

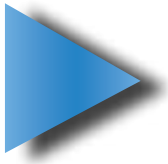
Ohio | Opportunities for Ohioans
with Disabilities

Annual Report

Federal Fiscal Year 2016
State Fiscal Year 2017



Who We Are



Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities works to provide individuals with disabilities opportunities to achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes.

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) is the state of Ohio agency that partners with Ohioans with disabilities to achieve quality employment and independence. We are also charged with making disability determinations for Ohioans applying for Social Security disability benefits.

OOD achieves these positive outcomes through three program areas: the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), the Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) and the Division of Disability Determination (DDD). A fourth area is the Division of Employer and Innovation Services, that establishes business relationships with employers.

Independence for Ohioans with disabilities is the mission that incorporates all aspects of our goals. OOD coordinates with partners in business, education and non-profit organizations to facilitate employment plans for the clients we represent. We assist Ohio companies to recruit and retain employees with disabilities based on job matching. OOD is also the sole agency in Ohio that administers the determination of benefits for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This report provides an overview of the accomplishments of these programs over the past fiscal year.

Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) assists those eligible, beginning at age 14, with physical, mental and emotional disabilities by providing direct, personalized services to assist them in finding and retaining meaningful work and personal independence.

Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired

Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired (BSVI) provides services to improve the employment and independent living outcomes for individuals with visual impairments. BSVI also leads OOD's efforts on the Workforce Integration Task Force and partners with Ohio's Community Centers for the Deaf and Centers for Independent Living.

Division of Employer & Innovation Services

Employer and Innovation Services (EIS) works with employer partners, promotes job-ready candidates, and supports businesses in the hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities. EIS also supports the development and implementation of OOD's strategic plan, performance management, the Lean Six Sigma process improvements, and project management.

Division of Disability Determination

The Social Security Administration (SSA) receives all submitted applications for Social Security disability benefits (both SSDI and SSI). Having mandated that each state process its own disability claims, SSA sends Ohioans' claims to OOD's Division of Disability Determination (DDD) for processing.

Director's Message

On behalf of Governor John Kasich, the General Assembly and our partners, we are pleased to present to you this annual report for State (Federal) Fiscal Year 2016-2017. Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) provides important services to Ohioans with disabilities to assist them in achieving quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes. This report reflects OOD's continued and relentless focus on jobs, accountability, cost-effectiveness and efficiency with a result of improved services to individuals with disabilities. A significant accomplishment that embodies all of these principles was the launching of www.OODWorks.com. It offers consumers a self-service portal to begin their journey with vocational rehabilitation services that ultimately leads to employment.

The success OOD has achieved related to several of the strategic initiatives across a multitude of programs are highlighted in this report and have garnered the attention of other states. Minnesota sent a nine-person cross-system delegation to learn about Ohio's Employment First Partnership and subsequently replicated the program. Multiple state vocational rehabilitation agencies have engaged us regarding our business relations model, the Workplace Initiative of Ohio and our partnership with the Ohio Business Leadership Network.

Ohio's disability determination program continues to stay in the forefront by leading the way nationally. In fact, this past year, Ohio was the first state to pilot and successfully process cases in the nation's new unified Disability Case Processing System. In addition, OOD's sister agencies in Ohio continue to inquire about our performance and innovation structure, including the application of Lean Six Sigma principles. We are pleased to be a partner in promoting the delivery of efficient, cost-effective and quality services to those we serve.

Our staff is committed to providing the most innovative and efficient services possible to Ohioans with disabilities with courtesy and compassion.

We welcome you to connect with OOD by visiting www.ood.ohio.gov and signing up to receive our publications or by following us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/oodohio) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/oodohio).



Kevin L. Miller
Executive Director



Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Program Highlights

- Assisted 6,360 individuals obtain competitive integrated employment
- Provided vocational services to 29,790 individuals seeking to find or retain meaningful work
- Reduced the time from application to successful closure to 19.4 months, a reduction of 3.4 months compared to FFY 2015
- Decreased cost per employment outcome to \$7,490, a 14.7 percent reduction from FFY 2015



Ohio Transition Support Partnership

The Ohio Transition Support Partnership, now in its second year, is a statewide collaboration between OOD and the Ohio Department of Education. This statewide partnership focuses on improving post-high school outcomes for students with disabilities by connecting them with OOD counseling staff beginning at age 14. This earlier engagement helps students with disabilities get a head start on becoming job ready so that they have the necessary skills to enter the workforce upon graduation.

The partnership funds 26 counselors and 13 caseload assistants who partner with local education agencies statewide and serve more than 4,000 students with disabilities annually. To date, 3,527 students served by the partnership have applied for OOD services, 2,942 Individualized Plans for Employment have been written, 521 youth have obtained competitive integrated employment, and there have been 400 successful closures. With this increased investment in transition, OOD is serving more students with disabilities than ever before. **The number of students with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 18 who applied for OOD services increased more than 27 percent from FFY 2015 to FFY 2017. In addition, OOD is connecting with more youth at a younger age. The number of youth ages 14 to 15 at time of application increased nearly 84 percent from FFY 2015 to FFY 2017.**





OODWorks.com Improves Access to Vocational Rehabilitation Services

In October 2016, OOD launched www.OODWorks.com - a website designed to improve access to services. While on www.OODWorks.com, individuals can watch a video about services, take a brief self-assessment and complete an online application for services to assist them in finding or keeping a job.

From October 2016 through June 2017, the site has steadily gained traffic with **more than 870 individuals applying for services by way of the portal**. Of those, more than 350 have scheduled an appointment and met with an OOD staff member to begin the eligibility process. The implementation of www.OODWorks.com is great news for individuals in need of vocational rehabilitation services.





Employment First Partnership

The Employment First Partnership between OOD and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities has been expanding community employment services for people with developmental disabilities since its inception in October 2013. Employment First counselors and regional work incentives consultants work with local county boards of developmental disabilities to support individuals who are interested in moving from facility-based settings to competitive integrated employment. Since the launch of this partnership, more than 5,339 individuals with developmental disabilities have applied for vocational rehabilitation services and more than 3,909 Individualized Plans for Employment have been written. As a result, 1,493 individuals have obtained competitive, integrated employment, and of those, nearly 1,257 have successfully sustained an employment outcome.

Since October 2013, OOD has significantly expanded access to vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with developmental disabilities, through this partnership. In fact, from FFY 2013 to FFY 2016, the number of individuals with developmental disabilities who have applied for OOD services has increased by more than 70 percent, and those who have been closed with an outcome of competitive integrated employment increased by more than 190 percent.

Bureau of Services for the Visually Impaired

Business Enterprise Program Modernizes

OOD's Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides entrepreneurship opportunities to individuals who are blind or visually impaired. This year, BEP continued to focus on key priorities to modernize the program.

In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Transportation, OOD continues to renovate rest area vending locations. One example is the operation at Ohio's new rest areas off of I-75 in Wood County which reopened after a year and a half construction project. The vending machines are now located in the main buildings, which were refurbished with the goal to better serve the traveling public and to increase foot traffic. Branding, signage and equipment was also upgraded on and around the machines. Both of these BEP locations have increased sales since the reopening.

Ohio Business Gateway and Telephonic Reporting

In collaboration with Ohio Business Gateway, the Business Enterprise Program updated the way blind and visually impaired operators report their monthly financial data and pay their service charge. In cooperation with a third party vendor, a voice

recognition system allows operators to use their phones to submit reports and payments through the portal. This collaboration has been very successful for visually impaired operators and has reduced agency resources required to manually post and process payments.





Independent Living Older Blind Expedites Service Delivery

The Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) program is open to Ohioans age 55 or older whose severe visual impairment make competitive employment extremely difficult to obtain. The program helps eligible Ohioans adjust to their low vision or blindness by increasing their ability to care for their personal needs, such as safety around the house or locating community supports like transportation. Common services this program offers include training in Activities of Daily Living (ex: cooking and housework) and Orientation and Mobility (ex: using a white cane). The program can also provide equipment (ex: low vision kitchen aids, tactile labeling, magnification, lighting, talking clocks and large-button telephones) to help Ohioans continue their independence.

This year, the ILOB program used LEAN principles to redesign the intake process and move individuals into services more quickly. The average time from application to eligibility decisions decreased from 16 days to under two days. As a result, OOD has been able to increase the number of Independent Living Plans written by 33.4 percent.





Workforce Integration Task Force

OOD continues to work with state agencies and workforce partners to implement recommendations of the Workforce Integration Task Force (WIT) submitted to Governor John Kasich in 2015. The WIT report identified barriers to employment for individuals who are blind, deaf or deafblind, as well as recommendations on how Ohio can improve employment opportunities and earnings. **This year,**

OOD and various state partners made advancements through two endeavors, the commercial driver's licensure (CDL) of individuals with hearing loss and increased availability of Braille literacy training.

Truck Driving Now Open to Drivers Who Are Deaf

There are more than 3,000 truck driving job openings each year in Ohio. Since Ohio applicants for commercial driver's licenses needed to pass a hearing test until last year, deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals were excluded from pursuing commercial truck driving. In 2013, however, the federal government began issuing waivers addressing the hearing requirement. In 2016, OOD began working with the Ohio Department of Public Safety, local truck driving schools and several employers to develop procedures to open the road for truck driving candidates who are deaf. In conjunction with these changes, OOD provided training for driving schools and has developed a sign language video detailing procedures for obtaining a CDL, which can be viewed at www.ood.ohio.gov and www.bmv.ohio.gov.

From May 2016 to June 2017, 11 individuals served by OOD with hearing waivers have participated in training and obtained CDLs. All of them have been offered employment with an average starting wage of \$16.28 an hour.

Advancing Literacy in Ohio's Blind Community

Addressing literacy needs in the deaf and the blind communities was highlighted as an important goal by the Workforce Integration Task Force. When adults lose enough vision that print reading is no longer possible, their literacy is also profoundly affected. BSVI has increased non-visual access to brochures and consumer materials. Dialogue with Aspire (the education and training program previously known as ABLE) led to financing a Braille learning course at the Cleveland Sight Center that started in April 2017. Adult learners master the basics of Braille, something that will also prepare them for additional learning in the Aspire system, along with reading and more advanced Braille study on their own.

Division of Employer and Innovation Services



Prioritizing Business & Employer Relations

In 2016, OOD continued to explore additional methods to increase employment outcomes for individuals

with disabilities. Due to new federal workforce legislation and alignment with the Governor's workforce transformation priorities, OOD elevated the agency's commitment to serve employers as a dual customer by devoting targeted resources to further advance the agency mission. In January 2017, OOD's business relations activities and staff were aligned as part of the Division of Employer and Innovation Services (EIS). Equipped with labor market information, EIS supports the agency by raising awareness of OOD and our mission with employer partners. EIS promotes and matches our talent pool of job seekers to available jobs, and supports businesses in the hiring and retention of individuals with disabilities.

A National Model of Best Practice

This past year, OOD was contacted by numerous other state agencies who wanted to learn about our successful business



relations model. Specifically, OOD business relations staff travelled to Kansas City, Missouri to address the Greater Kansas City Business Leadership Network and Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation. Insight was provided on OOD's process of matching job-ready individuals directly with employer partners' job opportunities. Also, the Indiana Department of Vocational Rehabilitation hosted OOD business relations staff at their Richmond, Indiana offices, and, in turn, their senior leadership delegation came to Ohio. They learned about OOD's business relations structure and services to manage employer partnerships and directly link job seekers to the talent needs of employers. Within the last year, OOD has shared its business relations model as a best practice with the vocational rehabilitation programs from Mississippi, Texas, Kentucky and Michigan.

Poses Grant Expands Business Relations Footprint

OOD has entered into a new three-year partnership with the Poses Family Foundation's (PFF) Workplace Initiative. The goal continues to be increasing the number of OOD job-ready candidates that achieve



meaningful employment. The Workplace Initiative is a national effort to help companies recruit, hire and retain the largest untapped talent pool in the country — individuals with disabilities. As a result of OOD's success with the first grant for the Workplace Initiative of Ohio, PFF renewed the funding partnership that allows for an increase in the number of talent sourcing coordinators who link job-ready candidates to employer partners. For the first time, one of these coordinators is now embedded within The Ohio State University, providing direct services and advocacy for OOD job-ready candidates to a variety of quality jobs with a specific employer partner.

Successful Job Fairs

OOD hosted six regional job fair events in Akron, Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton and Toledo that connected more than 1,000 job seekers to more than 200 employers. In November 2016, in cooperation with the Lawrence County Ohio Means Jobs Center and the Ohio Veterans Association, OOD hosted its first veterans job fair in Ironton. Thirty employers were on hand to discuss job opportunities with the 100 veterans and individuals with disabilities who attended. To date, 291 people who attended the job fairs have found employment.

In March 2017, OOD worked with the Ohio Department of Education and Region #14 Transition Council to host the first Five-County Transition Expo, where more than 300 high school juniors and seniors on Individualized Education Programs attended. The students received training and information on work ethics, interviewing skills and leadership.



Ohio Business Leadership Network Partnership

Since 2011, OOD and the Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN) have worked to recruit employers that embrace the value and business practice of hiring individuals with disabilities into their workforce. In 2016, OOD celebrated the 100th employer to join the OHBLN. It continues to grow and as of June 2017 there are more than 140 employer members.

OOD Lean Six Sigma: A Model for Improvement with Results

OOD has been a leader in operationalizing Lean Six Sigma in state government since 2011. Fourteen transformation projects have resulted in improved process times of 95 percent, a reduction in process steps of 57 percent, elimination of 76 percent process delays, and a 76 percent reduction in customer backlogs. These improvements also contributed to an increase in business partnerships, elimination of the waitlist for vocational rehabilitation services, and an increase in job outcomes for individuals served by OOD.

OOD's network of trained staff in Lean Six Sigma continues to grow with newly certified staff. All of OOD's managers and supervisors are now yellow belt certified, providing the foundation needed to understand and support the implementation of Lean Six Sigma methodology and terminology. This past year, OOD improved services and outcomes using Lean Six Sigma methodology. In December 2016, OOD conducted a Kaizen event to design a FastTrack process to expedite the intake and service delivery for job seekers, which is currently being piloted with select OOD offices and employers across the state. In addition, the Division of Human Resources designed a more efficient hiring process; Fiscal Management improved its inventory control processes for the Business Enterprise Program; and the Division of Disability Determination enhanced its quality assurance data integrity and processes.



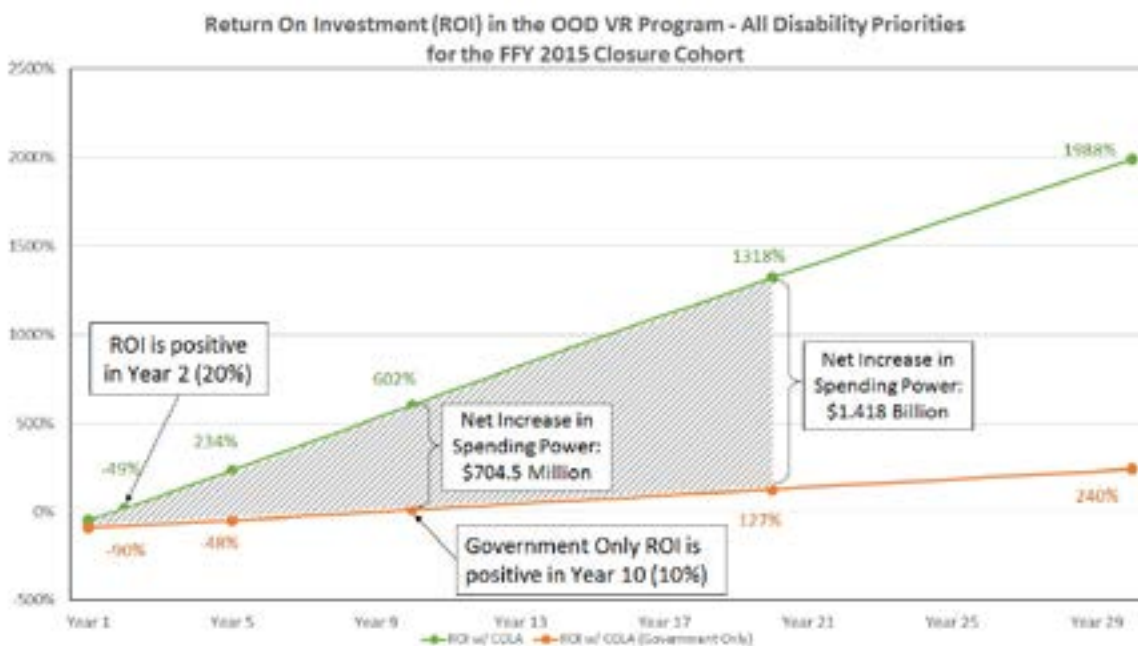
Return On Investment for Vocational Rehabilitation

We have completed our annual analysis of overall performance and have updated our program value accordingly. The chart below represents our return on investment (ROI) based on 2015 statistics. We served 21,759 individuals with disabilities, of which 12,039 were working and have increased independence and purchasing power. State and federal funding invested to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain and maintain employment are basically returned through the income taxes paid by the individual, as well as the reduction of public support paid to that person after 10 years. When the return is calculated to also include the individual's spending power reinvested into the local

economy, the ROI occurs even more quickly, achieving this return in two years.

- **The ROI is positive (20 percent) in the second year** after case closure. When only considering taxes generated and the reduction in usage of public support dollars, ROI is positive (10 percent) in the 10th year after case closure.
- **The ROI for Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities** (the first priority group that is required by law to be served) **is positive (47 percent)** in the third year after case closure. The ROI for Individuals with Significant Disabilities (the second priority group) **is positive (107 percent) in the second year** after case closure.

- **The net spending power**, excluding taxes and the reduction in usage of public support dollars, for individuals served by the vocational rehabilitation program **increases by \$704.5 million** in the 10th year after case closure and **\$1.418 billion** in the 20th year after case closure.



Division of Disability Determination

Federal Fiscal Year 2016 Program Highlights

- Received 196,066 applications for Social Security Disability benefits
- Processed 201,783 disability claims
- Cost per case was reduced by \$22 from \$412 to \$390 at end of FFY 2016, the lowest in the six state Chicago Region
- Processing time was reduced from 86.5 to 75.4 days, 11 days lower than FFY 2015
- Division of Disability Determination (DDD) is 100 percent federally funded

DDD Employees Receive National Awards

Pictured Below: Deputy Director Erik Williamson received the 2016 Social Security Administration (SSA) Commissioner's Disability Program Leadership Award for outstanding leadership and significant contributions to the success of the Social Security Disability program. This particular category recognizes one individual for outstanding leadership and contributions of those within disability determinations across the country. Supervisor Julie Keel (left) was the recipient of the 2016 Associate Commissioner's Citation for her contributions to a national SSA limited English proficiency workgroup. Disability Hearings Officer Christian Mateos (right) won the SSA Commissioner's Citation in recognition of contributions to excellent customer service as a bilingual disability claims specialist.

Case Processing System Rollout Continues

OOD's Division of Disability Determination continues to roll out the Social Security Administration's new case processing software. Ohio was the first state to process a case in the new system, and leads the nation with 358 of the 1,024 determinations completed nationally. The latest version went into production on April 1, 2017 in Ohio, Delaware and Maine. Since that time, Rhode Island, Virginia and Iowa have also gone live with the system, as well as Washington, Nebraska and South Dakota. DDD served as a mentor to Iowa and has also begun working with Washington to assist with their rollout.



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Originally, the focus was on quick disability determinations and compassionate allowances completed in DDD’s FastTrack Unit, but functionality has expanded to cases requiring consultative examinations and processing claims that may result in a denial. Fiscal reporting and business intelligence components will allow for improved data analytics and efficiency. DDD is a national leader in this important project and contributes significant user input to ensure its future success.

Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit Savings

The mission of the Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit is to resolve questions of fraud in Social Security Administration (SSA) disability programs. This supports the strategic goal of ensuring the integrity of Social Security programs, with zero tolerance for fraud. The mission is accomplished through the combined skills of DDD staff, the Office of the Inspector General, SSA, and state and local law enforcement personnel combating disability fraud. The Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit investigates individual disability beneficiaries and claimants, and identifies lawyers, doctors, translators or other third parties who facilitate disability fraud. The results of these investigations are presented to federal and state prosecutors for consideration of prosecution and for DDD to make timely and accurate disability determinations. DDD’s Cooperative Disability Investigations Unit has ranked among the top five units in the nation in each of the last six Federal Fiscal Years.

	SSA Program Savings	Non-Program
FFY 2011	\$ 24.6	\$ 18.0
FFY 2012	\$ 22.5	\$ 17.2
FFY 2013	\$ 24.6	\$ 21.1
FFY 2014	\$ 26.6	\$ 24.9
FFY 2015	\$ 15.3	\$ 24.4
FFY 2016	\$ 13.2	\$ 21.7
6-YEAR TOTAL	\$126.8	\$127.3

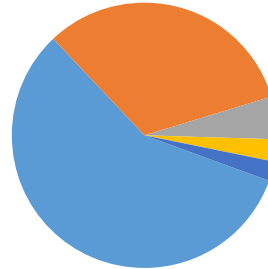
(In millions of dollars)

Financials

Federal Fiscal Year 2016

October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016

Use of Funds	Amount	Percent
Vocational Rehabilitation	\$ 130,825,748	57.4%
Disability Determination	\$ 73,782,756	32.4%
Central Support Services	\$ 11,838,011	5.2%
Other Disability Programs	\$ 6,209,839	2.7%
Business Enterprise	\$ 5,359,611	2.3%
TOTAL	\$ 228,015,965	100.0%

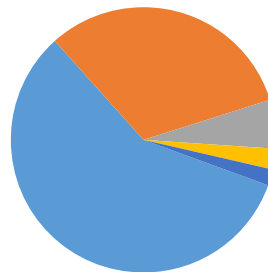


Sources of Funds	Amount	Percent
Federal Resources	\$ 196,051,200	86.0%
Business Enterprise	\$ 1,515,868	0.7%
General Revenue Funds	\$ 16,250,299	7.1%
DUI License Reinstatement	\$ 2,970,979	1.3%
State and Local Partnerships	\$ 11,227,619	4.9%
TOTAL	\$ 228,015,965	100.0%

State Fiscal Year 2017

July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

Use of Funds	Amount	Percent
Vocational Rehabilitation	\$ 130,890,055	57.8%
Disability Determination	\$ 71,929,416	31.8%
Central Support Services	\$ 13,478,073	6.0%
Other Disability Programs	\$ 5,729,777	2.4%
Business Enterprise	\$ 4,423,199	2.0%
TOTAL	\$ 226,450,520	100.0%



Sources of Funds	Amount	Percent
Federal Resources	\$ 195,996,095	86.6%
Business Enterprise	\$ 1,398,593	0.6%
General Revenue Funds	\$ 16,250,894	7.2%
DUI License Reinstatement	\$ 3,098,271	1.4%
State and Local Partnerships	\$ 9,706,667	4.2%
TOTAL	\$ 226,450,520	100.0%

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