

**Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)  
Statewide Independent Living Council Quarterly report June 9, 2023**

**Field Services Division (FSD) – FSD Division Director**

For the months of January, February, and March 2023 BSBP FSD data is as follows:

Description	Q2 FY23 Q3 PY22  1/1/23 - 3/31/23	Q2 FY22 Q3 PY21  1/1/22 - 3/31/22	Percent change
Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)	21	17	23.53%
Average hourly wage	\$20.00	\$20.53	-2.58%
Active VR customer	941	848	10.97%
Eligibilities	64	60	6.67%
Benefits planning	10	27	-62.96%

Program Year to date (7/1/2022 – 3/31/2023)

- BSBP has assisted 59 individuals in obtaining competitive integrated employment.

Last Program Year to date (7/1/2021 – 3/31/2022)

- BSBP assisted 44 individuals in obtaining competitive integrated employment.

BSBP Field Services highlights for FY23 Q2:

- Supported Employment technical assistance with the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center – Quality Employment (VRTAC-QE) training is completed. BSBP will continue to work with VRTAC-QE to implement the training that will assist rehabilitation professionals in identifying appropriate customers to receive supported employment services. The technical assistance will also provide tools to enhance collaborative relationships with providers.
- FSD is recruiting for additional counselors in Lansing and Kalamazoo areas.
- A General Office Assistant has been hired for the Grand Rapids office and will start May 15, 2023.
- Consistent commitment to the Customized Employment project, continues. The Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators (ACRE) training was provided to five providers.
- The tri-annual comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) is in progress and should be completed by late summer 2023. MRS and BSBP will review results with the Council when the report is complete.

Pre-ETS Highlights: BSBP is currently serving 325 students who are eligible to receive Pre-ETS.

**Current Students:**

Region/Office	Potentially Eligible	VR	Total
<b>Central Region</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>108</b>
Escanaba	2	5	7
Flint	10	21	31
Gaylord	2	22	24
Lansing	11	35	46
<b>East Region</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>102</b>

Detroit	30	72	102
<b>West Region</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>115</b>
Grand Rapids	32	51	83
Kalamazoo	5	27	32
<b>State Total</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>325</b>

January to March 2023, students received both vended and internally provided Pre-ETS. BSBP ran 10 Pre-ETS programs in the months of January to March. BSBP partnered with the Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach on two programs, “Growing through Career Conversations” and “It’s All about the Money.” Both had virtual sessions and an in-person component. The Pre-ETS unit also offers a monthly virtual educational session for families, students, and professionals on a variety of topics.

Vended Services by Category	
Counseling on Enrollment Opportunities	0%
Instruction in Self-Advocacy	20%
Job Exploration Counseling	12%
Workplace Readiness Training	40%
Work-based Learning Experiences	21%
Supportive Services	7%

Internal Services by Category	
Counseling on Enrollment Opportunities	20%
Instruction in Self-Advocacy	21%
Job Exploration Counseling	21%
Workplace Readiness Training	31%
Work-based Learning Experiences	7%
Supportive Services	0%

Students who received vended services 66

Students who received internal services 132

Number of vended services provided 141

Number of Internal Services provided 260

VR Priorities for FY23

- Customized Employment (CE) Pilots and translating to specific CE outcomes
- Supported Employment (SE) technical assistance and translating knowledge to specific SE outcomes
- Quality and Assurance focus for Individualized Plans for Employment
- Benefits Planning and Counseling
- Financial Literacy Instruction
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)

#### FSD Pre-ETS Priorities for FY23

- Credential Attainment and MSG for Pre-ETS
- Development and Implementation of Statewide programs
- Coordination with MDE-LIO
- Support of Regional Programs
- Provider partnerships to enhance outreach and targeted services
- Benefits planning and counseling
- Financial literacy programming
- Program monitoring and communication of policies

BSBP's Independent Living programs serve individuals who are 55 and older via the older blind program and those that are not appropriate for VR in our independent living part B program. The ultimate objective being to ensure that blindness and low vision never a reason to limit an individuals living environment. No one should be institutionalized because they cannot see well enough to manage their independence.

BSBP employs 11 Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (VRT) to provide blindness specific training to more than 500 individuals in Mi needing that service. BSBP's VRT's also provide teaching assessments to our VR customers and students to assist in the holistic approach of serving the whole person by addressing independent living needs in addition to the many vocationally related needs that our customers have. Our VRT's meet with their management team monthly to provide their subject matter expertise to update assessment materials, such as eye reports and other tools. BSBP's teaching team learns about aids and appliances and low vision devices that can assist customers in optimizing their skills.

**BSBP Training Center (BSBPTC) - Juan F. Ortiz, TC Division Director**

BSBP Training Center Fiscal Year Census Data.

<b>FY 23 YTD (3/31/2023)</b>			
<b>VR</b>	<b>IL</b>	<b>Pre-ETS</b>	<b>MINI</b>
58	56	19	57

<b>Referrals by Region</b>	
<b>Central</b>	30%
<b>Western</b>	20%
<b>Eastern</b>	51%

<b>Self-Identified Ethnicity</b>	
<b>White</b>	72%
<b>Black</b>	18%
<b>Asian</b>	2%
<b>Pacisle</b>	2%
<b>Hispanic</b>	2%
<b>Not Self-Identified</b>	5%

**TC Highlights:**

- Continue VR, IL, Pre-ETS, and Financial Literacy training engagements with participants.
- Conducted statewide TC virtual Family Engagements meet & greets February and March.
- Continued monthly TC open chats for Field Services Staff.
- Culinary weekend program in partnership with KVCC held during the weekend of 3/31/2023. Largest weekend program to-date.
- Mini-Adjustment Program held in Detroit in March.
- One WMU Rehabilitation Counseling graduate completed her internship requirement at TC.
- Two WMU VRT students completed their practicum at the TC.
- TC is able to provide benefits counseling and planning services in-house.

## **TC FY Goals**

- Increase VR referrals by 20%
- Continue data mining
- Benchmark programs
- Implement new report review tool
- Continue staff cross-training
- Increase business engagement
- Continue/grow Pre-ETS engagement opportunities
- Increase participant exit survey respondents
- Modernization (facility improvements & automation)

## **Braille Talking Book Library (BTBL):**

The BSBP Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) provides audio and braille books as well as specialized playback equipment to registered Michigan patrons who have a visual, physical, or print disability.

- **Circulation**
  - 173,985 audio books sent.
  - 121 braille books sent.
  - 379 patrons added.
- **New initiatives:**
  - Braille eReaders: In March, BTBL received its first shipment of 400 braille eReaders. A braille eReader is a portable device that allows a patron who is a braille reader to download an electronic braille book(s) to the device and read it using the refreshable braille display portion of the device. Currently there are approximately 125 BTBL patrons on the eReader wait list. We expect to begin shipping eReaders the second week of May.
- **Outreach**
  - Facebook ad campaign: Outreach librarian Stephanie Wambaugh has collaborated with LEO communications to design an ad campaign to target potential patrons such as veterans, people who have a physical disability, or people with a print disability. This campaign went live in March. Here are the totals for March:
    - 148,916 individuals reached.
    - 1,345 link clicks
    - 1,508 engagements

- 93 reactions
  - 58 shares
  - 1 comment
- Outreach efforts, marketing, and Public Relations:
  - Presentation on BTBL services to Frankenmuth Lions Club
  - Virtual presentation to Huntington Woods Public Library
  - Virtual presentation to Delta Township District Library
  - Presentation at Detroit mini adjustment
  - Monthly BTBL e-mail to schools
  - Wilcox School, Braille Literacy Month
  - Quarterly BTBL demo site e-mails (includes 5 marketing promos)
  - VI Teacher listserv post, targeting students with physical or print disabilities.
  - MDE-LIO newsletter, Library Lovers Month - eligibility
  - Disability Network MI locations, Mass Mailing
  - Area Agency on Aging MI locations, Mass Mailing
- Website and BTBL Facebook page:
  - 5,406 unique page views
  - 507 followers
  - 2,173 Gov Delivery subscribers
- **Machines:**
  - 470 machines sent.
  - 299 accessories sent.
- **Currency readers:**
  - 61 currency readers sent.