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# **DIVERSITY, OPPORTUNITY, AND INCLUSION (DOI) PLAN**

## **JUNE 2025**

**397 Azalea Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23227**

# **Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is to provide services and resources which empower individuals who are blind, vision impaired or deafblind to achieve their desired levels of employment, education, and personal independence.

## **Vision Statement**

DBVI envisions a world in which individuals who are blind, vision impaired or deafblind can access all that society has to offer and can, in turn, contribute to the greater community. We believe this is achievable.

## **Agency Values**

**Recognize the Abilities of Individuals Who are Blind** – *We value the contributions of individuals who are blind, vision impaired or deafblind.*

**Equal Access** – *We value equal access to all life activities including information, education, training and employment.*

**Exemplary Work Habits** – *We value integrity, honesty, teamwork and dedication.*

**Employees** – *We value our employees for their dedication and expertise.*

**Professional Boundaries** – *We value healthy appropriate relationships with the people we serve.*

## **Introduction**

The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) submitted the agency One Virginia Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan on August 16, 2021.

The agency implemented the following plan:

1. Regarding Language Access and Equity – enhance the plan to include language access as part of the priorities.
2. Regarding Goal Development - ensure that goals respond to the root causes of systemic barriers in the mission of the Commonwealth and within the culture of DBVI's workforce.
3. Regarding Indicators of Success - embed measurable indicators of success tactic or objective completion into the agency plan.
4. Regarding a Timeline - establish deadlines for indicators of success or objective need that would encompass a four-to-five-year period; and,
5. Regarding Goal and Objective Compatibility - distinctly define objectives or strategies and that the plan be organized to consider these elements.

DBVI was asked to adapt the narrative plan into the metric dashboard included in the One Virginia Tool Kit as an addendum to the agency DEI plan and to resubmit the narrative with the matrix as one new document by December 21, 2021. Due to unforeseen circumstances including the residuals of the COVID 19 pandemic, changes in state level administration, and changes in agency leadership, the DBVI DEI Strategic Plan was not edited and resubmitted as advised. DBVI's Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion Annual Report 2023 includes strategic goals and DBVI DEAI strategies from August 16, 2021, DBVI plan using the 2023 required annual report template format to report on progress made and activities relevant to the spirit of the new 2024 Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion Plan for the State Workforce under Governor Youngkin. The 2025 report includes updates to the 2024 plan.

## Report on Progress

### Goal 1: DBVI Access and Success

***Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.***

#### *Objective 1:*

*DBVI will continue to improve its hiring processes and increase access to potential applicants from diverse populations.*

- a. Increase the number of agency staff members who participate in management and professional development trainings provided by DBVI, the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Department of Human Resource Management by 10%.

**Status:** DBVI has exceeded its target. The agency set a goal to increase the number of staff participating in management and professional development training by 10%. As of mid-March 2025, DBVI achieved a 28% increase in the number of unique staff members participating in these trainings.

- b. Increase the number of recipients who are receiving DBVI's GOV delivery notices regarding job postings by 10%, including colleges and universities, Optometric Professional Organizations, consumer advocacy groups, job boards, disability services organizations, the Office of Refugee Settlement, and in areas where there is potentially more reach into diverse communities.
- c. Increase by 10%, the number of recipients receiving employment notifications through Gov Delivery who also receive services from DBVI or DARS.

**Status:** For Objectives 1b and 1c, DBVI exceeded its goal of increasing the recipients by 10%. The total new numbers, meaning all new signups, receiving job announcements through GovDelivery increased by 23.07% from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

## *Objective 2*

*DBVI will continue to retain and promote a diverse workforce.*

- a. Ensure that all agency employees receive a copy of the DBVI Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion (DOI) Plan by June 30, annually.

**Status:** DBVI's DOI Plan has been shared with the Senior Management Team for distribution to agency employees. This process is currently ongoing.

- b. Annually, review the DOI Plan in the Senior Management Team Meeting.

**Status:** The DBVI Senior Management Team collectively reviewed the DOI Plan and is actively engaged in its implementation. Leadership is working with their respective divisions to align activities with the goal of retaining and promoting a diverse workforce.

- c. Conduct an orientation for new employees to learn about the agency mission, vision, and values including diversity, opportunity, and inclusion at least twice per year.

**Status:** From July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, DBVI conducted quarterly orientation sessions for new employees, providing information on the agency's mission, vision, and values, including its commitment to diversity, opportunity, and inclusion.

- d. Conduct an immersive introduction to services at the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VDBVI) for agency employees four times per year.

**Status:** Between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, the VDBVI offered four immersive introductions to services for DBVI employees. One session was canceled and subsequently merged with the program scheduled for September 2025. A total of ten employees participated in the training.

- e. Conduct annual DOI survey for employees.

**Status:** DBVI conducted a survey of its employees on DOI in April 2024. Agency leadership is evaluating the most effective approach for conducting the next survey and will determine the appropriate timing for administering it agencywide.

- f. Annually review languages being used on agency websites.

**Status:** This is an ongoing process. The Director of Communications actively reviews the language used on DBVI's website to ensure alignment with the agency's goal of retaining and promoting a diverse workforce. The review focuses on the use of plain language and compliance with established assessment standards.

## **Goal 2: DBVI Welcoming and Respectful Culture**

**Create and sustain a culture that welcomes and embraces diverse opinions, independent thinking, and respectful interactions to deliver optimal results for the organization and its customers.**

### *Objective 1*

*DBVI will persist in creating and maintaining a climate that is supportive and respectful and that values and integrates differing perspectives and experiences.*

- a. 100 % of agency employees will complete the DHRM Civility in the Workplace training module by December 31 annually.

**Status:** DBVI leadership requires all employees to complete the DHRM Civility in the Workplace training module annually by December 31. Divisions and offices make concerted efforts to complete the training in groups and individually. The response to the training has been positive, with strong efforts demonstrated across the agency to achieve 100% completion.

- b. The recognizing, valuing, and honoring diversity and independent thinking will be a topic of discussion in DBVI's divisions staff meetings annually.

**Status:** This process is currently ongoing. DBVI recently conducted a Climate and Belong Survey to conduct a staff survey to better understand how DBVI staff and employees feel about working for DBVI. The survey results are currently under review and are being discussed for potential integration into DBVI's mission and values.

- c. Each division will conduct at least two internal outreach or team building activities with agency staff annually.

**Status:** DBVI leadership will reevaluate this goal and dedicate attention to it during the 2025–2026 planning period.

### *Objective 2*

*DBVI will continue to provide an environment where conflicts, concerns, and complaints are aired and addressed expeditiously.*

At least quarterly, DBVI will encourage employees to submit suggestions or concerns via the employee suggestion box.

**Status:** Each edition of the DBVI Staff Newsletter includes an invitation for employees to share ideas and feedback through the DBVI Electronic Suggestion Box. Staff members are encouraged to submit input at any time using the link provided.

## **Goal 3. DBVI State Agency DOI Infrastructure & Training**

### *Objective 1*

*DBVI will continue to amplify opportunities to advance the goals outlined in this framework.*

Incorporate the DOI plan into the agency's strategic planning and reporting efforts.

**Status:** DBVI Leadership regularly incorporates DOI discussions in all discussions related to short and long-term strategic planning.

DBVI regularly provides updates and feedback to its employees on its efforts to advance and incorporate DOI in its newsletters. Employees are encouraged to provide feedback and to submit ideas to improve DOI efforts.

In the Quarterly Monthly Report to Executive Leadership, DBVI reported agency accomplishments to recruiting and hiring from diverse populations and enhance communication strategies to effectively reach those communities.

As noted in its annual Employment Plan, DBVI reported an increase in the number of individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind recruited or hired by the agency.

### *Objective 2*

*DBVI will continue to create structures and processes of accountability to increase organizational effectiveness with the Department of Human Resource Management.*

Assess the DOI performance plan semiannually and make corrective actions to achieve the objectives.

**Status:** Ongoing. DBVI leadership has reviewed and discussed the Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion (DOI) Plan as part of an ongoing process. Updates, revisions, and corrective actions will be incorporated into the 2025–2026 DOI Plan.

### *Objective 3*

*DBVI will continue to provide training and educational workshops available to all employees.*

Conduct at least eight micro learning or snapshot opportunities annually in areas including but not limited to:

- a. Use of reasonable accommodations for individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind;
- b. Development of accessible materials;
- c. Disability etiquette;
- d. How to serve as a Human Guide for individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind; and,
- e. Conflict Resolution.

**Status:** Ongoing. Microlearning and snapshot training opportunities are integrated into the daily operations at DBVI, allowing staff to engage in workshops, seminars, and other training activities on an ongoing basis.

However, a formal tracking mechanism to monitor employee participation in these opportunities has not yet been established.



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Dr. Rick Mitchell  
Commissioner, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired  
Date: June 30, 2025