



Colorado
Legislative
Council
Staff

Bill 1

FISCAL NOTE

FISCAL IMPACT: State Local Statutory Public Entity Conditional No Fiscal Impact

Drafting Number: LLS 16-0303
Prime Sponsor(s):

Date: October 23, 2015
Bill Status: Interim Committee to Study
Vocational Rehabilitative Services
for the Blind Bill Request

Fiscal Analyst: Lauren Schreier (303-866-3523)

BILL TOPIC: VOCATIONAL SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Fiscal Impact Summary	FY 2016-2017	FY 2017-2018
State Revenue		
General Fund		
State Expenditures	\$906,877	\$701,412
General Fund	178,316	134,255
Federal Fund	658,846	496,052
Centrally Appropriated Costs	69,715	71,105
FTE Position Change	5.0 FTE	5.0 FTE
Appropriation Required: \$837,162 - Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (FY 2016-17)		
Future Year Impacts: Ongoing state expenditures.		

This fiscal note may be updated as more information is available.

Summary of Legislation

This bill, requested by the *Interim Committee to Study Vocational Rehabilitative Services for the Blind*, creates a new division within the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) to provide specialized vocational rehabilitative services to blind or visually impaired persons whom meet the criteria. It also creates a new technical resource center for providing information, training, and access to the most current technology and mobility options for persons who are blind or visually impaired.

The division will be responsible for providing services to blind or visually impaired persons through specialized counseling, personal adjustment and vocational training, skills and needs assessment, and information about and access to the most current technology available to persons who are blind or visually impaired.

By September 1, 2016, the CDLE must hire a division director. By December 15, 2016, the CDLE and the division director must create a transition plan and a corresponding budget and administrative plan for the division. The division will be responsible for:

- providing rehabilitative services to persons who are blind or visually impaired;
- hiring and training counselors to provide specialized vocational rehabilitation services to persons who are blind or visually impaired;
- operating and managing the resource center created in the bill;
- overseeing the duties and functions related to home teaching and teachers for the adult blind; and
- preparing an annual budget.

Background

Senate Bill 15-239 transferred the state's vocational rehabilitation programs from the Colorado Department of Human Services (DHS) to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE), beginning July 1, 2016. The bill specified the terms of the transfer and required the DHS and CDLE to prepare a detailed transition plan by December 1, 2015. In FY 2014-15, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation received an appropriation of \$53.8 million and 231.2 FTE.

State Expenditures

The bill increases expenditures by approximately \$906,877 and 5.0 FTE in FY 2016-17 and \$701,412 and 5.0 FTE in FY 2017-18. These costs are paid from approximately 21 percent General Fund and 79 percent federal funds. The bill increases workload in the CDLE, as highlighted in Table 1, and discussed below.

In addition to these costs, the CDLE will shift a portion of program staff and funding from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to the new blind services division based on actual and expected caseloads. Caseloads will be identified during the transition and planning process.

Cost Components	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18
Personal Services	\$344,657	\$344,657
FTE	5.0 FTE	5.0 FTE
Operating Expenses and Capital Outlay Costs	\$28,265	\$4,750
Information Technology Enhancements	\$214,240	\$30,900
Technology Resource Center	\$250,000	\$250,000
Centrally Appropriated Costs*	\$69,715	\$71,105
TOTAL	\$906,877	\$701,412

* Centrally appropriated costs are not included in the bill's appropriation.

Staffing. In FY 2016-17 and future years, the bill increases staffing needs by \$344,657 and 5.0 FTE. The division will be required to hire a division director for the new division. Other staff will be required to supervise field staff across the state and oversee the program implementation and operations. The division will also require data specialists to assist with the development of the case management system and provide technical assistance to program staff utilizing the case management system.

Information technology enhancements. Starting in FY 2016-17, the bill requires \$214,240 to adapt the AWARE vocational case management system for the new division. In FY 2016-17, this cost includes 2,080 hours of information technology work at a rate of \$103 per hour. In FY 2017-18, this cost includes 300 hours of information technology work at a rate of \$103 per hour for ongoing maintenance.

Technology resource center. The bill requires the CDLE to create a technology resource center at a cost of \$250,000 in FY 2016-17 and each year thereafter. The technology resource center will be used to provide information, training, and access to the most current technology and mobility options for persons who are blind or visually impaired.

Centrally appropriated costs. Pursuant to a Joint Budget Committee policy, certain costs associated with this bill are addressed through the annual budget process and centrally appropriated in the Long Bill or supplemental appropriations bills, rather than in this bill. The centrally appropriated costs subject to this policy are estimated in the fiscal note for informational purposes and summarized in Table 2.

Cost Components	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18
Employee Insurance (Health, Life, Dental, and Short-term Disability)	\$40,222	\$40,222
Supplemental Employee Retirement Payments	\$29,493	\$30,883
TOTAL	\$69,715	\$71,105

State Appropriations

In FY 2016-17, the bill requires an appropriation of \$837,162 and 5.0 FTE to the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, including:

- \$178,316 General Fund; and
- \$658,846 federal funds.

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State and Local Government Contacts

Human Services

Labor and Employment