

**WFD Customer Satisfaction Survey
State Services for the Blind (SSB)
Results from customers served during January through June 2024**

	Jan-Jun 2024
Total Sample Size of Customer Records:	758
Number of Customer Records with Valid Email Addresses:	710
Number of Completed Interviews:	141
Response Rate*:	19.9%

* Percent of completed interviews out of number of customer records with valid telephone numbers. See final page of this report for full discussion of response rate.

Average MnCSI score over time

Customers Served	Jan 20 – July 20	Jan 21 – Jun 21	Jan 22 – Jun 22	Jan 23 – Jun 23	Jan 24 – Jun 24
Average MnCSI Scores	69.2	68.9	72.0	78.2	74.7
N size	114	144	150	154	122

Frequencies of current period statistics

Q1 Think about any times that you asked staff for help. How satisfied are you that they responded in a reasonable amount of time? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied, or have you never asked for help? (old Q5)

Responses	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	46%
Satisfied	37%
Dissatisfied	12%
Very dissatisfied	4%
Never asked for help	0%
DK/Refused	2%
N Size	141

Q2 How satisfied are you that the staff understands/understood your needs? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? (old Q4)

Responses	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	50%
Satisfied	37%
Dissatisfied	4%
Very dissatisfied	5%
DK/Refused	4%
N Size	139

Q3 How satisfied are you that you were given enough information to make good choices for your employment plan? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? (old QVR1)

Responses	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	44%
Satisfied	35%
Dissatisfied	7%
Very dissatisfied	7%
DK/Refused	7%
N Size	138

Q4 How satisfied are you that you have/had an active role in decisions about your services? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? (old QVR2)

Responses	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	58%
Satisfied	28%
Dissatisfied	6%
Very dissatisfied	4%
DK/Refused	4%
N Size	139

Q5 How satisfied are you that the services are helping/have helped you plan for or maintain your employment? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied or it does not apply to your situation? (NEW)

Responses	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	43%
Satisfied	34%
Dissatisfied	9%
Very dissatisfied	6%
DK/Refused	8%
N Size	140

Assistive Technology

Q6 Have you received any Assistive Technology from State Services for the Blind? This could be hardware or software.

<i>Responses</i>	Jan-Jun 24
Yes	60%
No	35%
Don't know / Unsure	5%
N Size	141

Q7 Think about when you most needed to use your Assistive Technology. How prepared did you feel to use the Assistive Technology when you needed it? Were you very well prepared, somewhat prepared, not very well prepared, or not prepared at all?

<i>Responses</i>	Jan-Jun 24
Very well prepared	45%
Somewhat prepared	39%
Not very well prepared	8%
Not at all prepared	5%
DK/Refused	2%
N Size	84

Q8 How useful do you think the Assistive Technology equipment that you received will be/was in helping you meet your vocational plan goals? Do you think it will be very useful, somewhat useful, not very useful, or not at all useful?

<i>Responses</i>	Jan-Jun 24
Very useful	73%
Somewhat useful	23%
Somewhat not useful	1%
Not at all useful	0%
DK/Refused	4%
N Size	83

COVID Questions for 2020-2024

Q8a Please describe the primary method in how you interacted with SSB to receive your services. (NEW for 2020)

<i>Responses</i>	Jan-Jun 24
In person meeting	16%
Phone call	35%
Email	35%
Online meeting (e.g. Zoom, WebEx, Skype platforms)	15%
N Size	135

Q8b How satisfied are you with the non-traditional method you used with SSB to receive your services? (NEW for 2020)

<i>Responses</i>	Jan-Jun 24
Very satisfied	39%
Satisfied	49%
Dissatisfied	6%
Very dissatisfied	1%
DK/Refused	5%
N Size	114

Q8c Please explain how the process of meeting in a non-traditional way (e.g., Phone, Email, Online meeting, Other) went for you in receiving your services from SSB. (NEW for 2020) (88 responses)

- All questions and concerns can be addressed in these non-traditional communication methods. In fact, having to travel to SSB takes a great deal of time for what usually amounts to a short exchange.
- All ways of meeting with SSB works for me. Online meetings, phone calls, and emails worked well.
- I've experienced a lot of broken promises over the phone. Then to make it worse, I was stalked by other students and then the SSB and the NFB violated HIPAA to the organization and the state capital for government funding without my consent.
- As a DeafBlind person, email is my preferred means of communication, which makes it easier for me to meet in a non-traditional way and receive services appropriately. That said, I would prefer to meet in-person when possible.
- Communicating with SSB over phone and email was very convenient and beneficial. Over the phone, I was still able to get questions answered in real time. When we communicated over email, responses were prompt and thorough.
- I have been contacted via email and phone and online meetings.
- I have used email appointment and phone calls.
- E-mail has been my primary communication. Questions were answered in a timely manner, usually the same day.
- Emailing me is definitely faster than calling me, since I check daily for my email notifications. It also helps me when communicating with my SSB counselor, who is in town most of the time, and we would communicate remotely.
- Excellent - either over the phone or email was perfect.
- Fine, however there is inconsistency in meetings.
- For many things, phone calls and online meetings are ok. But to get to know and understand clients and their needs, I believe staff should meet in person with their clients once every 3 months or so.
- For me, I actually liked meeting virtually, just because transportation can be really hard to obtain. So, I felt like my needs were being completely met doing things through phone and email.
- For now, my daughter has a representative help her with communications. As she develops, we will need to go to face to face meetings.
- Communication has been good.
- Having to receive services through email has caused a lot of stress on me. I do not get responses for days at a time and they normally are not helpful. SSB has failed to pay multiple semesters correctly causing a bunch of issues with my financial situation.

- I am happy to have been able to meet with my counsellor by phone, I have also been receiving help by phone from one of your employment specialists. I like the fact that there doesn't have to be a physical meeting and I can engage with members of staff as and when I need them.
- I didn't notice a difference.
- I don't know how to respond to this question.
- I enjoyed using different forms of meeting with SSB such a text, email, and online meetings with Teams and Zoom. I actually like how it is now prior to the pandemic. It's easier to communicate with SSB now. Thank you.
- I feel that meeting in a nontraditional way has led to a huge disconnect on the part of my counselor. I feel that they are very overwhelmed with their workload and are very ill prepared for when I have conversations with them. I get the impression that they don't even really know me or have taken the time to look at my file before we meet.
- I had to play a little phone tag, but when we met up, they were professional and accommodating.
- I have reached out, and I haven't gotten a response. I'm unsure what to do moving forward.
- I just schedule with my counselor, and we talk over the phone or sometimes via video call.
- I like that I can have a meeting at my house, and I don't have to go anywhere.
- I liked non-traditional communication a lot. It's quicker.
- I prefer communications over the phone.
- I think it isn't the worst, but I feel like there could be improvement. I continue to discover that I am bad at keeping up with my email and I don't know if I've made it clear enough to my caseworker.
- I used to have in-person meetings. Then when COVID hit, they became phone calls. This is truly not ideal for somebody who is visually impaired or legally blind because you don't know if anything is going to get done the way that you wanted to get done.
- I was able to hear them.
- I was able to work with the service provider at my home on my computer. It went very well.
- I worked with tech support by phone and was able to take braille notes for retention.
- I would make everything work out to plan.
- In my case, non-traditional communication was just fine. There was no need for in-person meetings.
- In some aspects, it seemed difficult as a newly blind person because I just don't know what I need or what options are available.
- Interactions with my counselor and with technology, with voice and email conversations has seemed normal, acceptable, and efficient.
- It has been going pretty well. It is sometimes hard because I might not get a response right away, but it is still equally helpful.
- It has been sometimes very challenging as email messages get misinterpreted. Or we're playing phone tag and leaving messages. In this scenario, the flow of services gets interrupted, or lost due to the communication gaps.
- It is fine if counselors responded in a timely method. Sometimes they did respond in a timely manner, but often times, they did not respond in a timely manner or not at all. The non-traditional means has no bearing on the effectiveness of the services. What matters is clients being able to get responses in a timely manner so as to resolve problems quickly. The counselors are great when you can reach them. I prefer to correspond by phone, not email, for many of the communications. Though email is relevant for some things, it would be nice to just be able to text counselors. That would make things even easier. I know SSB is probably low staffed so some understanding is a must, but it would be nice to make it easier to work with counselors.
- It is important to have written records of the concepts discussed and decisions made. It also appears that staff, especially those who are neither blind people with lived experience nor formally trained as blindness professionals, struggle to understand email communication and do not ask clarifying questions. Through phone calls, I was able to identify gaps in understanding and bridge those gaps. With only email and the unwillingness

to admit deer-in-headlights confusion, I would have received almost nothing from SSB. Even the kindest of people will struggle to serve the public if they do not ask questions when they do not understand. It is also important that SSB train staff in a baseline of blindness knowledge.

- It makes it easier. I can just send an email, and I don't have to worry about trying to fit meetings into my schedule.
- Non-traditional communication was difficult for me.
- Non-traditional communication was easy since it didn't interfere with my schedule or my parents'.
- Non-traditional communication was fine for me.
- Non-traditional communication was good for me.
- I found Non-traditional communication to be smooth and efficient.
- Non-traditional communication went fine for me. I sort of miss the in-person meetings from before the pandemic.
- Non-traditional communication went ok for me.
- Non-traditional communication went pretty well overall. I could make things bigger on my screen.
- Non-traditional communication went pretty well for me.
- Non-traditional communication went well, and was very convenient, though in-person can sometimes be nicer.
- Non-traditional communication went well. There was some delay in email responses, but for the most part it was good.
- Non-traditional communication worked just fine for me. Meeting in-person would have been challenging to arrange and would have required more time.
- Non-traditional communication worked, but I do think an in-person meeting would be nice too. I think a hybrid option is always beneficial to meeting our representative to get to know them better.
- Non-traditional communication been going fine for me.
- I've been doing phone calls.
- Mostly I've received just a call to chat. The calls were either video or phone- plus, emails too.
- It takes forever for responses or to get an answer. Sometimes the counselor doesn't know the answer and then forgets to respond.
- I sometimes wait a long time in between email communications.
- Meeting by phone, email, and Zoom made it more convenient for both parties. I think the content of our conversations were the same as if we would have met in person. So, I don't think I was missing out by meeting in those ways.
- Meeting via Zoom worked well for me.
- My case manager has reached out to me and set up different services that we've discussed in our emails. I went to SSB to try out different technologies and found what worked best for me. I've also had phone calls to discuss different things.
- My experience with this method does help me obtain the information for the services that SSB provides its clients. I correspond with my SSB Counselor Amanda Anthony via email and phone calls.
- Online is more convenient for me, as it means that I don't have to deal with transportation issues.
- I communicate mostly by phone.
- Phone calls allowed for flexibility of time and location. There was also flexibility of second device used for looking at websites or forms.
- Phone calls, emails, and mailed equipment, an occasional home visit, all work fine for me.
- Phone/Email explained the program. Emailed proper paperwork for me to review.
- Prior to the pandemic, I had already been working with SSB exclusively through phone and email for many years due to attending graduate school out of state.

- I received a laptop loaded with zoom text.
- My counselor and I have mostly sent emails and phone calls.
- The non-traditional action mechanism by using phone calls, emails, plays well for those of us with limited mobility. So, my opinion is that it's some more inclusive feature for communications.
- The phone calls were great for me.
- They were pretty honest with me. They also helped me with things that I did not know.
- This process of non-traditional communication was incredibly smooth and simple!
- Usually, communication is a battle for me.
- I am very satisfied with the communications.
- My counselor has been very thorough and helpful.
- Non-traditional communication has worked very well. Email is best for me. My counselor is very responsive.
- Non-traditional communication works very well. It is easy and more convenient for me.
- My counselor and I have had a number of online meetings followed up with emailed notes.
- We live in rural north. Job opportunities are not as great here. SSB services were great. Support job opportunities just weren't there.
- We used a variety of communication methods, and it worked well for us.
- Well, meeting digitally is easier and more convenient for me.
- We've had a few phone conversations with the SSB representative. He's very knowledgeable and helpful.
- Non-traditional communication works well for us and our schedules.

SSB Themes to Open-ended Responses

Comment Coding Breakdown of Question 9 – 112 responses

“In your opinion, what is/was the most important part of the services you received from SSB?”

Individual comment categories (along with a sample comment)	# of comments
Help finding, searching, getting a job	
<i>Help finding a job; find a job quicker; help finding a new job (JSH)</i>	16
<i>They got me a job; helped me get back to work (GJOB)</i>	3
<i>Resume help, expertise; updating, writing a resume (RES)</i>	2
<i>Help with career exploration, goals (CE)</i>	1
<i>Networking, connections for job seekers (NET)</i>	1
Staff / Trainer / Vendor assistance	
<i>Specific mention of a vendor, trainer, staff member that provided notable help (VTS)</i>	14
<i>Staff provided emotional support, caring, concern (STFS)</i>	12
<i>Staff understands customer, needs of customer (STFUC)</i>	10
<i>Staff provided one-on-one contact, easy communication, consultation (STFC)</i>	9
<i>Staff provided general help, willingness to help (STF)</i>	7
<i>Staff listened, were patient with customer (STFL)</i>	3
Received education, classes, specific training, coaching	
<i>Provided help going to college, school, classes; training at school (EDC)</i>	22
<i>Training in how to get around; orientation & mobility (OM)</i>	10
<i>Received, got computer help or training; MS office, keyboard classes (CPUT)</i>	6
<i>Life skills training; cooking, cleaning, shopping (TDL)</i>	5
<i>Job training mentioned; other general training (TR)</i>	3
<i>Braille training (B)</i>	3
Received assistive technology, equipment, resources (or help with)	
<i>Customer mentions technology, help with; assisting with devices – laptop, note-taker, computer etc. (TECH)</i>	24
<i>Provided specific equipment; white cane, eye cone, school equipment, resources (EQP)</i>	11
Financial, transportation aid	
<i>Financial help; money for food, daycare, clothes, training, education, equipment (FIN)</i>	14
<i>Money for transportation, travel, bus passes, transit (TRVT)</i>	0
General comments	
<i>Meet customer’s needs; services to customer’s level (JSP)</i>	21
<i>Gave a general compliment about services (COMP)</i>	14
<i>Received general, helpful info on program services (INFO)</i>	13
Miscellaneous	
<i>Don’t know; not sure, none, dissatisfied (DK)</i>	14
<i>No services received yet (NSY)</i>	4

Q9 – 112 respondents	
Comment Category Groupings	# of comments
Staff, Trainer, Vendor assistance	55
Received education, classes, training	49
General comments	48
Technology, equipment received, assisted	35
Help finding or searching for a job	23
Miscellaneous	18
Financial, transportation aid	14

Comment Coding Breakdown of Question 10 – 88 responses

“If you could change one thing about the services you received, what would you change?”

Codes (along with a sample comment)	# of comments
Issues related to finding, searching, getting training for a job	
<i>Service didn't meet customer's needs; lack of options; other specific requests mentioned (MCN)</i>	26
<i>Help with assistive technology; receive training on technology (TECH)</i>	6
<i>Improve the help with finding a job; specialists/staff unhelpful in job search (JSH)</i>	6
<i>Wanted more education, schooling; training and learning opportunities (EDC)</i>	5
<i>Want mock interviews, more interviewing help (INT)</i>	0
Staff improvements	
<i>Improve communication, contact between staff and customers (COM)</i>	18
<i>Staff need a better understanding of customers; listen to customer (STFUC)</i>	12
<i>Need more personal support and interest from counselor; better fit (STFS)</i>	3
<i>More staff needed in SSB; hire more staff (STFM)</i>	2
<i>Quicker response time, level of responsiveness, too slow in responding (LSFR)</i>	1
Process issues	
<i>Length of time to get services; time between approval and service start (TIME)</i>	11
<i>Too many rules, obstacles that slow process & create unnecessary issues (PRI)</i>	10
<i>Issues with vendors and the way they work with SSB/State of MN (V)</i>	6
Program issues	
<i>Not enough funding, need more financial assistance (FIN)</i>	4
<i>Need more transportation help; bus passes, transit (TRVT)</i>	1
<i>Need more locations for SSB, longer hours of service, more days (LCHR)</i>	1
<i>Need more equipment; more resources (EQP)</i>	0
Job leads / placement assistance	
<i>Need better, more quality job leads; leads don't match user needs, more job options (JLQ)</i>	4
<i>More connections, links to employers that are hiring (CTE)</i>	2
<i>Specific job placement issues (JP)</i>	1
Miscellaneous	
<i>Nothing; none; not sure (NC)</i>	30
<i>Gave a compliment about services (COMP)</i>	11
<i>Don't know; haven't used the service long enough (DK)</i>	6

Q10 – 88 respondents	
Comment Category Groupings	# of comments
Miscellaneous	47
Issues related to finding, searching, getting trained for a job	43
Staff improvements	36
Process issues	27
Job leads / placement assistance	6
Program issues	6

State Services for the Blind (SSB) Open-ended Responses

Q9 In your opinion, what is/was the most important part of the services you received from State Services for the Blind (SSB)? (NEW) (112 responses)

- A really good counselor who listens and advises. I really like Rob.
- Above all, SSB empowered me to be my own best advocate while still valuing the support and input of others.
- Accommodations that make my life easier
- Alana Strickler helping me with biz plan.
- All of my services have been very important as each requested service allowed me to explore based on what I thought I needed, due to the journey being a new experience. I needed to figure everything out and what I needed to continue with my life and the services overall have allowed me to this.
- ALL of them! Transitioning into blindness (now 100% blind) is terrifying. Learning all the skills possible helps with gaining independence, self-esteem, and being able to feel like a productive citizen in society.
- As a low vision person, I learned how to make my life easier and learning braille is wonderful. And the technology class is very helpful.
- Assistance with finding and maintaining employment and the needed education.
- Assistive technology has been the most important service for me.
- Assistive technology
- Assistive Technology called ZoomText.
- Assurance that help is there when needed.
- Being in high school, we are just starting the process and have high hopes that this will help with the job search when that time comes.
- Cane traveling instructor Isaac was superb!!!
- Cohesive team that can help me achieve my goals. Assistive hardware and software would be the second most important thing because without it, I couldn't do what I want to do.
- Communication
- Comprehensive training and information that "opened my eyes" to functioning within the world of visual impairment.
- I don't know what's been the most important for me.
- Education and technology
- Employment support
- Encouragement. Contract support for employment.
- Equipment to do a job.
- Everything!
- Financial aid
- Financial aid to pursue educational goals to obtain a stable career.
- Financial assistance for college
- Finding resources to help me succeed.
- Funding for school
- Getting help financially
- Getting a job
- Getting assistance in finding a job of interest to me.
- Getting my confidence back and all the training I received.
- Getting resources from them.
- Getting the appropriate info needed to move on with my life.
- Getting to meet and socialize with other people around my age with visual impairments.
- Good communication. They really listened and helped me obtain work closely related to what was requested. Responded to a concern regarding potential loss of benefits.
- Good information and guidance.
- Great listening and support from Oscar.

- Having a dedicated person (Lindsey) for my caseworker. She has been exceptional in helping me.
- Having somebody teach me through the hands-on experience.
- Help with paying for graduate school.
- Helped with getting program for vision on my computer at work.
- Helping talk about how to go about applying for jobs and telling the employer about my vision issues.
- I am a college student. Beyond the direct costs paid to the university, there are many auxiliary costs associated with preparing for employment, such as attending professional conferences, adjustment-to-blindness training, pursuing professional credentials and licensures, acquiring access technology, etc. These are all important, and taking away these costly barriers is essential.
- I am not completed with all of the steps yet. I have not met with the person that assists with selecting job opportunities.
- I believe we have had more time face-to-face with SSB however zoom training was valuable and the email conversation/correspondence has been equally valuable as well.
- I did not received training yet.
- I don't know.
- I don't know because I just got my case opened six months ago.
- I have not received any services yet. I was assigned my counselor in March of 2024, and it has taken months to get a tech assessment. My technology was then never ordered. I hope at this point, it has, but now when I reach out to SSB, I feel like an inconvenience.
- I needed some cane travel to get around at Target Center. Also, SSB paid for the blind phone.
- I would have to say it would be that they have exposed me to a non-visual world. I am understanding the side of the visual impaired a bit better, even myself and my awareness.
- In many cases, SSB is the only resource for assistive technologies/services such a mobility training, technology training, and evaluating of assistive technologies.
- In my opinion, the most important part of the service I received from SSB are the services that make me independent via assistive technology and via working with the 700 program.
- Job coaching like interview and resume practice plus financial assistance.
- Job searching. Having someone to go to with job application recommendations and questions.
- John Hess
- Kelly Harrison's training on JAWS at my office and in my home.
- Knowing that they were there to help.
- Learning about the options I never knew about.
- Learning new staff and learning the ESL program - including braille training, how to read and write.
- Medical documents that needed to be filled out for the colleges I went to.
- Mobility Training
- Mobility training and IT training
- My assistance with rent and school, allowing me to pursue my education.
- My O & M training, and Independent Living Skills
- N/A
- N/A
- No clue
- Nothing I really like the help.
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Orientation and mobility training
- Our son receives job and ILS support that he wouldn't receive if it wasn't for SSB. Lindsay, our case worker, is full of knowledge and has an incredible amount of resources for our son's needs. Additionally, she is amazingly kind and compassionate. Thank you!
- Receiving computer for my job as well as adaptive equipment.
- Resources and education to help my daughter prepare for transition to adulthood.
- Setting me up with the classes at Vision Loss Resources. Wish I had received all of the assisted technology I needed from my first Tech Assessment. That ordeal was a letdown.

- So far, I would say the most important part is having access to the employment specialist. She has been able to point me in the direction of many useful resources and I am very happy working with her.
- So far, the computer with zoom text
- So far, I think the assistive technology has been most helpful. I plan on taking braille, which in the long term will be important.
- Social work and technology.
- SSB helped with college applications, FAFSA forms, and affording college.
- Tech Support
- Technology and school support. It would be very difficult to afford all the technology and costs for school without SSB.
- Technology training and provision of technology equipment.
- The assistive technology that I received for school. Also, the financial assistance that I've received while being in school.
- The fact that Oscar took the time to understand my needs and tailor a plan to meet them.
- The most important part of the services is to get to a point of feeling prepared with blindness skills and direction to be able to resume working at something that aligns with my skillsets and knowledge.
- The most important part of the services I received by SSB is the opportunity to have the education readiness needed to reach independence and the control of my life even with a physical disability. SSB is making it possible for me to reach my potential and good expectations of a better future, as I hope to fully transition into a full time job. SSB is giving me the opportunity to become useful and potentially a good and valuable asset in the job market. I am so grateful for the opportunity to overcome my limitations with my new tools in hand to face a new future, hopefully, a bright future for me. Your support has been very valuable all the way. Thank you.
- The most important services I received from SSB are the many different vendors they provide their clients. They provide suggestions on how to deal with sighted people who go too far on providing assistance when it's not required. These suggestions include how to tell them how to verbally guide me and not to put their hands on me.
- The most important thing I've received is a laptop, where I can dust off the cobwebs and enhance my use of Jaws.
- The most important thing would be finding an art related job.
- The relationship that is built.
- The technology provided (Jaws, Kurzweil, a refreshable braille display, and an embosser have been essential for me to complete my education (BA, MA, and PHD) and continue to be essential for me to pursue a career as a professor. I use Jaws continuously to access my computer. Kurzweil, and my refreshable braille display I use to perform research reading, which has contributed to my successfully publishing multiple academic articles. The embosser I use to produce notes for teaching and giving presentations at conferences. My SSB counselor has been diligent. Whenever I contact him with a technology need, he works to provide the equipment as efficiently as possible. When the embosser I had had for 12 years crashed last summer, he did his best to ensure that I would have a replacement in time to teach my classes in the fall.
- The technology training has been the most important service that I have received so far.
- The training I am receiving at VLR.
- The understanding staff and their willingness to provide support and information.
- The understanding that some areas need more work than others. The flexibility to adjust the outcome of each students' final needs.
- The white cane training and assistance with knowing what other services I qualify for.
- They are helping me figure out my schooling, going to help me get a computer that matches my needs, and I'm excited to learn how do things without my sight. The thing I'm looking forward to the most would be my cane.
- They informed me of the U of MN scholarship for the visually impaired, which I am utilizing. I feel very lucky to have this opportunity to be able to earn new skills and knowledge to advance my career options.
- This is a difficult question, as it is hard to define the most important thing, as all things have been important. I suppose the most important has been making the call in the first place to the counselor and VR tech and that was a challenge for me to do. Steve and Darin were and have been the most important connections for me in this process so far. Rapport building has been easy and they are both full of encouragement and help me to see

the possibilities when I don't always see them in the moment. Finally receiving the computer hardware and software and ironing out the kinks with how that was all set up and having the training in the area started with JAWS has been wonderful as well, although it has been overwhelming and tries my patience. My trainer is wonderful, and we are able to do remote training thus far. Orientation and Mobility training is my other real concern, and my trainer has been amazing as well. SHE has been able to help me feel safe again in taking some steps towards reentering the world beyond my home and medical facilities. I am regaining confidence in baby steps.

- To assist my son with his goals and ambitions through technology solutions.
- Understanding vision issues.
- Understanding and support.
- Unfortunately, it is limited ONLY to the financial assistance in my education. I have found much/most of my interactions with the team to be neutral or unhelpful. I ONLY receive the services I REQUEST and when I FOLLOW UP over and over again. I am not presented with options and plans - the staff seems to rely on me to request - and I don't know what I don't know.
- Unfortunately, I don't feel like I'm receiving much that I can really use to improve my daily life. I, as a person with a disability, am living in a world where most things are a struggle, and the biggest things are getting my personal needs met. Without being able to work a job, I cannot meet such needs. I often struggle to keep groceries, keep up with medical bills, and generally just struggle to have anything beyond the very basics, if that. I also think that because the world is changing, services need to change with it, evolve, and open up more opportunities for exploration in different areas. For example, finding what is considered to be normalized employment, so jobs that anyone can get, are hard to come by. The rest of the world really just is not as open to blind people as they should be. We simply do not have enough awareness, leaving many people without. So, I feel like being allowed to have more awareness jobs, would be super helpful, because I can't imagine it will get much better without those of us who are blind, going out and educating bigger companies and organizations. Yes, there are organizations such as the NFB, and the ACB, but they do have their own agenda of things that they'd like to cover, and it is not completely employment based. I also feel like in general the services need to be more open about supporting other careers as well. I've been told by multiple counselors that a job has to be marketable, and there has to be a good amount of need for a job, but that literally can be said for so many jobs and careers in the world, yet we have a small narrow path of careers that can be supported. No job is completely guaranteed, that's impossible, so taking more chances in a world where a lot of possibilities are becoming more well-known, would be greatly appreciated. Yes, I do realize that there are food shelves, and housing programs out there that can be used for assistance, but number one, those programs are hard to get into, and honestly hard to use. A lot of them have extremely high turnover, where you could have a worker, and then have another in like a month, and secondly, if you had to as sighted people only rely on food shelves to provide all your staples, and it was not by choice, and there was very little variation, I wonder if after five years of constant very basic needs being met, how you would approach this? So, I would like to be supported more, because life's a chance, and I do believe if someone took a good chance on me, they'd be surprised.
- We are dissatisfied in the services provided.
- We've just begun services. Too young and too soon for employment.
- When we had scheduled phone calls.
- Yes, and they are wonderful.
- Zoom text.

Q10 If you could change one thing about the services you received, what would you change? (NEW) (104 responses)

- Service is good. Nothing needs changing.
- The areas of assistive technology have been the most challenging. The original quote for the computer was not going to meet the needs I had. A new quote was received and then the order was made. The company then sent it out incorrectly, expecting SSB to install memory. So, it had to be sent back and have a new one sent back to us. Then when it came in and the SSB person set up my computer with the Microsoft office suite and it was in my hands to get started with training, we were not able to save items due to the security measures that were set up on my computer and one in which the SSB assistive tech person set his email address as the email to send

and access code to. This needed to be set up with my phone number or email address so that the access code could go to me immediately so I could put it in and get past that. That should not have been done this way or put on my shoulders to figure out. I know of this happening with other SSB customers as well. This needs to be set up appropriately for all SSB customers right away. I was then in a position to have to connect with Microsoft accessibility with the help of my trainer eventually as it was overwhelming for me to try to do this on my own as I am a new JAWS learner and was not sure that I could make it through the process, and this caused me a great deal of distress. I would like to think it could be easily rectified for all SSB customers in the future and found it to be unacceptable. It is an easy thing to do correctly from the start and can be done with a call between the SSB assistive tech person and the customer with ease to not ever have this be an issue for the customer in the future. The computer or the assistive tech is useless if we cannot even use it due to that type of issue. This is all about independence and not having to track down an SSB person to get a time sensitive code, nonetheless. As you can probably see, it caused me a lot of distress on top of already dealing with trying to adjust to all the new things that vision loss has brought to my table. I do not need the additional stress and it caused me to be even more angry at the fact that I could not see it, fix it, or see it to figure out how to fix it. Bottom line is, if done right in the first place it would eliminate the problem before it can be a problem.

- All the people I have worked with are awesome. (Kat and Shawn). Hire more people as I have heard it is hard to help everyone that needs this service.
- As a job seeker, I needed more coaching and guidance instead of being told that job search depends on what I want.
- I don't know.
- Easy access to counselors.
- Everything is great.
- First, I would have new counselor intern with a counselor already working for SSB. We need people who understand issues clients might have. Also, who or where the client can find assistance.
- For me, personally having someone to check in with me more often would help keep me motivated.
- Having more in-person interactions.
- Having the process of getting training take much less time.
- Help with finding remote jobs.
- I am not sure.
- I am very satisfied with the services I've received and feel like my case manager is there when I need her.
- I can't really think of anything. When I went to Saint Paul College, there were some things that the school did that I wished SSB would have fought a little bit harder about. They were allowed to do some things to me that were unfair. And I felt like I was by myself. And it hurt a lot.
- I can't think of anything.
- I do think it takes too long to receive assistive technologies from SSB. The time from discussion to having that technology in hand could be condensed if counselors had more decision-making authority. Reliance solely on the opinions of John Hess is not always effective for the client. Some clients come with knowledge and a sense of what would be appropriate and work best for them. This should be a critical part of the assistive technology calculus.
- I don't know because I am new to SSB.
- I don't know.
- I don't think there's a need to change.
- I fully expected that there would be more expertise in the arena of job vacancies and the ability of the employment counselors to engage with communities to introduce me and my skills. However, I feel like I've just gotten a couple more places I can look for jobs. So, in this manner, I am disappointed. Also, after I explained to the employment counselor my requirements and my background, they asked a really strange question, which had nothing to do with my abilities. That is, why had I not looked at doing some business from home. I asked what sort of service or product I could offer if I had my own business, and they weren't able to answer that. So I felt like they weren't listening to me at all.
- I have no suggestions.
- I receive responses in a quicker fashion even though I know my counselor has so many issues to deal with.

- I think the team needs to be aware that they are at SSB to serve the needs of real people. There is a complete lack of urgency, service orientation, and a limited awareness of the actual needs of the clientele. I have so many examples, but here is one: JAWS Training - I was directed to an SSB trainer that was not a JAWS trainer. When I arrived for the training, he alerted me that he is not a trainer, and I should really find a real JAWS trainer to help me out. He was helpful by sharing his experience with JAWS but was not able to actually train me. He directed me back to my counselor and told me SSB does indeed have JAWS trainers. I followed up with my counselor and was not presented with any further options. As a result, I didn't learn much beyond a few tricks here and there. The only way I've found success with your services is by asking specifically and repetitively following up weekly until you get what you need. An example: I asked about getting a new laptop at the beginning of the summer checking in throughout the summer. At the end of the summer, my counselor told me that he had forgotten to order it - this is a key function of this role. As I headed off to school - I was (and am still) forced to use a loaner.
- I wish I had a new case worker. My case worker didn't follow through with many of the things he said he would do for me. It turned into a very frustrating experience. Even when I called and complained about it and nobody got back to me about my issues was disappointing.
- I wish I had gotten better cane travel at first.
- I wish I had more time to do braille or transportation and mobility training.
- I wish SSB was more flexible about musicians. Music careers are very important, and I think SSB would be doing a great dis-service by excluding funding for equipment.
- I would ask them to not be super narrow minded and adjust accordingly to the world around us. I would ask them to continue adjusting with the economy, but also with what people would like to do with their lives. A person who is not working at a place they like or love, or doing a career they like or love, is not likely to stay in it. However, a person getting proper support to try and pursue a career path that they do like or love, is more likely to benefit from it, and do well. No one wants to be miserable, but without having even half the things in life most people get to have or work for, it makes things look quite grim and depressing. More business opportunities for those who want them outside of just, "The vending machine company" option, because contrary to what one might believe, not every single, blind person wants to own a vending machine company. There are some that have dreams beyond that. So, an overall expansion of career paths and job exploration. I would like us to be given the same options and opportunities as a person with sight, which for them is endless!
- I would change the manner that they use to educate companies they fund on how to deal with those who are visually impaired/blind, such as how to educate them on the proper method on how to approach them and offer assistance to them instead of assuming they need assistance and keeping their hands to themselves. I would include being firm with how to educate them, so they got the message loud and clear.
- I would have like to have known earlier about resources for my daughter.
- I would most likely change the way I meet with my counselor and possibly getting more assistive technology assistance via shortcut keys in every browser that I use on a daily basis.
- I would not change anything.
- I would not change anything.
- I wouldn't change anything because everything has been so great.
- I wouldn't change anything.
- In-person meetings are preferred.
- In person meeting would be better.
- Increase spending limits.
- It seems like SSB Employment Specialists with DEED should be able to be so much more helpful than they are, with abilities to guide me into future employment opportunities. Perhaps there should be more of them so that I don't have to be given the alternative of having to go to an outside vendor because a "specialist" and another employee there had problems communicating to understand what kind of work I need, re-wrote my resume to misrepresent my skills, experience and abilities, When I spoke to the specialist about it, instead of revisiting the original resume I had submitted to have him think about other employment possibilities, his answer was that DEED sees a lot of hiring opportunities for customer service and that was why his colleague only "focused" on that. But she actually put on my resume that I enjoyed customer facing positions (opposite of my enjoyment; that is so uncomfortable) and changed a job to say something about how I served the customers in a role where I actually never had any contact with customers! If you don't know, it's better to ask questions than make it up. I think DEED SSB Specialists, as they were described to me earlier on, should be a better way to coordinate

employment services with legally blind people to move forward in finding work, compared with an outside vendor. DEED SSB Specialists need to be able to do better.

- More consistency and communication with guardians.
- More drivers would be useful.
- More flexibility with options and timelines with services.
- More frequent check-ins with my counselor just to stay in clear communication on everything.
- More frequent meetings.
- More guidance with computers, in general. Assistive computer technology (like jaws) for the low vision and blind is helpful. But as a person with limited computer skills, I needed more help with computer or technology literacy. More training in how to use windows programs like edge, word, excel, or outlook would have been helpful.
- More help and assistance. Braille books.
- More help finding a job.
- More help in developing a business plan. My goal is to have a consulting business and SSB is not geared to that kind of business but needs to be.
- More job opportunities.
- More options for employment, better training on new equipment.
- More technology support with specialist.
- Motivation is very important for most people, when they are faced with significant challenges that can make a difference in their lives. SSB should work on motivating each and every customer by providing counseling about their best education and training services. This will put your clients in the right type of programs for them to be successful. It does not help your customers when you spend money training them on the wrong career, occupation, or skill. It is very important to ensure that a customer is getting the rehabilitation on the type of occupation that will put them in a job for real.
- My only real complaint with the services I have received so far is the length of time it took to receive my technology. I was waiting for my computer for over five months, and this significantly slowed my process towards finding employment. I also found some of the communication between different people who were supposed to be helping me to be less than ideal.
- My VR counselor, in whom I trust, tells me that there is currently no mechanism in SSB policy that enables SSB to pay the costs associated with obtaining or maintaining a professional licensure or certification that is absolutely necessary for my professional goal. The computer system that counselors must use when creating individualized plans for employment (IPEs) limits what a counselor can do, which prevents counselors from providing services that are theoretically allowable under VR policy. My credentialing process is costly, and I really wish that a mechanism could be created to allow SSB to pay for the costs of obtaining and maintaining a professional licensure or certification.
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- No comment. Steve from State Services for the Blind and Darin did an amazing job.
- None
- None
- None at this time
- Not really sure, but I have realized that the processing of paperwork can take a while when a student is waiting to get products or approved for items.
- Not sure yet
- Not sure.
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing

- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing at all
- Nothing at this time
- Nothing at this time.
- Nothing comes to mind at this time.
- Nothing could change.
- Nothing so far. It's been pretty good
- Nothing!
- Nothing, I am happy how I started.
- Nothing
- Nothing
- Nothing. Very good services.
- One thing I would change IF I could about receiving services, I think it would be more exposure to the environment in an independent way. More, kind of like a solo field trip exploring the area and understanding the layout more thoroughly.
- One thing I would change is the ability to receive support both vocationally for employment and academically for education. In my view, both aspects equally contribute to a person's holistic contributions to society, and I don't feel that it is right for someone to have to choose which type of support they receive at any given time.
- Record phone calls, make sure everything is on paper and not by mouth.
- Seems like everything goes very slowly. So, if anything I would enjoy some better communication.
- SSB does not service individuals with disabilities in the employment search process. They outsource it to Rise, etc. SSB told me they don't have the resources to look for a position for me as I would need support in this process and that they do not have the resources. Very disappointing. When I tell other organizations that I work with that SSB will NOT support my job search effort, only O&M training once I am employed, they are shocked.
- SSB should have more and better connections to obtaining employment for their clients.
- The location of the facility makes it very difficult to get there. Metro Mobility wants to pick you up 6:15 a.m. for an 8:00 class. No bus lines. 20 miles to drive in a car in rush hour traffic is horrible. There is a lot of pressure to "get it" (course material) because there is a kind of hurry to get you out the door and working.
- The state legislature needs to provide more funding so that counselors have more time to meet with clients.
- The technology training that I receive from a third-party vendor is great. The interactions and "services" that I have received from SSB have fallen short. I feel like my counselor is trying to get me to settle for a job that I am overqualified for just to close my case.
- There aren't enough (contracted) providers, but that's not your fault.
- This question is tricky for me due to an overlap experience as a customer and an employee of SSB, which was a great opportunity. However, what I would change is how my supervisor at SSB treated me. I am still struggling with how the expectations of delivering good customer service and yet not being respected for my disability by the person providing me with training and acting in the role of a supervisor.
- Time is the main issue. The time to actually get services is beyond ridiculous. 7 years to get mobility training and a white guide stick. I was a PRISONER IN MY OWN HOME as a result of it.
- The time it took for things to be completed.
- To benefit from the services I'm doing.
- Too many changes in counselors. Too much turnover in SSB staff.
- Video meetings
- When discussing my job goal last year, I felt a slight pressure in making up my mind in order to begin college courses and I ended up failing as I did not fully understand what I was getting myself into.
- While most vendors were very knowledgeable about the struggles of blind people on a daily basis, there were some vendors who were not as well-versed in the logistics of what goes into being employed as a blind person. For example, one vendor I worked with was unaware of how SSI worked and couldn't understand why I was so worried about my income being taken away from me in the way of SSI.
- Wish I would get more advice on what to ask for certain accommodations for work.

3 questions that produce the SSB MnCSI Score

Q11 Utilizing a scale of 1 to 10 where "1" means "Very Dissatisfied" and "10" means "Very Satisfied", what is your overall satisfaction with the services provided? (old Q1)

Responses	Jan-Jun21	Jan-Jun22	Jan-Jun23	Jan-Jun24
1 Very dissatisfied	5%	5%	3%	4%
2	6%	2%	1%	0%
3	4%	4%	2%	3%
4	1%	2%	3%	2%
5	8%	8%	4%	9%
6	2%	5%	4%	4%
7	18%	11%	10%	10%
8	12%	14%	18%	15%
9	15%	19%	21%	18%
10 Very satisfied	29%	31%	34%	34%
N Size	153	170	175	136
Mean	7.33	7.67	8.16	7.91

Q12 Considering all of the expectations you may have had about the services, to what extent have the services met your expectations? "1" now means "Falls short of your expectations" and "10" means "Exceeds your expectations." (old Q2)

Responses	Jan-Jun21	Jan-Jun22	Jan-Jun23	Jan-Jun24
1 Falls short of expectations	5%	5%	3%	4%
2	6%	1%	2%	2%
3	4%	4%	2%	4%
4	6%	4%	2%	2%
5	7%	11%	6%	9%
6	8%	5%	3%	4%
7	6%	8%	9%	8%
8	18%	15%	18%	13%
9	14%	15%	19%	19%
10 Exceeds expectations	25%	26%	30%	32%
N Size	150	159	175	131
Mean	7.11	7.40	7.96	7.75

Q13 Now think of the ideal program for people in your circumstances. How well do you think the services you received compare with the ideal set of services? "1" now means "Not very close to the ideal" and "10" means "Very close to the ideal." (old Q3)

Responses	Jan-Jun21	Jan-Jun22	Jan-Jun23	Jan-Jun24
1 Not very close to ideal	5%	5%	2%	5%
2	5%	1%	3%	1%
3	6%	3%	1%	4%
4	1%	6%	2%	5%
5	6%	7%	6%	4%
6	7%	5%	5%	3%
7	8%	10%	9%	10%
8	15%	11%	17%	15%
9	22%	14%	18%	15%
10 Very close to ideal	20%	28%	28%	29%
N Size	145	153	174	124
Mean	7.28	7.36	7.90	7.60

CSS Survey

The reader should be aware respondents continued to face the evolving service provision environment and the unique circumstances presented as a result of navigating in a post (COVID-19) pandemic world. While State Services for the Blind (SSB) worked to minimize the number of service disruptions, it is an inevitable fact that service delays, training disruptions, and changes in service delivery have and will continue to affect SSB services due to impacts directly or indirectly related to COVID-19.

Definitions of key terms:

Number of Interviews = Total number of customers interviewed.

Response Rate = Percent of customers completing interviews out of total number of customer records *with valid email addresses*. The numerator of this equation equals the number of interviews minus the number of disqualified interviews. The denominator equals the number attempted minus the number of invalid customer records. Invalid customer records are those that are attempted and result in one of two outcomes: 1) the email address provided is invalid (bounced, undeliverable, not able to load/incorrect, technical issue) 2) the customer is contacted and claims not to have received services.

Mean = the arithmetic average; the sum divided by the number of cases.

N = Indicates number of completed interviews or number of customers asked a particular question.

DK/Ref = Indicates that a customer answered “don’t know” or refused to answer a particular question.