

INFORMATION BRIEF #1

SNAPSHOT OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PARTICIPANTS WITH SELF-EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES: PYs 2018 and 2019

RSA's Case Service Report is the administrative data collected by each state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency on recipients exiting in a program year. The data that is the basis for this brief was taken from information submitted by for Program Years 2018 and 2019. PY 2018 for this report covers the period July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019; PY 2019 covers the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. VR state agencies operate as (1) Blind VR agencies that serve individuals who are blind or have visual impairments, (2) General VR agencies that serve individuals with all disabilities with all other types of disabilities, and (3) Combined VR agencies that serve individuals with all types of disabilities, including those who are blind or have visual impairments. This Info Brief combines the data for groups (2) General VR agencies and (3) Combined VR agencies ("General/Combined VR Agencies"). The numerical participation outcomes for PY 2019 are noticeably smaller than participation for PY 2018. The COVID-19 pandemic may be a primary influence on the VR outcomes in self-employment for PY 2019. Therefore, this report focuses on percentages of relative participation instead of the numerical counts in comparing state-to-state and year-to-year-outcomes.

SELF-EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Table 1 compares Program Years 2018 and 2019 for individuals exiting in self-employment compared to those exiting in Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) after receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) for General/Combined and Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies. In PY 2018, VR agencies closed 292,668 individuals in CIE. Of this number, 4,994 exited in self-employment. Comparative outcomes for PY 2019 were 130,145 CIE closures, with 2,230 individuals exiting in self-employment. The percentage of VR employment outcomes for both years in self-

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employment was 1.7% of the total exiting in CIE for all VR agencies (General/Combined and Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies).

TABLE 1

Individuals Exiting in Self-Employment Compared to Those Exiting in CIE After Receiving Services Under an IPE: PY 2018-2019 for All VR Agencies

Program Year	# Closed in Self-Employment	# of Closures in CIE	% of Closures in Self-Employment
2018	4,994	292,668	1.7%
2019	2,230	130,145	1.7%

Table 2 presents self –employment outcomes for (1) General/Combined VR Agencies and (2) Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired. VR agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired achieved a higher percentage of individuals closed successfully rehabilitated in self-employment than General/Combined VR agencies in the two years reported. General/Combined VR Agencies closed 1.54% of their employment outcomes in self-employment in PY 2018 and 1.57% in PY 2019. VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired closed 8.6% of their employment outcomes in self-employment in PY 2018 and 7.4% in PY 2019.

TABLE 2

Closure Rates: PY 2018-2019 by Type of VR Agencies - General/Combined Agencies and Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired

Program Year / Type of VR Agency	# Closed in Self-Employment	# of Closures in CIE	% of Closures in Self-Employment
2018: General/Combined	4,399	285,723	1.54%
2018: Blind/Visually Impaired	595	6,945	8.6%
2019: General/Combined	2,001	127,045	1.57%
2019: Blind/Visually Impaired	229	3,100	7.4%

GENDER, AGE, RACE / ETHNIC BACKGROUND, AND EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

Gender: Table 3 presents the gender of recipients with self-employment outcomes in 2018 and 2019. Of all the VR recipients who exited in self-employment in 2018, 62.6% were male, and 37.1% were female. In 2019, males again were closed in self-employment at a higher percentage than females with 64.2% male and 35.6% for females. A small percentage (.2%) in both years did not identify their gender.

TABLE 3

Gender - VR Participants in Self-Employment

Program Year	Male	Female	Did Not Identify
2018	62.6%	37.1%	0.2%
2019	62.2%	35.6%	0.2%

Age: Table 4 presents the mean average ages at the time of implementation of the IPE for VR participants with self-employment outcomes compared to all VR participants with an employment outcome. Recipients who exited in self-employment had a higher mean average age than those closed in CIE. For PY 2018, the mean average age for those closed in self-employment at the time of IPE implementation was 51.7 compared to 35.3 for all VR participants achieving an employment outcome. For PY 2019, the comparative figures were an age of 52.6 for those closed in self-employment and 36.6 for all VR participants closed in CIE.

TABLE 4

Mean Age at IPE

Program Year	Self-Employment: Mean Age at IPE	All VR Participants Exiting in CIE: Mean Age at IPE
2018	51.7%	35.3%
2019	52.6%	36.6%

Race/Ethnic Background: Tables 5 and 6 present the Race/Ethnic backgrounds for VR participants closed in self-employment in PYs 2018 and 2019 compared to all VR participants closed in CIE. VR participants closed in self-employment were predominately identified as White for both years. In PY 2018, 85.3% of VR participants closed in self-employment were White; in PY 2019, 84.8% were White. The percentage of VR participants exiting in self-employment that were black increased slightly from 12.4% in PY 2018 to 13% in PY 2019. Other race/ethnic data are presented in Table 5 and 6.

TABLE 5

Race/Ethnic Backgrounds: Closed in Self-Employment Compared to All VR Participants with an Employment Outcome for PY 2018

Race/Ethnic Background	Self-Employment	All Closed in Employment
Asian	1.2%	2.2%
Black	12.4%	21.9%
Hawaiian	0.5%	0.6%
Hispanic	12.4%	13.3%
Native American	2.1%	1.9%
White	85.3%	75.0%

TABLE 6

Race/Ethnic Backgrounds: Closed in Self-Employment Compared to All VR Participants with an Employment Outcome for PY 2019

Race/Ethnic Background	Self-Employment	All Closed in Employment
Asian	0.9%	2.1%
Black	13.0%	21.8%
Hawaiian	0.4%	0.5%
Hispanic	9.7%	12.7%
Native American	1.3%	1.8%
White	84.8%	74.7%

Educational Level: Table 7 presents the educational level at time application for VR services for participants who achieved a self-employment outcome in PY 2018 or PY 2019. The VR recipients' most frequent educational level at time of application was a Secondary Level Diploma: 39.2% for PY 2018; 28.8% for PY 2019. An additional 5.7% in PY 2018 and 4.7% in PY 2019 had a Secondary School Equivalent certification. For PY 2018, 5.7% of the VR recipients had a Post-Secondary education at time of application. Other education at the time of application included Post-Secondary Licenses or Certificates (3.8%), Associate Degrees (5.7%), Bachelor Degrees (11.3%), and Beyond Bachelor Degrees (7.2%). For PY 2019, Post-Secondary education at time of application included Associate Degrees (5.6%), Post Secondary Licenses or Certificates (3.8%), Associate Degrees (5.7%), Bachelor Degrees (4.3%), and Beyond a Bachelor Degree (6.6%). 'No level of education completed' was reported for 16.1% in PY 2018 and 23.2% in PY 2019.

TABLE 7

Highest Level of Education at Time of Application for Closures in Self-Employment

Level of Education at Time of Application	% of Closures in Self Employment PY 2018	% of Closures in Self-Employment PY 2019
Secondary School Diploma	39.2%	28.8%
Secondary School Equivalent	5.7%	4.7%
Certificate of attendance/completion (IEP)	0.7%	0.7%
Completed 1+ Years of post-secondary	10.2%	15.7%
Obtained post-secondary certification, license or certificate	3.8%	4.3%
Associate Degree	5.7%	5.6%
Bachelor Degree	11.3%	10.5%
Beyond a Bachelor Degree	7.2%	6.6%
No Level of Education Completed	16.1%	23.2%

DISABILITY

Primary Disability: Table 8 provides information on the most frequent primary disability for VR recipients closed in self-employment. There is limited variation in the comparative percentages between the two Program Years. Individuals with a primary disability of Physical Disorder not Listed Elsewhere represent the highest percentage of individuals closed in self-employment for PYs 2018 and 2019. The next highest percentage for PY 2018 and PY 2019 were people with a primary disability of Cause Unknown at 20.4% and 20.2% respectively. Other primary disabilities can be viewed in Table 8.

TABLE 8

Most Frequent Primary Disability for VR Recipients Closed Self-Employment

Primary Disability	PY 2018: % of People in Disability Category Closed in Self-Employment	PY 2019: % of People in Disability Category Closed in Self-Employment
Accident/Injury other than TBI/SCI	7.5%	7.8%
Anxiety Disorder	2.6%	2.8%
Cardiac and Other Conditions of the Circulatory System	2.3%	2.7%
Cause Unknown	20.4%	20.2%
Congenital Condition or Birth Injury	7.6%	8.0%
Depressive and Other Mood Disorder	6.5%	5.4%
Drug Abuse or Dependence other than Alcohol	2.7%	3.5%
Physical Disorder not Listed Elsewhere	26.1%	26.1%
Specific Learning Disability	3.5%	3.5%

Primary Developmental Disability: Table 9 provides information on VR recipients closed in self-employment whose primary disability was a developmental disability. Overall, the percentages of VR recipients closed in self-employment who had a development disability were extremely small. The largest percentage was represented by individuals with a congenital condition or birth injury at 7.6% in PY 2018 and 8% in PY 2019. Individuals with a specific learning disability made up the next largest percentage at 3.5% in both PY 2018 and PY 2019. Only 1.3% of the VR recipients closed in self-employment in PY 2018 had an intellectual disability; with 1.2% in PY 2019. Other primary disabilities can be viewed in Table 9 with very small percentages of individuals with these disabilities closed in self-employment.

TABLE 9

Primary Developmental Disability Causes for Persons Closed Self-Employment: FYs 2018 and 2019

Primary Disability	PY 2018	PY 2019
Autism	0.9%	1.0%
Cerebral Palsy	0.5%	0.5%
Congenital Condition or Birth Injury	7.6%	8.0%
Epilepsy	0.2%	0.2%
Intellectual Disability	1.3%	1.2%
Muscular Dystrophy	0.2%	0.2%
Polio	0.2%	0.3%
Specific Learning Disability	3.5%	3.5%

Level of Disability Status: Table 10 presents the level of disability status for VR recipients closed in self-employment compared to all VR recipients who exited in CIE. For both Program Years, Significant Disability is the most frequent disability significance level for those closed in self-employment (46.5% in PY 2018; 47.3% in PY 2019). In comparison, for both Program Years, Most Significant Disability is the most frequent disability significance level for all VR participants closed in employment (52.6% in PY 2018; 54.1% in PY 2019).

TABLE 10

PY 2018 Comparison Level of Disability Status for VR Cases Closed in Self-Employment versus All Closures in CIE for VR Agencies (General/Combined Only)

Significance of Disability	Significance of Disability at Closure in Self-Employment	Significance of Disability at Closure All Closed in CIE
Does Not Have Significant Disability	11.7%	17.7%
Significant Disability	46.5%	40.7%
Most Significant Disability	35.8%	52.60%

EARNINGS FROM SELF-EMPLOYMENT

General-Combined Agencies: Table 11 presents a comparison of earnings per week for all VR participants with a self-employment outcome compared to all VR participants with a CIE outcome. As noted, VR recipients closed in self-employment achieved higher average earnings per week when compared to all VR recipients who achieved a CIE outcome. The national average earnings per week at closure in self-employment in PY 2018 were \$500.76 compared to \$392.04 for all VR employment outcomes. Corresponding weekly earnings for PY 2019 for self-employment was \$528.81 compared to \$418.60 for all employment outcomes.

TABLE 11

Comparison of Earnings per Week for VR Cases Closed in Self-Employment (General / Combined and Blind Agencies) Versus All Closures in CIE

Program Year	National Average Earnings per Week at Closure in Self-Employment	National Average Earnings per Week at Closure for All Recipients Closed in CIE
2018	\$500.76	\$392.04
2019	\$528.81	\$418.60

General-Combined Agencies: Table 12 presents a comparison of hourly earnings for VR participants with a self-employment outcome compared to VR participants exiting services with an employment outcome. In both 2018 and 2019, VR recipients who exited in self-employment earned a higher average hourly wage than other VR recipients exiting in CIE. The national average hourly earnings at closure in self-employment for PY 2018 was \$17.77 compared to \$13.30. Corresponding average hourly earnings in PY 2019 for self-employment was \$18.62 compared to \$14.00 for all VR recipients closed in CIE.

TABLE 12

Comparison of Earnings per Hour for VR Cases Closed in Self-Employment versus All Recipients Exiting in CIE for VR Agencies (General/Combined Only)

Program Year	Average Earnings per Hour at Closure in Self-Employment	Average Earnings per Hour at Closure for All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE
2018	\$17.77	\$13.30
2019	\$18.62	\$14.00

Table 13 provides a comparison of average hours worked per week for all VR participants with a self-employment outcome compared to all VR participants who exited services with a CIE outcome. In both years, participants exiting with a self-employment outcome worked slightly fewer hours per week than participants who exited with a CIE outcome. The national average hours worked per week at closure in self-employment in PY 2018 was 28.23 compared to 29.7 for all VR employment outcomes. Corresponding hours worked per week in PY 2019 for self-employment was 28.4 compared to 29.9 for all employment outcomes.

TABLE 13

Comparison of Hours Worked per Week for VR Cases Closed in Self-Employment versus All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE for VR Agencies (General/Combined Only)

Program Year	Average Hours Worked per Week at Closure in Self-Employment	Average Hours Worked per Week at Closure for All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE
2018	28.2 hours	29.7 hours
2019	28.4 hours	29.9 hours

SUMMARY

This information brief provides a snapshot of the VR recipients who exited services in PY 2018 and PY 2019. Specifically, the brief provides information on the characteristics of recipients who are receiving services and their employment outcomes (earnings, hours worked, etc.). Follow-up briefs will present information on state outcomes for recipients exiting in self-employment. The following are summary points from the RSA 911 data for PY 2018 and PY 2019.

- The percentage of VR recipients closed in self-employment for the VR General/Combined and Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies was 1.7% for PY 2018 and PY 2019. This is the percentage of recipients closed in self-employment for all VR recipients exiting VR services in competitive integrated employment under an IPE.
- The Blind/Visually Impaired VR agencies had higher percentages of recipients exiting in self-employment than the General/Combined VR Agencies in PY 2018 and PY 2019. General/Combined Agencies had 1.54% (PY 2018) and 1.57% (PY2019) VR recipients closed in self-employment. In comparison, Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies had 8.6% (PY 2018) and 7.4% (2019) recipients closed in self-employment.
- In 2018, a greater percentage of VR recipients exiting VR services in self-employment were male (62.6%) than female (37.1%). In 2019, males (64.2%) again were closed in self-employment at a higher percentage than females (35.6%).
- The mean age of recipients exiting VR services closed in self-employment was 51.7 years in PY 2018 and 52.6 years old in PY 2019. This reflects an age older than other VR recipients exiting in CIE in 2018 (35.3 years) and in PY 2019 (36.6 years).
- Individuals with a primary disability of “physical disorder not listed elsewhere” represent the highest percentage of individuals closed in self-employment for PYs 2018 and 2019. The next highest percentage for PY 2018 and PY 2019 were people with a primary disability of cause unknown at 20.4% and 20.2% respectively.

- Overall, the percentages of VR recipients closed in self-employment who had a developmental disability were very small. The largest percentage was represented by individuals with a congenital condition or birth injury with 7.6% in PY 2018 and 8% in PY 2019. Use of self-employment among individuals with primary intellectual disability appears to be nominal.
- The national average earnings per week at closure in self-employment in PY 2018 were \$500.76 compared to \$392.04 for all VR employment outcomes. Corresponding weekly earnings for PY 2019 for self-employment was \$528.81 compared to \$418.60 for all employment outcomes.

The authors of this “Information Brief” are Katherine Inge, Grant Revell, Rob Cimera, and Beth Keeton for the National Center on Self-employment Business Ownership, and Telecommuting. Visit us at: [<https://centeronselfemployment.org/>]. If you have questions on this brief, please contact Dr. Inge at [kinge@vcu.edu].

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