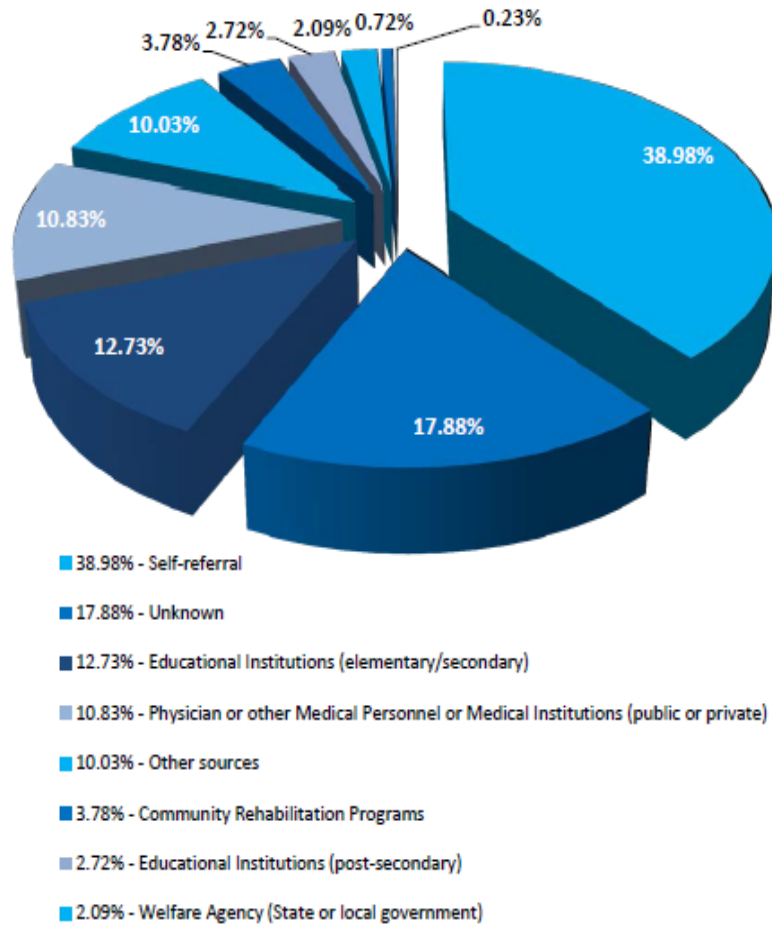
Race/Ethnicity of BRS Job Seekers Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017



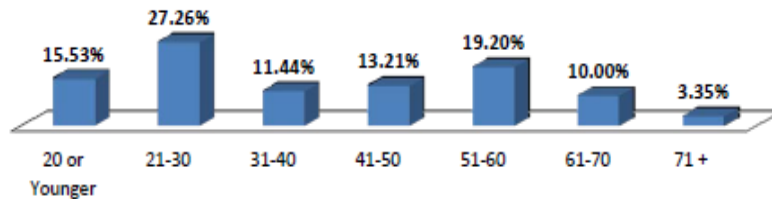
- 50.24% - White
- 18.03% - Unknown
- 15.21% - Black or African American
- 12.01% - Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin
- 2.79% - Multiracial
- 1.32% - Asian
- 0.30% - American Indian or Alaska Native
- 0.09% - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

NOTE: Unknown has increased because this accounts for Level Up cases in status 00. Prior to July 1, 2017 we were not required to collect race/ethnicity on cases in status 00.

Referral Sources
BRS Received 3,558 new applications for services
in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017



Applicants by Age at Application - Federal Fiscal Year 2017



Competitive Employment Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2017

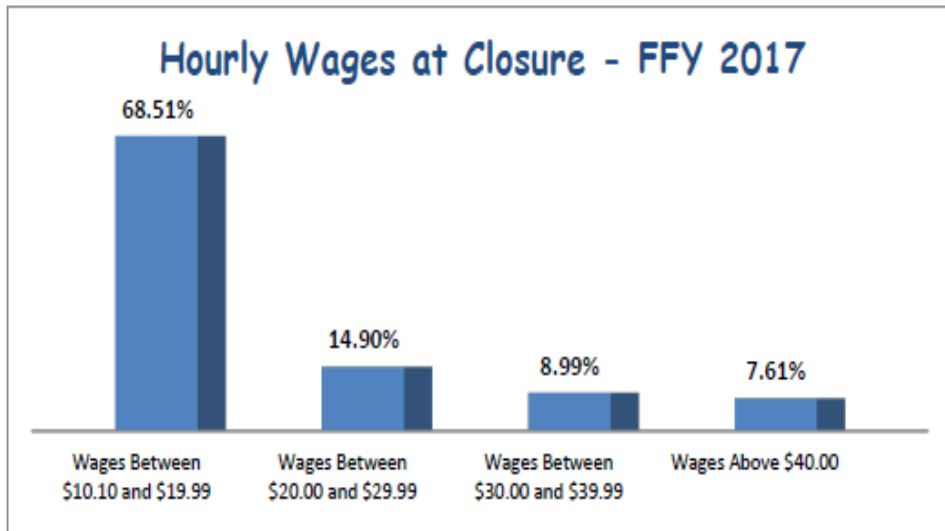
BRS assisted 1,591 job seekers to enter or maintain employment in FFY 2016

Average Hourly Wages

\$20.21

Average Annual Salary

\$34,565



Average # of Hours Per Week

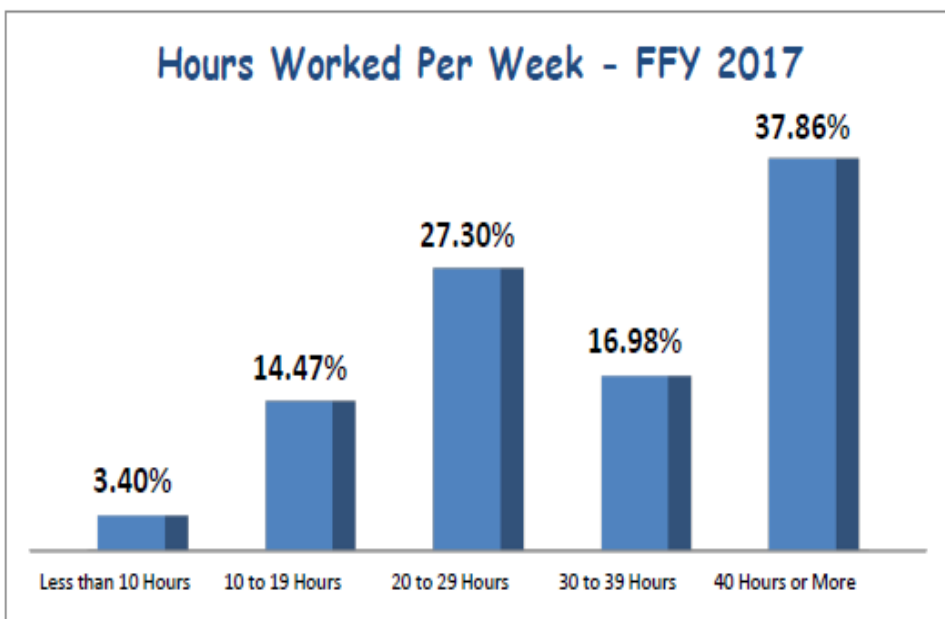
30

% of Job Seekers working F/T (>= 35hrs)

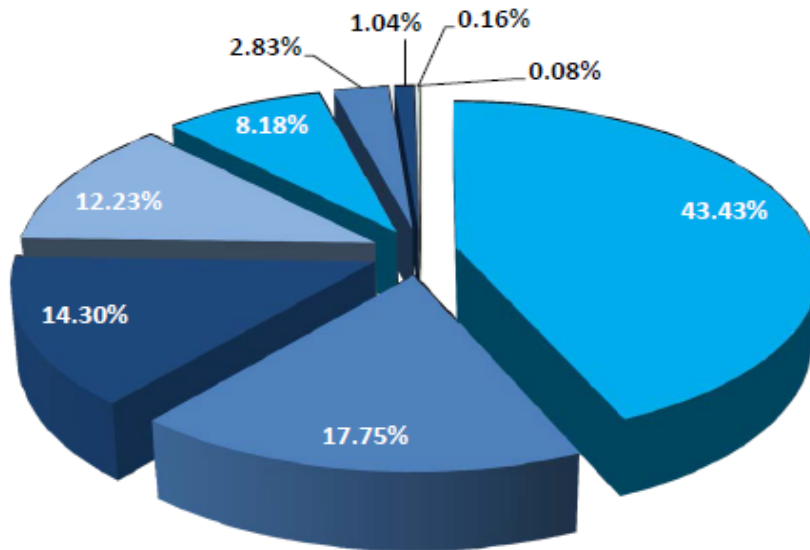
47.04%

% of Job Seekers w/ Medical Benefits from Employer

34.19%

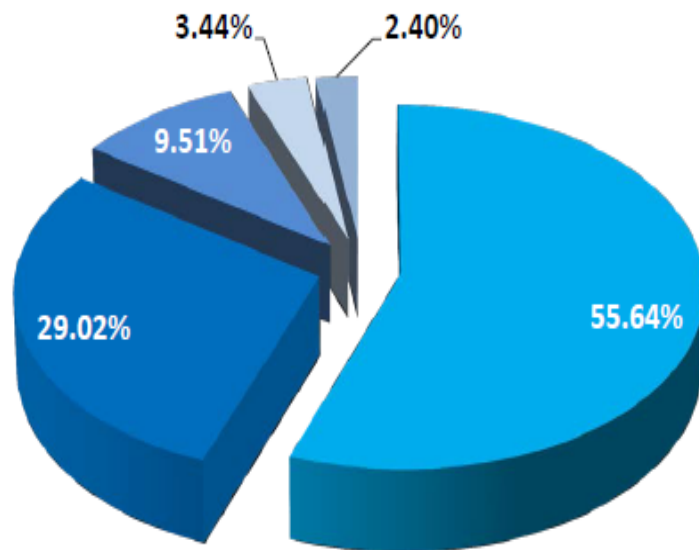


**Purchased Traditional Goods and Services
Total Expenditures = \$13.4 Million
Federal Fiscal Year 2017**



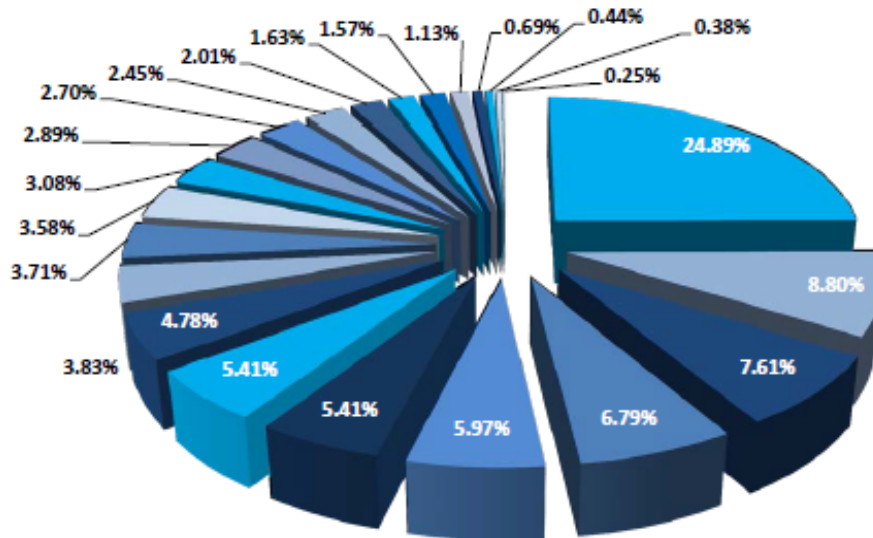
- 43.43% - CRP Services: All services purchased from Community Rehabilitation Providers
- 17.75% - Level Up: 15% set aside for services to pre-applicant transition students
- 14.30% - Training: All Proprietary School Programs, On-the-job training, and corresponding supplies
- 12.23% - Appliances: Prosthetic, Orthotic, Hearing Aids or other assistive devices
- 8.18% - Adaptive Tech and Services: Rehabilitation Technology and Devices, Vehicle and Home Modifications
- 2.83% - Medical & Psych: All Evaluation/Treatment for Physical, Psychological, and Psychiatric Conditions
- 1.04% - Other: All other services not otherwise categorized, including college
- 0.16% - Equipment and Supplies: All goods purchased for consumers, excluding training related fees
- 0.08% - Maintenance: Direct cash payments to consumers for reimbursement of goods and services purchased

**Services Purchased From
Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP)
Total Expenditures \$8.2 Million
in Federal Fiscal Year 2017**



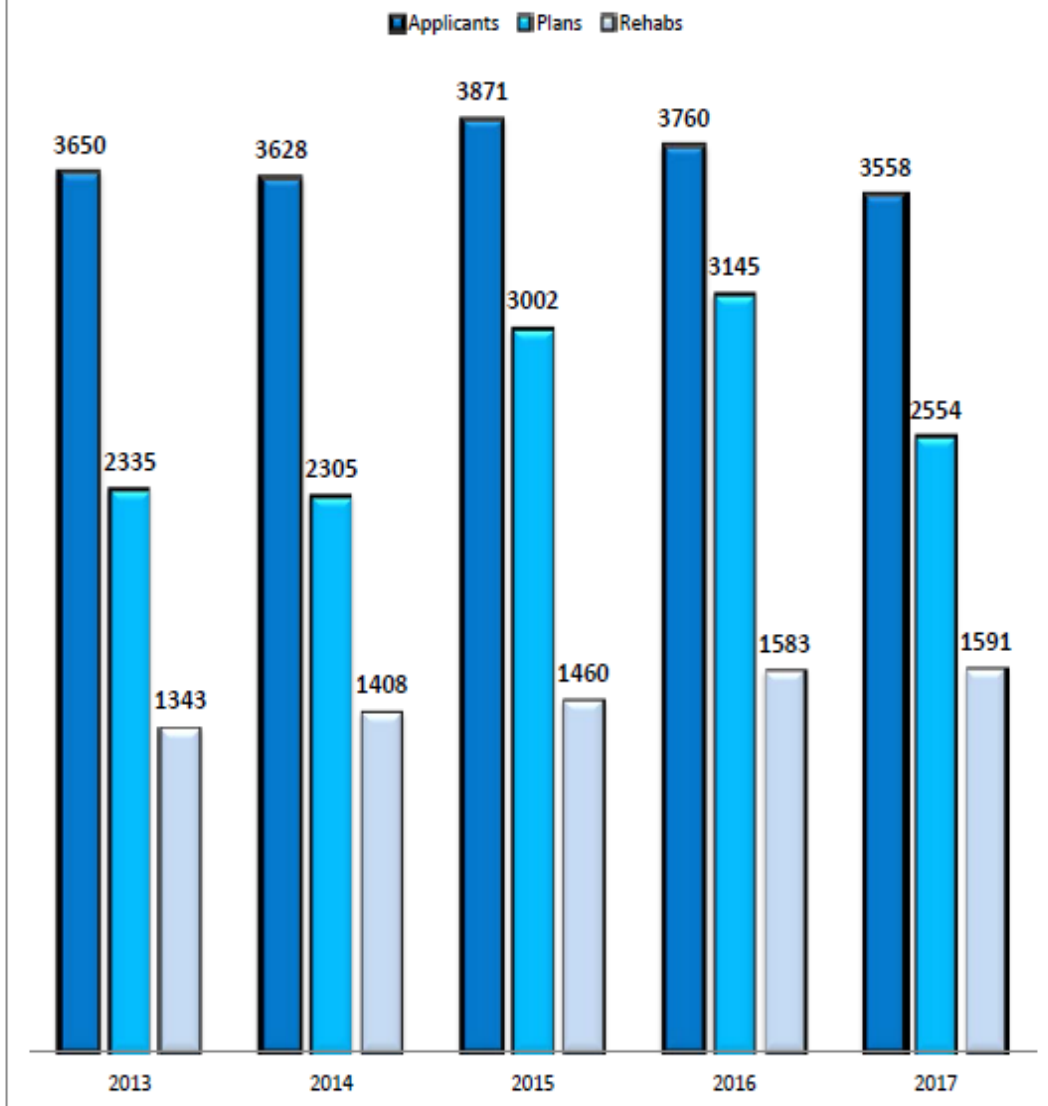
- 55.64% - CRP-Assessment
- 29.02% - Pre-Employment Transition Services
- 9.51% - CRP-Job Coach
- 3.44% - CRP-Other
- 2.40% - CRP-Placement/SD

Jobs Acquired or Maintained in Competitive Employment in Federal Fiscal Year 2017



- 24.89% - Office and Administrative Support
- 8.80% - Sales and Related
- 7.61% - Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance
- 6.79% - Education, Training, and Library
- 5.97% - Food Preparation and Serving Related
- 5.41% - Healthcare Practitioners and Technical
- 5.41% - Transportation and Material Moving
- 4.78% - Management
- 3.83% - Personal Care and Service
- 3.71% - Healthcare Support
- 3.58% - Community and Social Service
- 3.08% - Production
- 2.89% - Business and Financial Operations
- 2.70% - Installation, Maintenance, and Repair
- 2.45% - Construction and Extraction
- 2.01% - Computer and Mathematical
- 1.63% - Architecture and Engineering
- 1.57% - Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media
- 1.13% - Protective Service
- 0.69% - Life, Physical, and Social Science
- 0.44% - Legal
- 0.38% - Farming, Fishing, and Forestry
- 0.25% - Office and Administrative Support

Comparison of Applicants, Plans, and Successful Closures Over Last 5 Years - 2013 to 2017



Status	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Applicants	3650	3628	3871	3760	3558
Plans	2335	2305	3002	3145	2554
Rehabs	1343	1408	1460	1583	1591

BRS Office Telephone Numbers

Central Office

55 Farmington Avenue, 12th Floor, Hartford, CT 06105

Telephone: 860-424-4844 Fax: 860-424-4850

Toll-Free in Connecticut: 800-537-2549

Video Phone: 860-920-7163

Northern Region

184 Windsor Avenue, Windsor CT 06095

Telephone: 860-697-3550 Fax: 860-566-4766

Video Phone: 860-920-7171

Local Offices:

East Hartford: 959-200-4400; Video
Phone 860-509-4417

Enfield: 860-899-3567 Manchester:
860-647-5960

New Britain: 860-612-3569

Danielson: 860-455-1617

Willimantic: 860-455-1606

Southern Region

370 James Street, Suite 306, New Haven, CT

06513 Telephone: 203-974-3000 Fax:

203-789-7850 Video Phone: 203-584-9840

113 Salem Turnpike, Suite 200, Norwich, CT

06360 Telephone: 860-859-5720

Fax: 860-859-5733 Video Phone: 860-237-3525

Local Offices:

Middletown: 860-740-1080

New London: 860-439-7686

Western Region

1057 Broad Street, Bridgeport, CT 06604

Telephone: 203-551-5500 Fax: 203-579-6903

Video Phone: 203-416-6761

249 Thomaston Avenue, Waterbury, CT 06702

Telephone: 203-578-4550 Fax: 203-578-4590

Video Phone: 203-577-5319

Local Offices:

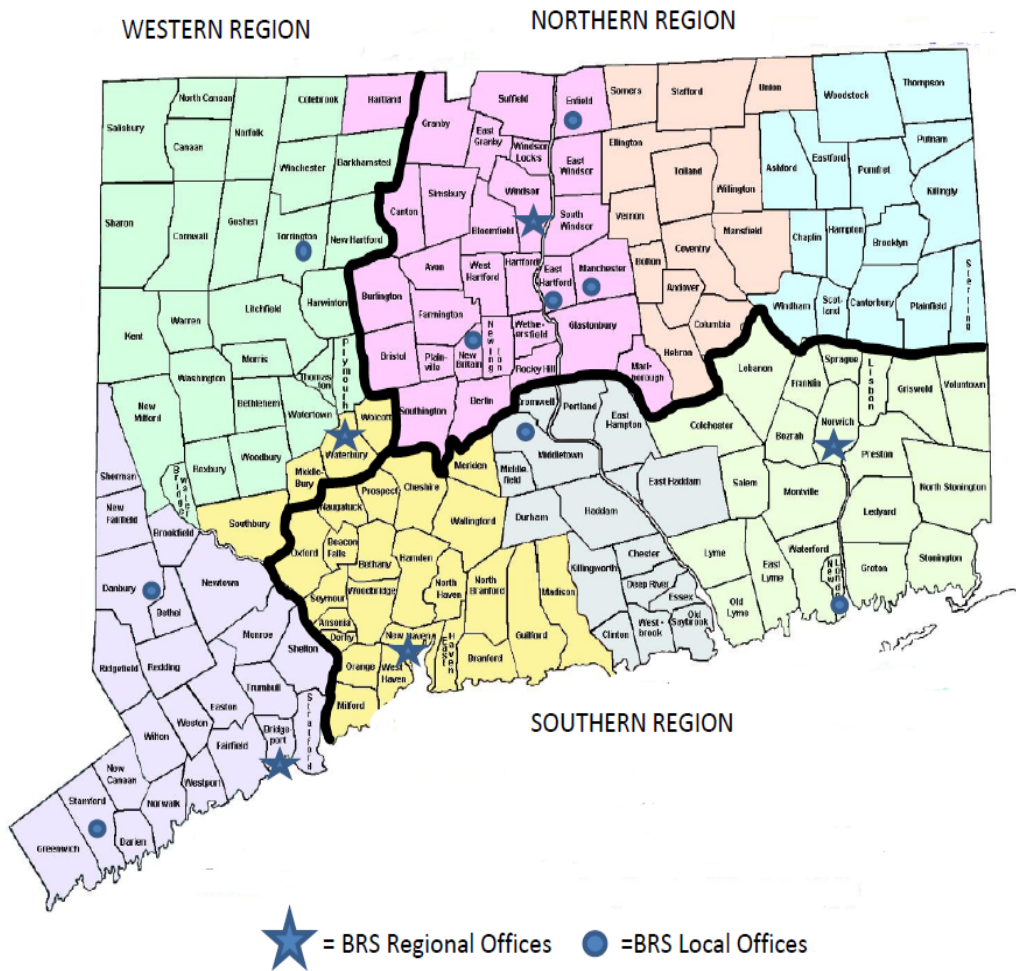
Danbury: 203-207-8990

Stamford: 203-251-9430

Torrington: 860-294-0013

Effective January 2018

Map of Connecticut by County with BRS Offices and Regions



State Rehabilitation Council — 2017

Officers:

Acting Chairperson

Gary Prushko

Vice Chairperson

Thomas Boudreau

Secretary

Kristen Winkle

Treasurer

Gary Prushko

Voting Members:

Thomas Boudreau

David P. Morgana, Jr.

Shannon McCann

Patrick Melfi

Gary Prushko

Beth Reel

Bruce Stovall

Kate Travis

Joe Wendover

Kristen Winkle

Ex-Officio Members:

David Doukas

Warren Stamp

Volunteers:

Andrea Richardson

Melissa Taylor

Linda Mizzi

Linda Rammler

Vicki Kowaleski

SRC 2017 Meeting Dates

- ◆ January 17
- ◆ March 28
- ◆ May 16
- ◆ June 20
- ◆ September 19
- ◆ November 21

With the exception of the January 17th Webinar, meeting locations rotate around the state and will be announced once they are scheduled.

The SRC meetings will occur 1:00 – 3:30 PM and **are open to the public**. Please contact the SRC Liaison listed below to register your attendance and to request accommodations.

Accommodations must be requested four weeks prior to the date of the meeting.

How to Become a Member of the SRC

Members of the State Rehabilitation Council are appointed by the Governor of Connecticut for a term of three years. They represent BRS jobseekers, business and industry, community-based providers of vocational rehabilitation services, advocacy organizations, and state agencies that serve persons with disabilities. A majority of the SRC members have physical and/or mental disabilities.

If you would like to be considered for appointment to the SRC or would like to recommend someone for appointment, please mail or fax the completed SRC Application (found on pages 26 and 27) along with a current resume to the SRC Liaison listed below.

SRC Liaison

Kerri Fradette, SRC Liaison

Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

55 Farmington Avenue, 12th Floor

Hartford, CT 06105

Voice: 860-424-4858; Toll-free: 800-537-2549; Video Phone: 860-920-7163

E-mail: kerri.fradette@ct.gov Website: www.ct.gov/brs

Application for Appointment to the SRC

Name of Nominee: _____

Home Address/City/Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Home E-Mail: _____

Employer: _____

Work Address/City/Zip: _____

Work Telephone: _____ Work E-Mail: _____

Name of Nominator (if different than nominee): _____

Address/City/Zip: _____

Day Telephone: _____ Day E-Mail: _____

Please identify your race/ethnicity (voluntary):

African-American *Asian* *Caucasian* *Hispanic/Spanish Speaking*
Multi-racial *Native American/Alaskan* *Other* _____

The SRC membership must include representatives of the following categories:

- a. at least one representative each of the **Statewide Independent Living Council, the Parent Training and Information Center, the Client Assistance Program - CAP** (Section 112), **Community Rehabilitation Program service providers, the State Education Department, the State Workforce Investment Board, and Section 121** (Vocational Rehabilitation [VR] for Native Americans);
- b. a qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor;
- c. four representatives of **business, industry and labor**;
- d. **representatives of disability advocacy groups** representing physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities and individuals who have difficulty representing themselves; and
- e. **current or former applicants or recipients** of VR services.

Which membership category is the most appropriate match for you? _____

SRC Application (Page 2)

Please feel free to add extra pages to answer the following questions.

1. Why are you interested in serving on the State Rehabilitation Council?
2. What is your interest in vocational rehabilitation and the employment of persons with disabilities?
3. Please list any organizations in which you have held leadership positions, and your accomplishments while holding such positions:
4. Have you ever done legislative advocacy? If so, please describe your activities.
5. Do you have a disability? If so, please describe.
6. Have you ever been enrolled in the Bureau's Vocational Rehabilitation Program?
7. If you are employed, does your supervisor support your Application for appointment to the State Rehabilitation Council?

Statement of Commitment

"I, the undersigned, understand that the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is a working council which meets at least six times per year for the full Council and at others times for the committees, as needed. I also understand that I must work on a SRC committee, support legislative and public awareness campaigns, participate in the process to complete the BRS State Plan and the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA), and attend at least one public meeting, as scheduled. If appointed to the SRC, I will earnestly strive to meet these commitments."

Signed,

(your name)

(date)

IN ORDER FOR YOUR APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED, YOU MUST INCLUDE A RESUME.

You may attach any other information you feel would be valuable in evaluating your application. Please mail all information to **Kerri Fradette, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Rehabilitation Services, 55 Farmington Avenue, 12th Floor, Hartford, CT 06105** or, you may fax all information to Kerri at **860-424-4850**.

SRC 2017 Annual Report Credits

Statistical Data:

David Johnson, BRS Consultant

Editing, Layout Design and Photos:

Rachel McAuliffe, Editing

Kerri Fradette, BRS Consultant and SRC Liaison

The Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is an Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Employer and offers its programs regardless of race, color, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, sex, or marital status.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this report is available upon request in large print, Braille, or on compact disc. If you need this report in an alternate format, please use the contact information listed on page 25.

