

2017 Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results

Prepared in collaboration with
the State Rehabilitation Council

Executive Summary

The mission of the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is to work in partnership with consumers and other stakeholders to provide services and advocacy resulting in employment, independent living, and equality for individuals with disabilities.

The DOR Vocational Rehabilitation program provides direct services to eligible individuals with significant disabilities to prepare for, find, and retain a job. In furtherance of its mission, DOR recognizes the value of consumer input to evaluate services, processes, and improve results. In accordance with 34 Code of Federal Regulation §361.17 (h)(4), the DOR in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) conducts an annual Consumer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) in an effort to ensure that DOR is meeting its vocational rehabilitation program responsibilities to its consumers by providing high quality, effective services that ultimately result in employment outcomes. The survey results inform the Department and the SRC and are utilized to increase effectiveness and efficiency in the service delivery process, both internally and externally. This report is shared with DOR staff, consumers, and the public. Publication is available on the DOR intranet and internet domains.

The SRC is a federally mandated policy advisory body composed of individuals appointed by the Governor. The DOR and SRC work jointly to determine the goals and priorities for the State's effort on behalf of its vocational rehabilitation consumers.

The consumer satisfaction survey sample size this year was increased from 12,800 to **20,400** in order to properly reflect 20% of the department's consumer population. Of the 20,400 surveys sent on April 2017, **18,676** were deliverable surveys with 1,724 undeliverable surveys. DOR received **4,344** (23.3%) responses. Of those respondents, 1,052 indicated they were screen reader users. The 23.3% response rate reflects an increase from the 2016 response rate of 19.0% which had a sample size of 12,800. The details are included in the table below:

Survey Method	2017 CSS	2016 CSS	2015 CSS
Sample Size	20,400	12,800	12,800
Total Surveys Sent	18,676 ¹	11,844 ²	12,004 ¹

¹ Excludes invalid email addresses but may contain undeliverable surface mails.

² Excludes surface mails returned and invalid email address returns.

Survey Method	2017 CSS	2016 CSS	2015 CSS
Electronic	17,676	11,126	11,204
Surface Mail	1,000	718	800
Responses Received	4,344	2,253	2,360
Response Rate	23.3%	19.0%	19.7%

The overall satisfaction ratings for consumers who are in plan and those who became employed displayed an increase in 19 of the 20 questions from prior year. Aside from the same satisfaction rating of 89% as prior year, where consumers understood the DOR services is to help them become employed, the results of this year's survey showed no decreases in satisfaction rating.

Highlights of the survey results are included below. For a comprehensive comparison of 2017 to 2016 survey responses, please refer to the Summary of Results beginning on page 7.

Agency Satisfaction

- **89%** of respondents reported they understand the reason for DOR services is to help them become employed. No change from prior year.
- **85%** of respondents, who were employed, reported that the services provided by DOR were instrumental in their becoming employed. This reflects a 4% increase from prior year.
- **85%** of respondents reported they were treated with courtesy and respect from the counselor and DOR team. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.
- **78%** responded that they would recommend DOR services to other persons with disabilities who want to become employed. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **75%** of respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the services provided directly by DOR. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.
- **66%** responded that their quality of life has improved because of DOR services. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.

Satisfaction with Services from External Service Providers

- **72%** responded they were satisfied with the quality of service from their service providers. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.
- **69%** responded they were satisfied with the timeliness of services from their service providers. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.

Provision of Benefits Counseling (Work Incentive Planning)

- **64%** responded that they received benefits counseling from DOR and/or their service provider(s). This reflects a 4% increase from prior year.

Satisfaction with Counseling Services Provided

- **75%** were satisfied with the prompt response to questions and requests by the counselor and/or DOR team. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.
- **74%** responded that their counselor and/or DOR team clearly explained all services available to them. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **71%** were satisfied with the level of vocational guidance and quality of counseling received. This reflects a 2% increase from prior year.

For Consumers Who Were Employed

- **85%** reported that the services provided by DOR were instrumental in their becoming employed. This reflects a 4% increase from prior year.
- **82%** reported they were satisfied with their job. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **74%** were satisfied that their job was consistent with their employment plan. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **17%** reported they were dissatisfied with health benefits received from their job. No change from prior year.

For Consumers Who Were Not Employed

(Consumers were asked to check all reasons that prevented their ability to become employed.) Of the total responses:

- **22%** reported they need additional help to find a job. No change from prior year.
- **17%** reported that DOR did not help them find a job. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **17%** reported they are not ready to start working. This reflects a 2% increase from prior year.
- **12%** reported there was no job available that was consistent with the DOR employment plan. No change from prior year.
- **4%** reported they did not want to give up SSI/SSDI benefits. No change from prior year.

Methodology

For this year's survey, DOR have increased the sample size to 20,400 instead of last year's 12,800. As a recommendation from the SRC, this now represents 20% of the DOR consumer population. The **20,400** sample names were generated at random from the consumer database: **19,400** consumers with email addresses, and **1,000** with mailing addresses. The sample selected includes consumers whose case was in open status as of drawn date³, or who had a closure outcome as of January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016.

Surveys are conducted in two formats: email recipients take the survey electronically through the Survey Monkey website and surface mail recipients take the survey by mail which includes a postage paid return envelope. This year email recipients received a second reminder notice to complete the survey instead of one reminder while surface mail recipients continued to receive one reminder.

In addition to the English version, the survey was translated into seven languages consistent with the prevalent consumer population. This year the Cambodian language was replaced by Farsi.

- Armenian
- Farsi
- Chinese
- Korean
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese

The survey contains a series of questions designed to measure program satisfaction and provide a systematic method of obtaining the point of view of DOR consumers. Through the survey, consumers are able to provide their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services, staff, service providers, and other aspects of the vocational rehabilitation process anonymously. In addition, the survey assists in identifying areas where program and process improvements can be made to enhance the services provided by DOR and its service providers and increase employment outcomes for Californians with significant disabilities.

³ Drawn date of January 27, 2017

Demographics - Disability

Respondents were asked to self-identify their disability, and some consumers reported multiple disabilities. In comparing 2017 with the 2016 and 2015 respondents, the percentages by disability have remained fairly consistent between all three years. The largest percent change for 2017 was a 2% increase in the Intellectual/Developmental disability category. There was a 1% decrease in the Blind/Visually Impaired, Cognitive Impairment, and Physical Disability category.

Disability Impairment	2017	2016	2015
Blind/Visually Impaired	8%	9%	8%
Cognitive Impairment	5%	6%	6%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	10%	10%	9%
Intellectual/Developmental Disability	7%	5%	5%
Learning Disability	20%	20%	20%
Physical Disability	22%	23%	23%
Psychiatric Disability	18%	18%	18%
Traumatic Brain Injury	3%	3%	4%
Not Reported	7%	7%	7%

For 2017, a selected number of satisfaction ratings by disability (some consumers reported multiple disabilities) are included below.

- **90%** or more of the respondents within the cognitive impairment, intellectual/developmental disability, learning disability, psychiatric disability, and physical disability categories responded with the highest satisfaction rating on the statement that they understand the reason for DOR services was to help them become employed.
- **87%** of respondents with a learning disability reported the highest satisfaction rating on the statement that they were treated with courtesy and respect from the counselor and DOR team.
- **78%** of respondents with a learning disability expressed overall satisfaction with the services provided directly by DOR.
- **53%** of respondents with traumatic brain injury reported the lowest satisfaction rating of any category on the statement “My counselor helped me understand my disability and how it may affect my work”.

Summary of Results

The DOR provides vocational rehabilitation services through its Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Division and Specialized Services Division which are administratively organized into fourteen districts. Thirteen districts are constructed along geographic lines; with a fourteenth district to include consumers in any of the geographical districts who are blind and/or visually impaired. The statewide responses are summarized below.

Statement	2017 Satisfied	2016 Satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2016 Dis-satisfied	2017 No Opinion	2016 No Opinion
Overall, I am satisfied with the services provided directly by the DOR.	75%	72%	18%	19%	7%	9%
I found the level of vocational guidance and quality of counseling received from my DOR counselor adequate for my needs.	71%	69%	19%	20%	10%	12%
I was treated with courtesy and respect by my counselor and DOR team.	85%	82%	8%	10%	7%	8%
I was satisfied with the quality of services from my service provider(s). (examples: school, job coach, community rehabilitation program, etc.)	72%	69%	16%	18%	12%	13%
I was satisfied with the timeliness of services provided by my service provider(s). (examples: school, job coach, community rehabilitation program, etc.)	69%	66%	19%	21%	12%	12%
My counselor and/or DOR team responded promptly to my questions and requests.	75%	72%	17%	18%	8%	10%
My counselor helped me understand my disability	60%	58%	18%	20%	22%	22%

Statement	2017 Satisfied	2016 Satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2016 Dis-satisfied	2017 No Opinion	2016 No Opinion
and how it may affect my work.						
I was informed of my right to disagree with and appeal DOR decisions.	73%	70%	11%	12%	16%	18%
I understand the reason for DOR services was to help me become employed.	89%	89%	4%	4%	7%	7%
I was satisfied with my level of participation and involvement in the decision making process that led to my vocational goal and the services provided.	74%	71%	13%	14%	13%	15%
My counselor and/or DOR team clearly explained all services available to me.	74%	73%	16%	16%	10%	11%
My counselor and/or DOR team assisted me in connecting with other agencies and service provider(s) to meet my specific needs.	65%	62%	18%	20%	17%	18%
I received benefits counseling from DOR and/or my service provider(s).	64%	60%	18%	20%	18%	20%
I would recommend DOR services to other persons with disabilities who want to become employed.	78%	77%	11%	12%	11%	11%
My quality of life has improved because of DOR services.	66%	63%	17%	18%	17%	19%

If Employed	2017 Satisfied	2016 Satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2016 Dis-satisfied	2017 No Opinion	2016 No Opinion
I am satisfied with my job.	82%	81%	5%	8%	12%	11%
I am satisfied with the health benefits available from my job.	51%	48%	17%	17%	32%	35%
I am satisfied with other employment benefits available through my job (examples: vacation, sick leave, retirement, long term disability, etc.)	61%	58%	14%	14%	25%	28%
My job is consistent with my employment plan.	74%	73%	8%	10%	18%	17%
The services provided by DOR were instrumental in my becoming employed.	85%	81%	3%	4%	12%	15%

If Not Employed <i>Check all reasons that prevented your ability to become employed</i>	2017 # of Responses (Count)	2016 # of Responses (Count)	2017 # of Responses (Percent)	2016 # of Responses (Percent)
Total Number of Responses	4,468	2,468	100%	100%
I did not want to give up my SSI/SSDI benefits.	174	104	4%	4%
There was no job available to me that is consistent with my DOR employment plan.	529	293	12%	12%
DOR did not assist me in finding a job.	748	390	17%	16%
My disability prevented me from working.	456	254	10%	10%
Family issues such as daycare, caring for relative.	176	106	4%	4%
Lack of or no transportation.	261	167	6%	7%
I am not ready to start working.	768	371	17%	15%
Need additional help to find a job.	962	531	22%	22%
No jobs are available that I want.	394	252	9%	10%

Consumer Comments

A total of **1,803** consumers provided open-ended statements or comments. The majority of consumers responded that they were satisfied with DOR services which assisted them to reach their employment and educational goals. More positive remarks were received from consumers who are in the transition of completing their plan and becoming employed, or have already found employment. Some of the positive comments received are included below:

- Consumers stated the DOR team was helpful in meeting their educational goals to acquire employment and would or have recommended DOR services to others.
- Consumers also stated that their counselor or DOR team is welcoming, supportive, and resourceful in meeting their needs.
- Some personal statements:
 - “All services with DOR are helpful and satisfactory. They help me work towards my goal of being employable again.”
 - “I have had an amazing experience with DOR. I feel very supported and thanks to DOR, I will be able to reach my goals of becoming employed soon.”
 - “The help of DOR was overall the greatest help I ever received and would recommend people. Thank you for the great service!”
 - “My DOR team was of tremendous help in my educational needs that will help me secure employment in the very near future; I feel they have gone beyond their duties for my benefit regardless of my disabilities. I can't thank them enough!”
 - “DOR has been a great asset for me and continues to be, I'm grateful for the caseworker's that have worked with me and helped guide my advancement in search of employment that will hopefully sustain my family.”
 - “The DOR was amazing. Although I am not currently employed though the efforts of the DOR, does not mean that their efforts were either non-existent or in vain. My quality of life has definitely increased due to the continual efforts of my counselors. The DOR is

the best state-funded program in existence to help the disabled. It truly helped me.”

Some consumers provided comments based on their experiences to inform DOR and the SRC where opportunities for change exist, and are included below:

- Some consumers feel the full capacity of DOR services was not disclosed to them at the start of the program and were not able to obtain the services in its entirety.
- Some consumers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of communication and miscommunication with their counselors along with untimely response.
- A number of consumers feel the DOR process needs to be restructured to improve the counselor to consumer ratio, as a result providing timely services and individualized counseling.
- A few consumers who are currently seeking employment expressed the need to have more training programs and employment placement agencies.
- Some consumers expressed an urgent need to be contacted as soon as possible, and provided contact information. These consumers were contacted immediately by appropriate DOR staff.

SRC Recommendations

The SRC recommended the following enhancements to the 2017 CSS and related activities. The SRC appreciates the DOR’s timely incorporation of these recommendations:

- The SRC recommended that DOR increase the survey’s sample size to 20 – 25 percent of the total number of DOR consumers served. For the 2017 CSS, the DOR distributed the survey to 20,400 consumers, representing 20% of total consumers served. The SRC commends the DOR on receiving a response rate of 23.3% in 2017, which is an increase from prior years.
- The SRC recommended that DOR notify the Community Rehabilitation Program (CRP) partners and the Client Assistance Program (CAP) of the survey in order to provide guidance and assist

consumers. DOR notified CRP partners on March 15, 2017 and CAP on March 29, 2017 by email.

- The SRC recommended that the DOR distribute a second email reminder to consumers encouraging them to complete the survey. The DOR distributed this email on April 20-21, 2017.
- The SRC recommended that DOR add an option at the end of a survey for a consumer to indicate if they would like a DOR representative, *other than their assigned counselor*, to follow up regarding the consumer's survey responses.

The SRC looks forward to continued collaboration with DOR in the forthcoming year on the CSS. Items that the SRC may consider exploring include (but are not limited to): more in-depth analysis of consumer responses that report "dissatisfied," "not employed" and "unsuccessful case closure"; setting new sample size and response rate goals; continued discussions with DOR regarding the survey's methodology; and specifically assessing the satisfaction of DOR's consumers who are youth and students with disabilities.

Approved by the SRC Executive Planning Committee on December 18, 2017