AGENCY NAME:	Commission for the Blind			
AGENCY CODE:	L240	SECTION:	39	



Fiscal Year 2024-25 Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS (FORM B1)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"): X Requesting General Fund Appropriations. X Requesting Federal/Other Authorization. Not requesting any changes.
Non-Recurring Requests (Form B2)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"): Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations. Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization. Not requesting any changes.
CAPITAL REQUESTS (FORM C)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"): Requesting funding for Capital Projects. Not requesting any changes.
Provisos (Form D)	For FY 2024-25, my agency is (mark "X"): Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos. Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references). Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY	Matthew Daugherty	803-898-8835	matthew.daugherty@sccb.sc.gov
CONTACT:			
SECONDARY	Carrie Morris	803-898-8807	Carrie.morris@sccb.sc.gov
CONTACT:			

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2024-25 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	Board or Commission Chair		
SIGN/DATE:	Darlie Araham	Sum L gad		
Type/Print Name:	Darline Graham	Susan John		

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Commission For The Blind
Agency Code:	L240
Section:	39

BUDGET	REQUESTS	<u> </u>	FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Older Blind Services Increase	292,572	0	0	0	292,572	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Match Request	552,732	0	0	0	552,732	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B1 - Recurring	Administrative Support	311,536	0	0	0	311,536	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B1 - Recurring	Federal Authorization Increase	0	977,604	0	0	977,604	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTALS	•		1,156,840	977,604	0	0	2,134,444	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Agency Name:	Commission For The Blind		
Agency Code:	L240	Section:	39

AGENCY PRIORITY

1

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Older Blind Services Increase

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: \$292,572

Federal: \$0

Other: \$0

Total: \$292,572

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:

Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience

Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines

Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program

Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas

Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative

Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program

IT Technology/Security related

Consulted DTO during development

Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:

X Education, Training, and Human Development

Healthy and Safe Families

Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security

Public Infrastructure and Economic Development

Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

1.2 Increase the number of consumers achieving and maintaining independence

The use of funds would be evaluated through meeting the projected outcome values on the agency strategic plan at the end of the year.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

Older Blind Services will receive the increase to aid in accomplishing the goals laid out in the strategic plan.

FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

Vision and eye problems increase as people age, including diabetic retinopathy, cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. As South Carolina's population ages, the number of individuals age 55 and older seeking services to remain independent in their homes and communities continues to increase each year, with more than 600 hundred (600) individuals receiving Older Blind Services in FY23.**

Vision loss in adults 55 and older reduces their quality of life, affecting their ability to read, watch television, walk or climb stairs, run errands, attend to personal affairs, and remain independent in their home and community. It may lead to social isolation, family stress, and a greater tendency to experience other health conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, or mobility issues. In addition to health and chronic conditions, nearly 40% of individuals 65 and older who are blind or have a visual impairment have an annual income less than \$20,000.*** Finally, vision loss also affects those who care for people with a visual impairment because it reduces their ability to care for themselves, other family members, and manage personal matters.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

An additional \$292,572 funds would allow the agency to assist more consumers with Older Blind Services, helping them to receive low-vision evaluations, training on how to manage personal care and daily tasks, adjustment to blindness, orientation and mobility training, and instruction in the use of adaptive computer software. Those funds would also make it possible to provide more assistive devices and low vision aids such as hand-held magnifiers, digital magnifiers, electronic reading aids, closed circuit television systems, and protective sun filters to consumers (depending on their specific needs).

Helping our seniors remain independent in their homes and communities not only improves their quality of life, it can also reduce their reliance on government benefits and costly out-of-pocket expenses for home health care or skilled nursing care.

- ** According to the Big Data Project, nearly 8% of South Carolinians age 65 and older have blindness or low vision.
- *** According to the Big Data Project conducted by VisionServe Alliance and Ohio State University College of Optometry.

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AGENCY PRIORITY

2

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Match Request

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: \$552,732

Federal: \$0

Other: \$0

Total: \$552,732

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:

Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience

Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines

Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program

Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas

Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative

Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program

Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program

IT Technology/Security related

Consulted DTO during development

Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:

X Education, Training, and Human Development

Healthy and Safe Families

Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security

Public Infrastructure and Economic Development

Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

1.1 Increase successful competitive integrated employment outcomes

The use of funds would be evaluated through meeting the projected outcome values on the agency strategic plan at the end of the year.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

Vocational Rehabilitation Services will receive the increase in funds to aid in accomplishing the goals laid out in the agency's strategic plan.

FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

To receive the full federal grant award for the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program, the state has to match the federal dollars at a rate of 21.3%. An increase of general funds in the amount of \$552,732 will allow the agency to continue to meet its federal obligation and would be utilized to fund portions of several administrative positions that directly support the provision of VR services. Ultimately, an increase of state matching funds will allow the agency to provide a greater number of VR services and opportunities to more SC citizens throughout the state.

VR services help eligible consumers who are blind or visually impaired to prepare for, find, maintain, or regain competitive integrated employment. This also includes providing pre-employment transition services and other supports for youth with disabilities age 13-21.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

VR services are individualized and based on a consumer's specific needs and vocational goal. Consumers may participate in adjustment to blindness training (orientation and mobility, home management, etc.), career exploration, and job readiness programs. Depending on an individual's specific needs, they may receive support for educational goals (such as tuition assistance), assistive technology devices (braille displays, CCTVs, etc.), or training to use screen readers such as JAWS (Job Access With Speech). All services are provided with the ultimate goal of helping consumers achieve high quality, competitive, integrated employment in a career field of their choice. Some of the successful employment outcomes in FY23 included Financial Analyst, Counselor, Nuclear Technician, Business Operations Specialist, Registered Nurse and Postal Service Clerk.

If the increase in funds is not received, the agency will not be able to match or utilize the full amount of its federal award, thus reducing the funds available for the agency to serve consumers. In addition, since the match requirement is a state level requirement, the funding for the SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department would also be negatively affected.

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AGENCY PRIORITY

3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Administrative Support

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: \$311,536

Federal: \$0

Other: \$0

Total: \$311,536

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:

Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience

X Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines

Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program

Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas

Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative

Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program

Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program

IT Technology/Security related

Consulted DTO during development

Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:

X Education, Training, and Human Development

Healthy and Safe Families

Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security

Public Infrastructure and Economic Development

Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS

1.1 Increase successful competitive integrated outcomes

1.2 Increase the number of consumers achieving and maintaining independence

The use of funds would be evaluated through meeting the projected outcome values on the agency strategic plan at the end of the year.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

Agency consumer services support staff and vendors to aid in accomplishing the goals laid out in the agency's strategic plan.

FUNDS

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

Increasing funds for Administrative Support by \$311,536 will allow the agency to fund portions of administrative positions that provide support to all Consumers Services and that were previously funded through sources that have been exhausted. This will allow agency administrative support staff to continue providing a consistent, high level of service to partners and vendors, and to provide indirect support for consumer services staff.

Administrative Support for Consumer Services encompasses many aspects of the agency, such as:

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST

- Financial management of federal consumer service grants and matching funds (Vocational Rehabilitation, Supported Employment, Independent Living for Older Individuals Who Are Blind), plus state appropriations (Children's Services and Prevention Services)
- Procurement of consumer services contracts and small purchase solicitations
- Recruitment and retention of qualified staff to ensure quality and timely consumer service delivery
- Monitoring agency compliance with state and federal regulations through a continuous quality assurance process
- Management of agency communication, information and data storage systems to ensure data integrity and security in compliance with state and federal laws and regulations

If these funds are not received, staff may not have the support needed to provide direct consumer services through the agency's local offices or statewide facilities.

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AGENCY PRIORITY

4

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE

Federal Authorization Increase

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT

General: \$0

Federal: \$977,604

Other: \$0

Total: \$977,604

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2024-2025? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS

0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST

Mark "X" for all that apply:

Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience

Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines

Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program

Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas

Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative

Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program

Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program

IT Technology/Security related

Consulted DTO during development

Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:

X Education, Training, and Human Development

Healthy and Safe Families

Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security

Public Infrastructure and Economic Development

Government and Citizens

1.2 Increase th

1.1 Increase successful competitive integrated outcomes

1.2 Increase the number of consumers achieving and maintaining independence

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS An increase in federal spending authorization would apply to those portions of the Strategic Plan concerned with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Older Blind Services and administration of those programs.

The use of funds would be evaluated through meeting the projected outcome values on the agency strategic plan at the end of the year.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF

Agency programs, services and vendors will receive the increase to aid in the accomplishment of goals laid out in the strategic plan.

FUNDS		

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	This request of \$977,604 is to add additional authority for funds that will be received from federal grants awards. These grant awards increase annually, and the authorization increase will allow the agency to fully utilize these funds to increase its effectiveness and efficiency in providing consumer services.

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FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan

AMOUNT

\$165,439

What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS

None

How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

A 3% reduction would impact Vocational Rehabilitation Services, decreasing case service funds available to spend for consumers.

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT

A reduction would also affect the agency's ability to spend the required non-federal matching funds for our federal grant awards.

What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

A 3% reduction to the case services budget would greatly impact service delivery to SCCB consumers.

Consumers who receive Vocational Rehabilitation Services need training, and often medical services, to find, obtain, or retain employment. A reduction in funds for the program could affect the agency's ability to comply with the federal regulations that set forth the services the agency is to provide to consumers.

SUMMARY

Please provide a detailed summary of service delivery impact caused by a reduction in General Fund Appropriations and provide the method of calculation for anticipated reductions. Agencies should prioritize reduction in expenditures that have the least significant impact on service delivery.

	None
AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS	

What measures does the agency plan to implement to reduce its costs and operating expenses by more than \$50,000? Provide a summary of the measures taken and the estimated amount of savings. How does the agency plan to repurpose the savings?

Agency Name:	Commission For The Blind		
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TITLE	Reducing Cost and Burden to Businesses and Citizens
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.
EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	SCCB does not charge any fees for its services, nor does it charge any fines.
	What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply: Repeal or revision of regulations. Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens. Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden. X Other
METHOD OF CALCULATION	SCCB does not charge any fees for its services, nor does it charge any fines.
	Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.
REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	SCCB does not charge any fees for its services, nor does it charge any fines.
	Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?
REDUCTION OF REGULATION	SCCB does not charge any fees for its services, nor does it charge any fines.
	Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?
	SCCB does not charge any fees for its services, nor does it charge any fines.

SUMMARY

