

# AN OVERVIEW OF KENTUCKY VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

PRESENTED BY:

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Executive Director

# What is Vocational Rehabilitation?

- The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program helps people with disabilities prepare for, enter, engage in or advance in competitive employment.
- The program also helps businesses and employers recruit, retain and accommodate employees with disabilities.
- Our customers are adults with disabilities, youth and students with disabilities and businesses/employers.

To empower  
Kentuckians with  
disabilities to  
maximize  
independence and  
economic security  
through competitive,  
integrated  
employment.



# Vocational Rehabilitation in Kentucky

- 17.8% of people with disabilities in Kentucky.
- 32.8% employment rate for individuals with disabilities.
- 67.2 % employment rate for people without disabilities.



# Funding

- **Federal Oversight Agency: Department of Education-Rehabilitation Services Administration**
- **Funding: CFDA Number 84.126A Formula Grant based on the statutory formula that takes into account population and per capita income administered under the approved VR services portion of the State Plan.**
- **VR implementing regulations require the state incur a portion of expenditures of non-Federal funds to meet its cost sharing requirements (34 C.F.R. § 361.60).**
- **The Federal share for expenditures 78.7 percent.**
- **The state's share is 21.3 percent of the total program cost**

# Vocational Rehabilitation Funding

- For every 22 cents funded by the Commonwealth, 78 cents in federal funds are received.
- For example:
  - \$16,719,555 General
  - \$61,776,010 Federal



# 2021 Program Metrics

- **Numbers Served – 38,207**
- **Exited in Successful Employment – 2,880**
- **Average Wage - \$18.45**
- **Average hours worked - 34**

# Agency Statistics

- OVR has around 373 fulltime 18A merit employees and 63 additional contractual staff providing services statewide.
- 45 Offices Statewide



# Consumer Demographics

- **Gender**

- Male 49%
- Female 50.8%

- **Race**

- White 88%
- Black 10%
- All Other 2%



# Consumer Disability Type

- Sensory 20.28%
- Physical 19.42%
- Cognitive 24.26%
- Psychological/Mental 32.31%



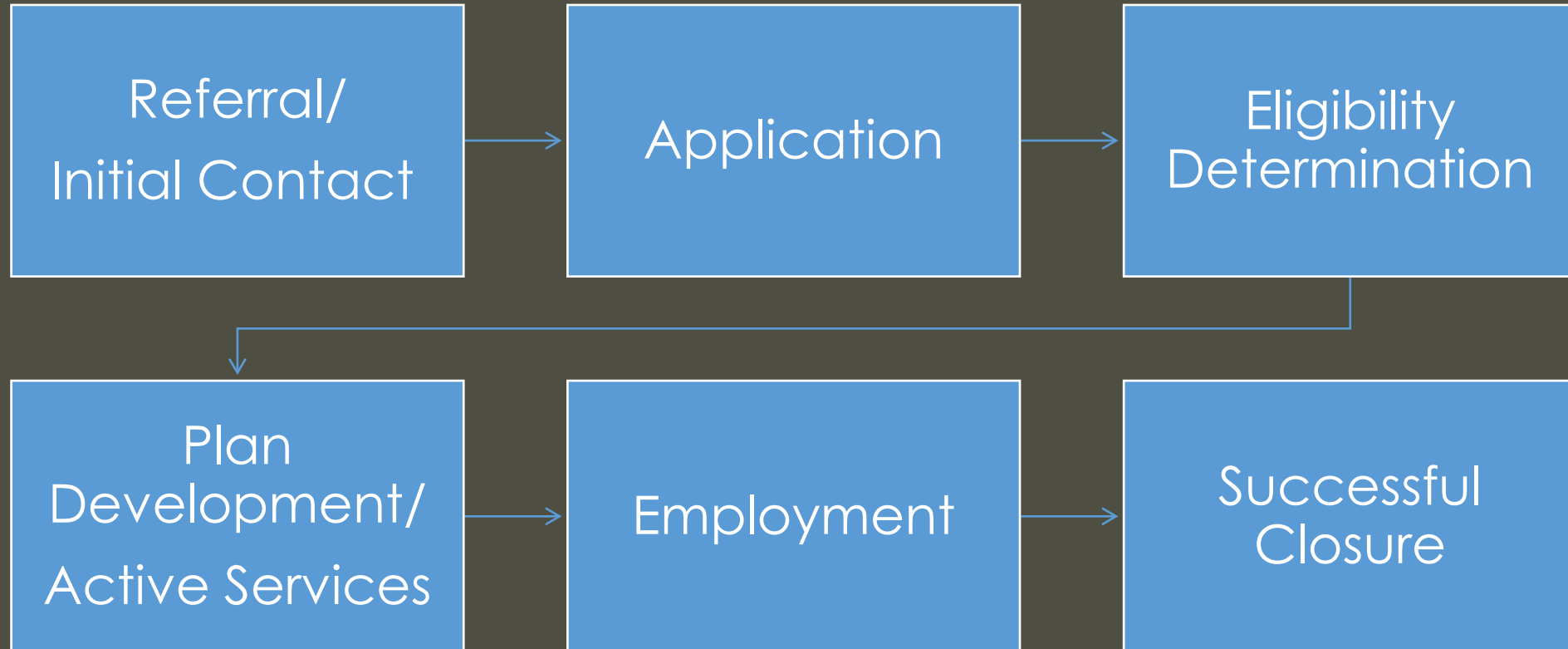
# Agency Structure

- **There are four Divisions**
  - **Division of Field Services**
  - **Division of Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center**
  - **Division of Blind Services/McDowell Center**
  - **Division of Business Enterprises**

# Division of Field Services VR Basics

- VR is an eligibility program not an entitlement program.
- Income is not a factor in eligibility but may be considered as part of the cost of certain services.
- Once a person has completed the application for services VR has 60 days to determine eligibility.
- We are not an emergency services provider.
- Our services are not intended to be long-term, but if supports are needed long-term the agency will work to identify alternatives and provide referrals for potential resources.

# VR Process At-A-Glance



# Eligibility Criteria for VR Services

- The individual must have a disability (physical, mental or sensory).
- The disability has to result in a significant barrier to employment.
- The individual must require VR services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or advance in competitive employment.
- The individual must be presumed eligible to achieve an employment outcome.

# Services Available

- Vocational Guidance and counseling (the foundation of our services)
- Job Placement Assistance and Job Readiness Training
- College or Vocational Training
- Supported Employment Services
- Skills Training or On the Job Training
- Job Coaching or Tutoring
- Transportation
- Interpreter/Translator Services
- Assistive Rehabilitation Technology
- Referral Services

# Cost of VR Services to the Consumer

- There is no cost to apply for VR services and to find out if you are eligible for the program.
- Depending on financial resources you may be asked to help contribute to the cost of certain services



# The Goal: Competitive Integrated Employment Outcome or CIEO's

- What everyone wants!
- Success for the individual!
- Success for the program!



# Carl D Perkins Vocational Training Center Programs

The Center currently operates several programs and services that enable consumers to achieve their vocational goals. Our brochure can be found at this <https://kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/cdpvtc/Documents/brochure.pdf> and will give an excellent overview of our many programs and services.

# Transition Services for Students

- The goal of transition services is to identify and begin working with students before they graduate so there isn't a delay in supports when they exit school
- Schools assist with referring students and sharing information about VR
- VR can take applications on students in high school age 14 – 21

# Pre-Employment Transition Services

- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) amends the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and now requires vocational rehabilitation (VR) agencies to set aside at least 15% of their federal funds to provide "pre-employment transition services" to "Students with Disabilities who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services .
- "Student (with a disability): Is in an Educational Program, is 14-22 years of age and is eligible for and receiving special education or related services under IDEA or is an individual with a disability for purposes of section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended.

# Division of Blind Services – Mission, Services and Goal

- The mission of the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation/ Blind Services Division is to provide opportunities for employment and independence to individuals with visual disabilities.
- We serve Kentuckians who are visually impaired or blind and assist individuals in obtaining and maintaining employment, economic self-sufficiency and independence.

# Division of Blind Services - Programs

- Our programs and services provide individuals with visual disabilities the tools they need to become more independent in their homes, schools, workplaces and communities.
- These programs include
  - McDowell Rehabilitation Center (training in low vision and blindness skills)
  - Independent Living and Older Blind Program
  - Orientation and Mobility Services
  - Deaf Blind Program
  - Bioptic Driving Program.

# Division of Kentucky Business Enterprises

Kentucky Business Enterprises (KBE) is one of the nation's leading vending and food service programs operated by people who are visually impaired or blind. The program trains and places individuals as self-employed operators of snack bars, dining facilities and automated vending facilities in public and private buildings across the state.

# Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation

Central Office

500 Mero Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

Frankfort, KY 40601

502-564-4440

<https://kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/Pages/aboutus.aspx>



# RETAIN Kentucky Overview

## KWIB Partner Spotlight

February 2, 2022

Johnny Collett

**RETAIN**  
KENTUCKY | Retaining  
Employment  
and Talent After  
Injury/Illness  
Network

# What is RETAIN KY?

A U.S. Department of Labor grant focused on **helping people who have non-work-related injuries or illnesses continue to work.**

RETAIN KY promotes effective **Return-to-Work** policy through

- Direct intervention research;
- Professional capacity building; and
- Employer and healthcare driven leadership.

# What is RETAIN KY?

RETAIN KY started as a pilot program.

- **In Phase 1**, RETAIN served over **200** Kentucky workers and trained more than **1,000** professionals through a regional model.
- **In Phase 2**, RETAIN KY will expand to provide early intervention and direct service coordination to **3,200** Kentuckians at risk of exiting the workforce due to a non-work-related injury or illness.

*Other states receiving a Phase 2 grant: OH, KS, MN, VT*

# RETAIN KY Partnerships

- **KY Office of Vocational Rehabilitation**
- Governor's Office
- University of Kentucky/University of Kentucky HealthCare
- UofL Health
- KY Department for Public Health
- KY Hospital Association
- KY Workforce Innovation Board
- The Council of State Governments
- KY Chamber of Commerce

# Why It Matters

When people leave the labor force because they become sick or have an injury, it can be detrimental—for them, their families, their employers, and the economy.

- The odds of an employee ever returning to the workforce **drop 50%** by the 12th week after injury or illness onset.
- After a year, that chance decreases to **almost zero**.

Many injured or ill workers **could remain in their jobs** if they received timely, coordinated assistance.

# Helping Kentuckians Stay Connected to the Labor Force

Through immediate customized intervention and supports, **RETAIN KY helps employers** keep valuable staff, and **helps employees** keep their worker identity.

- Rapid response, interdisciplinary, and person-centered intervention strategies;
- Peer supports; and
- Training of health care and employers.

# How It Works

All enrolled participants have support of a **Return-to-Work Coordinator**

An individualized **Return-to-Work Plan** is developed to help participants:

- Identify their stay at work and return to work goals; and
- Take steps to achieve those goals.

Participants also receive connections to community resources as needed.

# Enrollment/ Eligible Participants

## Enrollment in the Study

October 2021 - March 2024

## Eligible Participants:

- Age 18 or older living in Kentucky;
- Have had a non-work-related illness or injury that could impact their ability to work or perform their jobs; and
- Are employed now or have worked in the last year.



# The referral process is easy!

Call 859.562.3251

Screener:

[www.tinyurl.com/retainreferral](http://www.tinyurl.com/retainreferral)

Email [RETAIN@uky.edu](mailto:RETAIN@uky.edu)

Visit [www.kyretain.org](http://www.kyretain.org)



# Expanding Services & Improving Systems

A key strategy in our RETAIN KY efforts is the **Inclusive Worker Health Leadership Network**, consisting of medical professionals, public health leaders, employers, workforce development, and the KY Chamber of Commerce.

This network:

- Focuses on the coordination of state and local initiatives to accelerate opportunities for Kentuckians to stay on the job or return to work, and
- Makes recommendations regarding necessary policy and systems change.



You can watch RETAIN employment related videos at [RETAIN Kentucky Media](#) on YouTube to support return-to-work/stay-at work efforts.

Visit and subscribe today!

# RETAIN Employment Seminar Series: Previous Topics Include:

Return to Work Post  
Covid: Multiple  
Chemical Sensitivity  
and Universal Design

A Sustainable  
Approach to  
Empower People in  
Healthcare and  
Employment

Return to  
Work: Engaging  
Peer Mentors in your  
Stay at Work and  
Return to Work  
Processes

Return to  
Work: Chronic Pain  
and Safe Opioid  
Usage in the  
Workplace?

Engagement of  
Employees with  
Injury/Illness as we  
Return to the  
Workplace/Work  
from Home

The 7 Habits of  
Highly Effective  
Employers

Creating a Trauma  
Informed Workplace

# Other RETAIN KY Resources

- Article
- Social Media Guide
- Referral Form
- Success Stories
- Handbill (with QR Code for Referral)

# Thank you!

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