

2018 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 the 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 **20,400**, reflecting 20% of the department's consumer population. Of the 20,400 surveys sent in April 2018, **18,561** were deliverable surveys and 1,839 were undeliverable surveys. DOR received **4,351** (23.4%) responses. The 23.4% response rate reflects a 0.1% increase from the 2017 response rate of 23.3%, which had the same sample size of 20,400. The details are included in the table below:

Survey Method	2018 CSS	2017 CSS	2016 CSS
Sample Size	20,400	20,400	12,800
Total Surveys Sent	18,561 ¹	18,676 ²	11,844 ¹

¹ Excludes surface mails returned and invalid email address returns.

² Excludes invalid email addresses but may contain undeliverable surface mails.

Survey Method	2018 CSS	2017 CSS	2016 CSS
Electronic	17,650	17,676	11,126
Surface Mail	911	1,000	718
Responses Received	4,351	4,344	2,253
Response Rate	23.4%	23.3%	19.0%

Highlights of the survey results are included below. For a comprehensive comparison of 2018 to 2017 survey responses, please refer to the Summary of Results beginning on page 7.

Agency Satisfaction

- **90%** of respondents reported they understand that the reason for DOR services is to help them become employed. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **85%** of respondents reported they were treated with courtesy and respect from the counselor and DOR team. No change from prior year.
- **80%** responded that they would recommend DOR services to other persons with disabilities who want to become employed. This reflects a 2% increase from prior year.
- **76%** of respondents expressed overall satisfaction with the services provided directly by DOR. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **66%** responded that their quality of life has improved because of DOR services. No change from prior year.

Satisfaction with Services from External Service Providers

- **73%** responded they were satisfied with the quality of service from their service providers. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **69%** responded they were satisfied with the timeliness of services from their service providers. No change from prior year.

Provision of Benefits Counseling (Work Incentive Planning)

- **62%** responded that they received benefits counseling from DOR and/or their service provider(s). This reflects a 2% decrease 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. No change from prior year.

- **73%** responded that their counselor and/or DOR team clearly explained all services available to them. This reflects a 1% decrease from prior year.
- **71%** were satisfied with the level of vocational guidance and quality of counseling received. No change from prior year.

For Consumers Who Were Employed

- **84%** of respondents reported that the services provided by DOR were instrumental in their becoming employed. This reflects a 1% decrease from prior year.
- **83%** reported they were satisfied with their job. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **77%** were satisfied that their job was consistent with their employment plan. This reflects a 3% increase from prior year.
- **15%** reported they were dissatisfied with health benefits received from their job. This reflects a 2% decrease 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.
- **19%** reported they are not ready to start working. This reflects a 2% increase from prior year.
- **16%** reported that DOR did not help them find a job. This reflects a 1% decrease from prior year.
- **11%** reported their disability prevented them from working. This reflects a 1% increase from prior year.
- **10%** reported there were no jobs available consistent with their employment plan. This reflects a 2% decrease from prior year.
- **4%** reported they did not want to give up SSI/SSDI benefits. No change from prior year.

Methodology

The sample size of 20,400 remained the same as prior year's survey to comply with SRC's recommendation to represent 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

included consumers whose cases were in open status as of drawn date³, or who had a closure outcome as of January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017.

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. Email recipients received both a first and second reminder notice to complete the survey, while surface mail recipients received just one reminder.

In addition to the English version, the survey was translated into seven languages consistent with the prevalent consumer population. There were no changes in languages this year.

- 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 anonymously provide their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services, staff, service providers, and other aspects of the vocational rehabilitation process. At the end of the survey, consumers are able to provide open-ended feedback and contact information should they like to be contacted by DOR staff. 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.

Demographics - Disability

Respondents were asked to self-identify their disability, and some consumers reported multiple disabilities. In comparing 2018 to the 2017 and 2016 respondents, the percentages by disability have remained consistent between all three years. The only percent change is 1%

³ Drawn date of January 18, 2018

increase from Cognitive Impairment and 1% decrease of Deaf/Hard of Hearing.

Disability Impairment	2018	2017	2016
Blind/Visually Impaired	8%	8%	9%
Cognitive Impairment	6%	5%	6%
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	9%	10%	10%
Intellectual/Developmental Disability	7%	7%	5%
Learning Disability	20%	20%	20%
Physical Disability	22%	22%	23%
Psychiatric Disability	18%	18%	18%
Traumatic Brain Injury	3%	3%	3%
Not Reported	7%	7%	7%

For 2018, 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, psychiatric disability, physical disability, and other categories responded with the highest satisfaction rating on the statement that they understand that the reason for DOR services was to help them become employed.
- **85%** of respondents with learning disability and deaf/hard of hearing 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.
- **50%** of respondents with traumatic brain injury reported the lowest satisfaction rating of any category regarding 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; a fourteenth district includes consumers who are blind and/or visually impaired in any of the geographical districts. The statewide responses are summarized below.

Statement	2018 Satisfied	2017 Satisfied	2018 Dis-satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2018 No Opinion	2017 No Opinion
Overall, I am satisfied with the services provided directly by the DOR.	76%	75%	17%	18%	7%	7%
I found the level of vocational guidance and quality of counseling received from my DOR counselor adequate for my needs.	71%	71%	19%	19%	10%	10%
I was treated with courtesy and respect by my counselor and DOR team.	85%	85%	8%	8%	7%	7%
I was satisfied with the quality of services from my service provider(s). (examples: school, job coach, community rehabilitation program, etc.)	73%	72%	16%	16%	11%	12%
I was satisfied with the timeliness of services provided by my service provider(s). (examples: school, job coach, community rehabilitation program, etc.)	69%	69%	19%	19%	12%	12%
My counselor and/or DOR team responded promptly to my questions and requests.	75%	75%	17%	17%	8%	8%
My counselor helped me understand my disability and how it may affect my work.	60%	60%	18%	18%	22%	22%

Statement	2018 Satisfied	2017 Satisfied	2018 Dis-satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2018 No Opinion	2017 No Opinion
I was informed of my right to disagree with and appeal DOR decisions.	73%	73%	11%	11%	16%	16%
I understand the reason for DOR services was to help me become employed.	90%	89%	4%	4%	6%	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.	76%	74%	12%	13%	12%	13%
My counselor and/or DOR team clearly explained all services available to me.	73%	74%	16%	16%	11%	10%
My counselor and/or DOR team assisted me in connecting with other agencies and service provider(s) to meet my specific needs.	63%	65%	19%	18%	18%	17%
I received benefits counseling from DOR and/or my service provider(s).	62%	64%	18%	18%	20%	18%
I would recommend DOR services to other persons with disabilities who want to become employed.	80%	78%	11%	11%	9%	11%
My quality of life has improved because of DOR services.	66%	66%	17%	17%	17%	17%

If Employed	2018 Satisfied	2017 Satisfied	2018 Dis-satisfied	2017 Dis-satisfied	2018 No Opinion	2017 No Opinion
I am satisfied with my job.	83%	82%	7%	5%	10%	12%
I am satisfied with the health benefits available from my job.	55%	51%	15%	17%	30%	32%
I am satisfied with other employment benefits available through my job (examples: vacation, sick leave, retirement, long term disability, etc.)	65%	61%	12%	14%	23%	25%
My job is consistent with my employment plan.	77%	74%	7%	8%	16%	18%
The services provided by DOR were instrumental in my becoming employed.	84%	85%	4%	3%	12%	12%

If Not Employed <i>Check all reasons that prevented your ability to become employed</i>	2018 # of Responses (Count)	2017 # of Responses (Count)	2018 # of Responses (Percent)	2017 # of Responses (Percent)
Total Number of Responses	4,532	4,468	100%	100%
I did not want to give up my SSI/SSDI benefits.	194	174	4%	4%
There was no job available to me that is consistent with my DOR employment plan.	446	529	10%	12%
DOR did not assist me in finding a job.	738	748	16%	17%
My disability prevented me from working.	499	456	11%	10%
Family issues such as daycare, caring for relative.	172	176	4%	4%
Lack of or no transportation.	268	261	6%	6%
I am not ready to start working.	853	768	19%	17%
Need additional help to find a job.	991	962	22%	22%
No jobs are available that I want.	371	394	8%	9%

Consumer Comments

A total of **1,878** consumers provided open-ended statements or comments. These comments consist of consumers who were satisfied with DOR services that assisted in reaching employment and educational goals. A few consist of valuable comments to improve services. 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:
 - “Everything DOR has done for me so far has been of great help to me. . . my experience has been very pleasant. My DOR counselor has been awesome. I appreciate him and DOR for helping me become a better person and a better role model for my children.”
 - “Thank you for all the help, resources and services you have made available to me and others like myself.”
 - “The help of DOR was overall the greatest help I ever received and would recommend people. Thank you for the great service!”
 - “The department of rehab has helped me immensely through the many years I have been able to use their services. They've paid for classes that financial aid wouldn't cover, and then extended education when I was trying to get back into school after long periods of illness, just to get me started again...”
 - “I am satisfied with DOR because they helped provide me with information for the Vocational Institute to become a phlebotomist; thank you to the program and thank you to my counselor for always helping me. She call me to ask me how I was doing, so I keep looking on opportunity for a job.”

- “DOR has helped me through every step of going back to school. I am satisfied with my counselor's commitment to helping me get through school.”

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

- Consumers expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of communication, follow-ups, and miscommunication with their counselors along with untimely responses.
- Consumers felt it would've been beneficial if they were informed of all existing DOR services at the start of the program to be able to obtain the services in entirety based on their specific needs.
- Some consumers commented that DOR staff should be more understanding and knowledgeable of their disability needs.
- Some consumers advised that their employment should be consistent within the scope of their goal, while expressing the need to have more training programs and employment placement agencies.

Some consumers expressed an urgent need to be contacted directly and provided their contact information. These consumers were contacted immediately by the appropriate DOR staff.

SRC Recommendations

During the 2017 – 18 term, efforts took place to revisit the survey's objectives, design and data analysis methods. To kick start the discussions, DOR's Program Policy Implementation Unit presented the SRC with an expanded analysis of the 2017 CSS results and critical findings. In May 2018, the SRC and the DOR Strategic Initiatives Office held a brainstorming session to explore the following: What questions should a consumer satisfaction survey answer, and what data is needed to answer those questions? Using the generated ideas and feedback, researchers from the Strategic Initiatives Office joined the SRC in August 2018 and presented ideas on: question addition and modification, demographics, rating systems, other mechanisms (besides a survey) for collecting consumer satisfaction data, and more. As a result of the information sharing and discussions, the SRC adopted the following recommendation:

Recommendation 2018.3 – Consumer Satisfaction

The SRC recommends that the Comprehensive Statewide Assessment (2018–20) be used to gather information from consumers regarding effective methods to elicit feedback about their DOR experience. This information could be utilized by the SRC and the Department to develop the Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

DOR Response to SRC Recommendation 2018.3

We agree that having deeper insight into the most effective ways to collect feedback from consumers about their DOR experience would be beneficial. DOR is currently developing the 2018-2020 Comprehensive Statewide Assessment (CSA). Through this effort, DOR will reach out to consumers through interviews, focus groups, surveys, etc. about providing feedback on their DOR experience. This will help us update and modify the methodology for receiving consumer feedback so we can use the information to its maximum potential and make positive changes to better serve consumers. We look forward to collaborating with the SRC on the 2018-2020 CSA.

The SRC looks forward to continued collaboration with DOR during the 2018 – 19 term on the CSS.

Approved by the SRC Executive Planning Committee on December 19, 2018.