

## INFORMATION BRIEF #2

### SPOTLIGHT ON SELECTED STATE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCIES' SELF-EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES: PYs 2018 and 2019

The data for this brief was taken from information submitted by each State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) program years (PY) 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 Federal/State VR System in the United States covers the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the four U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Marianas and the Virgin Islands.

In PY 2018, VR agencies closed **292,668** individuals in competitive integrated employment (CIE). Of this number, **4,994** exited in self-employment. In PY 2019, there were **130,145** CIE closures, with **2,230** individuals exiting in self-employment. The percentage of VR employment outcomes for both years in self-employment was 1.7% of the total exiting in CIE for all VR agencies (General/Combined and Blind/Visually

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Impaired Agencies). This information brief includes the following:

- The State VR agencies with the highest percentage of self-employment outcomes among all individuals exiting in CIE.
- The State VR agencies with the highest hourly and weekly wages for VR recipients exiting in self-employment.

### STATES WITH THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF SELF-EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

In PY 2018, 1.54% of all CIE outcomes for the **General/Combined VR agencies** were in self-employment; in PY 2019 the self-employment outcomes were 1.57%. In PY 2018, approximately 40 (71.4%) of the 56 General/Combined VR agencies had employment outcomes in self-employment at less than 1.5%; the corresponding figure in PY 2019 was 42 (75%). Also, with the possible exception of Colorado and Michigan, the states presented in Tables 1 and 2 representing VR agencies with the highest percentage of self-employment may be considered generally more rural with limited, frequently dispersed populations.

**General-Combined Agencies:** Table 1 presents the 10 States with the highest percentage of self-employment closures in PY 2018. It provides the percent and the number of self-employment outcomes for each state. The four General/Combined VR agencies with the highest percentage of self-employment closures are Mississippi (10.2%; n of 533), Hawaii (5.6%; n of 28), Montana (15.9%; n of 29), and Maine (6.0%; n of 77). Table 2 presents the same information for PY 2019. The six General/Combined VR agencies with the highest percentage of self-employment closures are Hawaii (15.6%; n of 9), Mississippi (10.5%; n of 322), Colorado (6.3%; n of 123), Maine (5.5%; n of 37), New Mexico (5.3%; n of 25) and Michigan (5.1%; n of 11).

**TABLE 1**

*The 10 VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-Employment for PY 2018*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	PY 2018 Percentage of Closures in Self- Employment	PY 2018 Number of Closures in Self- Employment
Mississippi	10.2%	533
Hawaii	5.6%	28
Montana	5.0%	29
New Mexico	4.4%	77
New Hampshire	3.9%	47
Colorado	3.8%	145
Maine	3.6%	56
Wyoming	3.5%	47
Idaho	3.1%	77
Vermont	2.9%	51
<b><i>National Summary</i></b>	<b>1.54%</b>	<b>4,399</b>

**TABLE 2**

*The 10 VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-Employment for PY 2019*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	PY 2019 Percentage of Closures in Self- Employment	PY 2019 Number of Closures in Self- Employment
Hawaii	15.5%	9
Mississippi	10.5%	322
Colorado	6.3%	123
Maine	5.5%	37
New Mexico	5.3%	25
Montana	5.1%	11
Puerto Rico	4.8%	84
South Carolina	4.8%	192
New Hampshire	4.2%	10
Wyoming	3.5%	20
<b><i>National Summary</i></b>	<b>1.57%.</b>	<b>2,001</b>

**Weekly Earnings of General/Combined VR Agencies with the Highest Percentages of Participation in Self-Employment for PY 2018 and PY 2019:** Table 3 presents the average earnings per week at closure in self-employment for the 10 General/Combined VR Agencies identified in Table 1 for PY 2018. With the exception of Wyoming and New Mexico, the average weekly earnings at closure were higher for participants exiting in

self-employment than all VR recipients exiting in CIE. Table 4 presents the average earnings per week at closure in self-employment for the 10 General/Combined VR Agencies for PY 2019. Table 4 complements Table 2, which presented information on the 10 state General/Combined VR agencies with the highest outcomes in self-employment. The states Colorado, Maine, Montana, and South Carolina had higher wages for those closed in self-employment. The other five states plus Puerto Rico had higher wages for those exiting in CIE than VR recipients exiting in self-employment.

**TABLE 3**

*Comparison of Earnings per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment to all VR recipients exiting in CIE PY 2018*

General/Combined State VR Agency	Average Earnings at Closure per Week in Self-Employment	Average Earnings per Week for All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE
Mississippi	\$532.82	\$499.04
Hawaii	\$574.88	\$424.47
Montana	\$364.47	\$343.41
New Mexico	\$263.51	\$375.24
New Hampshire	\$417.36	\$358.61
Colorado	\$430.96	\$402.14
Maine	\$533.48	\$360.88
Wyoming	\$308.01	\$387.79
Idaho	\$653.39	\$398.94
Vermont	\$648.34	\$393.30

**TABLE 4**

*PY2019 Comparison of Earnings per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment to All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE (VR Agencies (General/Combined Only))*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	Average Earnings at Closure per Week in Self- Employment	Average Earnings per Week for All VR R recipients Exiting in CIE
Hawaii	\$144.90	\$392.88
Mississippi	\$513.41	\$531.03
Colorado	\$506.24	\$438.64
Maine	\$747.18	\$379.79
New Mexico	\$301.53	\$381.52
Montana	\$544.24	\$386.76
Puerto Rico	\$304.48	\$352.17
South Carolina	\$526.49	\$486.49
New Hampshire	\$267.37	\$344.84
Wyoming	\$389.72	\$429.62

**VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired:** Tables 5 and 6 present the 10 States with the highest percentage of self-employment closures in PYs 2018 and 2019 for VR agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired. The Tables provide the percent of self-employment outcomes and also the number of self-employment outcomes for each of the 10 states. For PY 2018, 8.6% of the employment outcomes for VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired were in self-employment. The five VR Agencies for the

Blind/Visually Impaired with the highest percentage of self-employment closures in PY 2018 as presented in Table 5 were: Vermont (21.3%; n of 20), Maine (15.4%; n of 12), Florida (15.0%; n of 261), South Dakota (12.2%; n of 27) and Oregon (10.0%, n of 18). For PY 2019, 7.4% of the employment outcomes for VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired were in self-employment. The six VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired with the highest percentage of self-employment closures in PY 2019 as presented in Table 6 were Nebraska (20.5%; n of 8), Vermont (17.2%; n of 5), Florida (14.0%; n of 115), Oregon (11.8%; n of 8), Washington (9.2%: n of 6), and Minnesota (9.0%; n of 7).

**TABLE 5**

*The 10 VR Agencies (Blind Only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-employment for PY 2018*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	PY 2018: % of Closures in Self-Employment	PY 2019 # of Closures in Self-Employment
Vermont	21.3%	20
Maine	15.4%	12
Florida	15.0%	261
South Dakota	12.2%	27
Oregon	10.0%	18
Arkansas	9.4%	46
Connecticut	8.6%	14

Missouri	8.5%	32
New Mexico	8.3%	3
Nebraska	8.2%	7
<b><i>National Summary</i></b>	<b>8.6%.</b>	<b>595</b>

**TABLE 6**

*The 10 VR Agencies (Blind Only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-Employment: PY 2019*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	PY 2019: % of Closures in Self-Employment	PY 2019: # of Closures in Self-Employment
Nebraska	20.5%	8
Vermont	17.2%	5
Florida	14.0%	115
Oregon	11.8%	8
Washington	9.2%	6
Minnesota	9.0%	7
Massachusetts	6.3%	8
North Carolina	5.8%	21
Connecticut	5.2%	4
South Dakota	4.9%	5
<b><i>National Summary</i></b>	<b>7.4%.</b>	<b>229</b>

**Average Weekly Earnings for Recipients Exiting the Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies with the Highest Percentages of Participation in Self-Employment:** Table 7 complements the information on the 10 state VR agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired with the highest participation outcomes in self-employment in PY 2018.



Also presented in this table are the average earnings per week at closure in self-employment for the 10 VR Agencies identified in Table 5. With the exception of Missouri, Connecticut and South Dakota, the average weekly earnings at closure for participants exiting in CIE were higher than those exiting in self-employment. Table 8 complements Table 6, which presents information on the 10 state VR agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired with the highest participation outcomes in self-employment for PY 2019. The VR participants closed in self-employment in the states of Florida, Oregon, Minnesota, North Carolina and South Dakota had higher average weekly earnings compared to all VR participants closed in employment in those states.

**TABLE 7**

*PY2018 Comparison of Average Earnings per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment to All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE: VR Agencies (Blind/Visually Impaired only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-Employment*

State VR Agency: Blind/Visually Impaired only	Average Earnings per Week at Closure in Self- Employment	Average Earnings per Week for All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE
Vermont	\$434.87	\$487.07
Maine	\$353.39	\$338.58
Florida	\$396.50	\$439.20
South Dakota	\$1,653.41	\$573.68
Oregon	\$375.42	\$460.40
Arkansas	\$413.91	\$509.54
Connecticut	\$940.53	\$620.73
Missouri	\$702.66	\$575.36

New Mexico	\$175.53	\$516.37
Nebraska	\$381.12	\$474.90

**TABLE 8**

*PY2019 Comparison of Average Earnings per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment to All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE: VR Agencies (Blind/Visually Impaired only) with Highest % of Closures in Self-Employment*

State VR Agency: Blind/Visually Impaired only	Average Earnings per Week at Closure in Self- Employment	Average Earnings per Week for All VR Recipients Exiting in CIE
Nebraska	\$318.78	\$570.21
Vermont	\$215.69	\$596.90
Florida	\$542.97	\$512.38
Oregon	\$914.45	\$582.80
Washington	\$448.99	\$843.19
Minnesota	\$936.05	\$579.15
Massachusetts	\$591.57	\$734.65
North Carolina	\$477.63	\$467.02
Connecticut	\$458.00	\$619.49
South Dakota	\$513.74	\$447.84

**General/Combined VR Agencies with Highest Weekly Earnings in Self-Employment:** The national average weekly wage for VR participants closed in self-employment in PY 2018 was \$500.76. Table 9 presents the 10 General/Combined Agencies with the highest weekly wages for VR participants with self-employment outcomes closed in PY 2018. The average weekly wage at closure for all VR outcomes was lower than the wages earned in

self-employment for all ten of states. Table 5 also presents the percent and number of participants closed in self-employment and the average wage at closure for all VR employment outcomes. The five General/Combined VR Agencies with the highest weekly wages at closure and the average self-employment weekly wage in PY 2018 were: Connecticut (\$1,115.09), California (\$848.15), Florida (\$772.92), Ohio (\$725.19) and Nebraska (\$722.80). The percentages of self-employment outcomes for each of the top five wage-earning states in PY 2018 were below the national percentage of 1.54% for self-employment outcomes among overall VR employment outcomes.

**TABLE 9**

*The 10 VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest Average Earnings for PY 2018 Closures in Self-Employment*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	Average weekly wage self-employment	Average weekly wage all CIE closures	% Closed in self-employment	# Closed in self-employment
Connecticut	\$1,115.09	\$620.61	0.8%	41
California	\$848.15	\$435.64	1.1%	53
Florida	\$772.92	\$342.57	1.4%	68
Ohio	\$725.19	\$306.87	1.4%	70
Nebraska	\$722.80	\$418.81	0.4%	22
Idaho	\$653.63	\$398.77	1.5%	77
Vermont	\$648.47	\$392.20	1.0%	51
Michigan	\$637.39	\$472.42	4.7%	237
Arkansas	\$555.39	\$442.87	1.8%	89

Mississippi	\$532.04	\$499.04	10.2%	533
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Table 10 presents the 10 General/Combined Agencies with the highest weekly wages for VR participants with self-employment outcomes closed in PY 2019. It also presents for each of the 10 states the percent and number of participants closed in self-employment. The national average weekly wage for VR participants closed in self-employment in PY 2019 was \$528.81. The five General/Combined VR Agencies with the highest weekly wages at closure and the average self-employment weekly wage in PY 2019 were: Connecticut (\$907.32), Arkansas (\$845.96), Vermont (\$824.70), Alabama (\$821.40) and North Dakota (\$751.73). The average weekly wage at closure for all VR outcomes was lower than the wages earned in self-employment for all ten of states.

**TABLE 10**

*10 VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest Average Earnings for PY 2019 Closures in Self-Employment*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	Average weekly wage self-employment	Average weekly wage all CIE closures	% Closed in Self-Employment	# Closed in Self-Employment
Connecticut	\$907.32	\$775.52	1.4%	32
Arkansas	\$845.96	\$478.95	0.8%	56
Vermont	\$824.70	\$455.23	0.9%	21
Alabama	\$821.40	\$401.00	1.0%	23
North Dakota	\$751.73	\$431.27	0.4%	9
Maine	\$747.28	\$428.69	1.7%	37
Virginia	\$694.87	\$322.98	0.9%	21

Delaware	\$680.14	\$369.70	0.3%	6
California	\$679.21	\$500.69	0.9%	20
Maryland	\$658.88	\$352.72	0.2%	5

**VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired with Highest Weekly Earnings in Self-Employment Close in 2018:** Table 11 presents the 10 Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies with the 1) highest weekly wages for VR participants with self-employment outcomes, and 2) the percent and number of participants closed in self-employment, 3) the average wage at closure for all VR employment outcomes. The five agencies with the highest weekly wages at closure and the average self-employment weekly wage were: South Dakota (\$1,652.35), Connecticut (\$940.42), Massachusetts (\$814.36), New Jersey (\$766.87) and Missouri (\$701.567). The states of New York, Washington, Virginia and Vermont had average earnings at closure lower in self-employment than for those exiting in CIE. The percentages of self-employment outcomes for seven of the ten highest wage-earning states in PY 2018 were below the national percentage of 8.6%. South Dakota, with 46% of its employment outcomes in self-employment and an average earnings per week of \$1652.35, had self-employment wage and participation outcomes higher than any of the other 21 Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies in PY 2018.

**TABLE 11**

*10 VR Agencies (Blind Agency Only) with Highest Earnings for Closures in Self-Employment: PY 2018*

State VR Agency: Blind Agency Only	Earnings at Closure per Week in Self Employment	Earnings at Closure per Week for All Closures in CIE	% Closed in Self- Employment	# Closed in Self- Employment
South Dakota	\$1,652.35	\$573.68	46.0%	102
Connecticut	\$940.42	\$620.73	8.6%	14
Massachusetts	\$814.36	\$685.82	2.9%	8
New Jersey	\$766.87	\$495.46	5.4%	21
Missouri	\$701.57	\$575.36	8.5%	32
New York	\$609.11	\$714.60	3.2%	22
Washington	\$571.04	\$721.99	6.0%	16
South Carolina	\$547.99	\$485.42	6.6%	9
Virginia	\$457.50	\$549.43	7.3%	20
Vermont	\$434.90	\$487.07	21.2%	20

Table 12 presents the 10 Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies with the highest average weekly wages for VR participants with self-employment outcomes closed in PY 2019. Also presented are the percent and number of participants closed in self-employment and the average wage at closure for all VR employment outcomes. The five VR Agencies for the Blind/Visually Impaired with the highest weekly wages at closure and the average self-employment weekly wage in PY 2019 were Washington (\$1,607.47), Missouri (\$1,084.51), Minnesota (\$936.70), Virginia (\$800.96) and Michigan (\$789.43). The states of

Massachusetts and Connecticut had lower average earnings at closure in self-employment than for all closures in CIE. The percentages of self-employment outcomes for five of the ten highest wage-earning states in PY 2019 were below the national percentage of 8.6% for self-employment outcomes among overall VR employment outcomes.

**TABLE 12**

*The 10 VR Agencies (Blind Agency Only) in PY 2019 with Highest Earnings for Closures in Self-Employment*

State VR Agency: Blind Agency Only	Earnings at Closure per Week in Self-Employment	Earnings at Closure per Week for All Closures	% Closed in Self-Employment	# Closed in Self-Employment
Washington	\$1,607.47	\$843.19	9.2%	6
Missouri	\$1,084.51	\$506.45	4.2%	8
Minnesota	\$936.70	\$579.15	8.9%	7
Virginia	\$800.96	\$622.70	2.9%	3
Michigan	\$789.43	\$514.40	4.2%	3
New Jersey	\$771.65	\$583.85	4.0%	7
Oregon	\$669.72	\$582.80	11.8%	8
Massachusetts	\$591.54	\$737.04	6.3%	8
Florida	\$542.48	\$512.49	14.0%	115
Connecticut	\$487.66	\$619.49	5.2%	4

**Hourly Earnings and Hours Worked per Week in Self-Employment for States with the Highest Weekly Earnings in Self Employment:** Tables 13 and 14 provide information on average earnings per hour and hours worked per week with the # closed in self-employment for General/Combined VR agencies only. In PY 2018 (Table 13), average hourly wages for the 10 states ranged from \$32.78 for California to \$15.18 for Mississippi. Hours worked per week ranged from a high of 37.5 in Nebraska to 25.8 in Vermont. In PY 2019 (Table 14), hourly wages for those 10 states ranged from \$31.41 for Arkansas to \$18.79 for North Dakota. Hours worked per week ranged from a high of 40 for North Dakota to 25.7 for Virginia.

**TABLE 13**

*PY 2018 Comparison of Earnings per Hour / per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment-VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest Weekly Earnings*

States General/Combined Only	# Closed in Self-Employment	Average Earnings per Hour at Closure in Self-Employment	Average Hours Worked per Week at Closure in Self Employment
Connecticut	41	\$31.14	35.8
California	53	\$32.78	25.9
Florida	68	\$27.39	28.2
Ohio	70	\$25.21	28.8
Nebraska	22	\$19.27	37.5
Idaho	77	\$19.77	33.1



Vermont	51	\$25.11	25.8
Michigan	237	\$19.57	32.6
Arkansas	89	\$17.90	31.0
Mississippi	533	\$15.18	35.1

**TABLE 14**

*PY 2019 Earnings per Hour and Hours Worked per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment-VR Agencies (General/Combined Only) with Highest Weekly Earnings*

State VR Agency: General/Combined Only	# Closed in Self- Employment	Earnings at Closure per Hour in Self- Employment	Hours Worked per Week at Closure in Self Employment
Connecticut	32	\$25.40	35.7
Arkansas	56	\$31.41	26.9
Vermont	21	\$28.07	29.4
Alabama	23	\$23.41	35.1
North Dakota	9	\$18.79	40
Maine	37	\$26.18	28.5
Virginia	21	\$27.07	25.7
Delaware	6	\$23.19	29.3
California	20	\$30.94	22
Maryland	5	\$20.59	37

Tables 15 and 16 present information on average earnings per hour and hours worked per week along with the # closed in self-employment for the Blind/Visually Impaired

Agencies only. This information is presented for the 10 states with the highest hourly weekly earning. In PY 2018 (Table 15), average hourly wages for those 10 states ranged from \$54.21 in South Dakota to \$20.08 in Washington. Hours worked per week ranged from a high of 30.6 hours in Massachusetts to 21.0 hours in Missouri. In PY 2019 (Table 16), average hourly wages for those 10 states ranged from \$58.45 in Washington to \$17.16 in Virginia. Hours worked per week ranged from a high of 46.7 in Virginia to 18.9 in Oregon.

**TABLE 15**

*PY 2018 Comparison of Earnings per Hour and Hours Worked per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment (Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies with Highest Weekly Earnings in Self-Employment)*

State VR Agency: Blind Agency Only	# Closed in Self- Employment	Earnings at Closure per Hour in Self-Employment	Hours Worked per Week at Closure in Self-Employment
South Dakota	102	\$54.21	30.5
Connecticut	14	\$37.94	24.8
Massachusetts	8	\$26.59	30.6
New Jersey	21	\$25.12	30.5
Missouri	32	\$33.46	21.0
New York	22	\$28.82	21.1
Washington	16	\$20.08	28.4
South Carolina	9	\$18.61	29.4

Virginia	20	\$17.43	26.3
Vermont	20	\$20.04	21.7


**TABLE 16**

*PY 2019 Earnings per Hour and Hours Worked per Week for Cases Closed in Self-Employment (Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies with Highest Weekly Earning in Self-Employment)*

Blind/Visually Impaired Agencies	# Closed in Self-Employment	Earnings at Closure per Hour in Self-Employment	Hours Worked per Week at Closure in Self Employment
Washington	6	\$58.45	27.5
Missouri	8	\$40.54	26.8
Minnesota	7	\$45.22	20.7
Virginia	3	\$17.16	46.7
Michigan	3	\$35.88	22.0
New Jersey	7	\$37.77	20.4
Oregon	8	\$36.54	18.9
Massachusetts	8	\$21.91	27.0
Florida	115	\$20.11	27.0
Connecticut	4	\$18.58	26.3

## SUMMARY

This information brief provides a snapshot of VR recipients who exited services in PY 2018 and PY 2019 for the states reporting the highest outcomes in self-employment. The brief is intended to provide a baseline that can be used in subsequent years to compare



progress in self-employment as well as to design future research activities. The brief does not provide insight into why these states have higher outcomes when compared to the national outcomes for all VR agencies or other state VR agencies. Future research needs to be conducted to compare the states' policies and procedures as well as other variables that may be impacting the outcomes achieved by individuals exiting services in self-employment.

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