

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

---

Subcommittee on Human Services

---

Mission and Governance Statement

AGENCY MISSION STATEMENT:

The Office of Disability Concerns provides accurate and timely information, technical assistance, referral, education, awareness and advocacy for all things in the disability community. We act as an intermediary for persons with disabilities and provide solution and services for those with disabilities. The agency involves all staff in development and its process is ongoing.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR:

Doug MacMillan, Director  
1111 N Lee Ave, Suite 500, Oklahoma City, OK 73103  
Phone: (405) 522-6700

GOVERNANCE:

The director of the agency is appointed the Governor of the State of Oklahoma. This agency does not have a governing board but it has two advisory committees. They are the Advisory Committee to the Office of Disability Concerns and the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Both committees are compiled of Governor's appointments. They provide valuable insight to concerns from their local experience.

GOVERNANCE ACCOUNTABILITY:

The Office of Disability Concerns has no governing board or commission. We are accountable to the Governor's Office and abide by the rules and regulations set by the legislature.

MODERNIZATION EFFORTS:

Recurring costs are analyzed to determine cost benefit, such as the migration procurement management, financial and support services to OMES "Shared Services". The result was a reduction in salary cost with an additional cost to admin, by overall a cost savings to the agency. Also, detailed analysis of employee tasks and appropriate assignment in conjunction with a training program to improve skill cost ratios. Print material is expensive; the agency prints on demand and utilizes a data CD to distribute information. Our agency believes in a "Stone Soup" approach to activities. We try to be included in multiuse events where our message is joined with others to increase impact as well as decrease cost. Both outreach and trainings opportunities are carefully analyzed, and where possible share the message with other groups to promote to a larger audience. Agency moved from Shepherd Mall location to cohabitate with another agency with an interagency agreement. This resulted in a reduced cost. Also, adherence to a strict schedule, careful vendor selection was able to move agency from one location to a much smaller space with less than \$7k. This cost included all movers, packing, IT equipment move and surplus of excess material. To further save costs, and due to the phone upgrades (which would have resulted in an additional cost of nearly \$750 a month), replaced to the Automatic Call Distribution System with a call blast, not as efficient and lose reporting capabilities, but does distribute inbound call volume. Used training to augment call handling. All activities are measured through the mission statement and if they are a benefit to citizens of Oklahoma. Other cost-cutting and productivity improvements include utilizing state

## Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

---

### Subcommittee on Human Services

employee training, arrangement of job duties, better use of electronic data, as well as installation and use of a phone system.

#### CORE MISSION:

Our mission reaches to a large cross section of Oklahoma's population. As stated in the recent release "2013 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium", Oklahoma has approximately 570,000 individuals with a disability, which is slightly more than 15% of the population. This community has a wide range of concerns and may not be aware of what is available. When an individual reaches out to our agency we work with them to identify available resources that may help them in their concern. Our reference resource base is over 25,000 entities that offer a solution. Note that other state agencies are included in the list, but it also contains many times more non-profits and specialty groups. We try to connect with the right resource at the right time. Our mission also expands into outreach and awareness to our state with specialty events. Our mission falls into 5 major categories

- Technical assistance with all things concerning disability
- Training and awareness to businesses, schools, general public, groups and associations as well as other state agencies
- Client Assistance Program
- Maintain inbound channels to support inquiries over a variety of subjects that may be impacting a person with a disability.
- Maintain an original library of information that includes some excellent practical publications, training material, suggested reading material, Facebook and our website

The Office of Disability Concerns has the following powers and duties:

1. To identify the needs of people with disabilities on a continuing basis and to attempt to meet those needs.
2. To serve as a referral and information source for the people with disabilities seeking services and for agencies seeking assistance in their provision of services.
3. To generate community awareness and support of disability programs.
4. To advise and assist the Governor and the Legislature in developing policies to meet the needs of citizens with disabilities.
5. To assist agencies in complying with federal laws.
6. To enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.
7. To provide resources to individuals with disabilities who contact ODC either by phone, fax, web, chat or walk-ins.
8. ODC actively participates in Oklahoma's Workforce system by providing input on issues and identifying opportunities for people with disabilities.
9. Actively work with state employees on the advantages of hiring people with disabilities, assist employers with understanding of ADA issues and promote disability awareness.

The Client Assistance Program (CAP) was established to advise and inform clients, client applicants, and other individuals with disabilities of all the available services and benefits under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and of the services and benefits available to them under Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Services include

## Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

---

### Subcommittee on Human Services

---

#### Mission and Governance Statement

advising and informing individuals of their rights in direct connection with programs authorized under the Act, including advocacy services. CAP does not provide financial, housing or medical benefits directly to individuals with disabilities. Agencies designated by the governor to provide CAP services help clients or client applicants pursue concerns they have with programs funded under the Rehabilitation Act. The governor may designate a public or private entity to operate the CAP. CAP provides an avenue for clients of the Department of Rehabilitation Services to appeal the services they receive. CAP provides advocacy with authority to investigate client concerns. The public with disabilities has redress and by extension a better quality of services in their search to rely on employment rather than a disability payment for their livelihood.

What are the benefits of this program to other agencies: CAP directly benefits DRS by providing quality assurance to its clients with disabilities who are seeking employment. CAO provides assurances to the U.S. Department of Education that employment services within DRS are provided according to policy and federal law. CAP provides an avenue for clients of the Department of Rehabilitation Services to appeal the services they receive. CAP provides advocacy with authority to investigate client concerns. The public with disabilities has redress and by extension a better quality of services in their search to rely on employment rather than a disability payment for their livelihood.

What are the benefits of this program to other agencies: CAP directly benefits DRS by providing quality assurance to its clients with disabilities who are seeking employment. CAO provides assurances to the U.S. Department of Education that employment services within DRS are provided according to policy and federal law.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

##### **Accomplishments Over the Past Year:**

- Helped over 2,500 Oklahomans with their disability concerns;
- Distributed over 200 letters to businesses, Title II entities about ADA concerns with suggested resources;
- Implemented an ADA resource page on the web site containing information and resources;
- Client Assistance Program handled more than 130 cases with over 800 contacts;
- Expanded CAP outreach with display packets to every DRS office;
- Completed over 75 trainings and events on disability awareness;
- Participated in several groups including the Governor's Economic and Workforce Development Council, the Central Oklahoma Workforce Investment Board, United We Ride, Department of Rehabilitation Policy Committee, and ARDC;
- Hosted HRDS classes in Oklahoma City and Tulsa;
- Supported Sooner Success;
- Became a CLEET certified training provider;
- Worked in Police and Community Trust as a disability advocate; and
- Joined with or hosted multiple events including a state agency career fair, police and community training, and disability awareness training.

##### **Goals for The Upcoming Year:**

## Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

---

### Subcommittee on Human Services

- Provide a readily available up-to-date resource for Oklahomans with disabilities to assist in identifying available services throughout the state;
- Maintain the agency's status as the technical resource for our state concerning disability issues, concerns, laws, regulations and general application as well as working diligently with state policymakers on disability matters;
- Provide CLEET accredited training to police and first responder groups on "How Understanding a Disability Will Lead to Better Police and Community";
- Continue to host "Life Skills" a community cooperative effort to interested groups;
- Provide assistance with informational booths at professional occupational meetings, educational trainings, press releases and other publications, website and telephone requests, and referrals from other entities that assist people with disabilities;
- Provide speakers statewide to discuss disability issues with businesses, governmental entities, and other interested parties;
- Offer disability related training and resource material, including a wide range of engaging awareness training for interested groups, employers, businesses, associations and agencies;
- Increase public awareness and understanding of the Office of Disability Concerns as an advocate and a guide to services for persons with disabilities;
- Increase contacts for information/advocacy and training by 5% year over year;
- Promote awareness and acceptance among the general public of the value and potential of persons with disabilities;
- Promote, coordinate and conduct a series of Ability Job Fairs throughout the state with the long-term goal of establishing a repeatable model; and
- Continue awareness of accessibility issues throughout the state.

#### **Major Agency Projects:**

- Organizing Ability Job Fairs in order for the disabled community to showcase their skills to both private and public employers;
- Working with several partners promoting positive employment outcomes by including an employment piece with Sooner Success events;
- Using our CLEET approved and accredited training course to provide Oklahoma Police and First Responders disability awareness and mental health first aid;
- Working with several groups host Life Skills for individuals with disabilities;
- Hosting events addressing good physical, mental, and social health;
- Investigating reported violations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and taking proactive appropriate action;
- Work with the Oklahoma Election Commission to provide information at the next annual meeting concerning accessibility requirements for Oklahoma polling places; and
- Helping Oklahoma Citizens that may be disabled with connection to resources and empowerment to make a difference in their lives.

Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on Human Services

Mission and Governance Statement

**Savings, Efficiencies and Shared Services:**

- Created a resource database of available services, replacing an outdated and inefficient rolodex system, with results that can be exported into an email for the client's reference;
- Reduced printing costs by placing most information on CD;
- Reduced the print load by using a smaller profile tri-fold which is printed on demand thus lowering printing costs and allowing the material to be updated on a regular basis;
- Provided employee training through YouTube to increase skills in areas such as business communication and presentation skills, and PowerPoint skills;
- Moved the agency to shared space reducing rent;
- Creative use of the web site and Facebook to provide information, resources and training;
- Creative phone integration with a call "blast" replacing a possible very costly automatic call distribution system

**PRIVATE SECTOR ALTERNATIVES:**

Are any of the services which are performed by the agency also performed in the private sector in Oklahoma? In other states?

The agencies blend of a customer focus, self-advocacy and education provides a one of a kind service that is not offered by any other group in Oklahoma. Our citizens who call the Office of Disability of Concerns have a variety of issues and opportunities where we take the time to communicate, understand and connect to a self-advocated solution. Most solutions are not another state sponsored program, but the knowledge that our citizens can make choices and positive results by using available resources. The services of this office could not provide by a private or a non-profit entity. To my knowledge, many other states in the nation have equivalent agencies. The State of Oklahoma was one of the first states in the nation to authorize such services and has been a national leader.

Basically, we answer, we provide resources, we advocate, we train, we research and we do.

1. Provide a readily available resource for Oklahomans with disabilities to help identify assistance resources throughout the state. This includes all back-office activities to maintain currency on what resources are available.
2. Reaffirm and maintain the status as the technical resource for our state concerning disability issues, concerns, laws, regulation and general application. Work diligently with our legislature and state agencies on disability matters.
3. Provide agency services on informational booths at professional occupational meetings, educational trainings, technical assistance to agencies and businesses, press releases and other publications, website and telephone requests, and referrals from other entities that assist people with disabilities.
4. Provide speakers state wide to discuss disability issues to businesses, governmental entities, and other interested parties.
5. Based on timely issues and opportunities conduct, partner, leverage and participate in events that achieve specific goals or change concerning disability issues concerning our state.

## Oklahoma Senate Committee on Appropriations

---

### Subcommittee on Human Services

6. Offer disability related training and resource material. To include providing HRDS courses on disability awareness to state employees and supervisors. Offer a wide range of engaging awareness training for interested group, employers, businesses, associations and agencies as well as public sector.
7. Now CLEET certified, we offer to our first responders credits in their continuing education on disability and mental health and how it may impact their performance of duties.

Has the agency been approached by any foundation, for-profit or not-for-profit corporation with efforts to privatize some of the functions of the agency?

Our particular mission of American with Disabilities Act in Oklahoma, requires a unique blend of skills, knowledge and experience. There are pockets and groups that work a particular interest or focus. Very few work concerns that span ALL disabilities. Our mission and business process cross over these silos with connections and referrals. As a resource for the state, we keep other agencies aware of current trends as well as support any inquiries.