



# South Carolina Commission for the Blind

**FY 2023-24 BUDGET HEARING**

# Agency Officials

- ▶ Darline Graham, Commissioner
- ▶ Matt Daugherty, Operations Director
- ▶ Luis Mendoza, Human Resources Director
- ▶ Ryan Skinner, Business Services Director
- ▶ Karma Marshall, Consumer Services Director
- ▶ J. Michael Daniels II, Quality Assurance Director
- ▶ Mark Gamble, Communications Director
- ▶ Thomas Smith, General Counsel

# Agency Overview

South Carolina Commission for the Blind



Our mission is to provide quality individualized vocational rehabilitation services, independent living services and prevention-of-blindness services to blind and visually impaired consumers, leading to competitive employment and social and economic independence.

# Agency Overview

## South Carolina Commission for the Blind

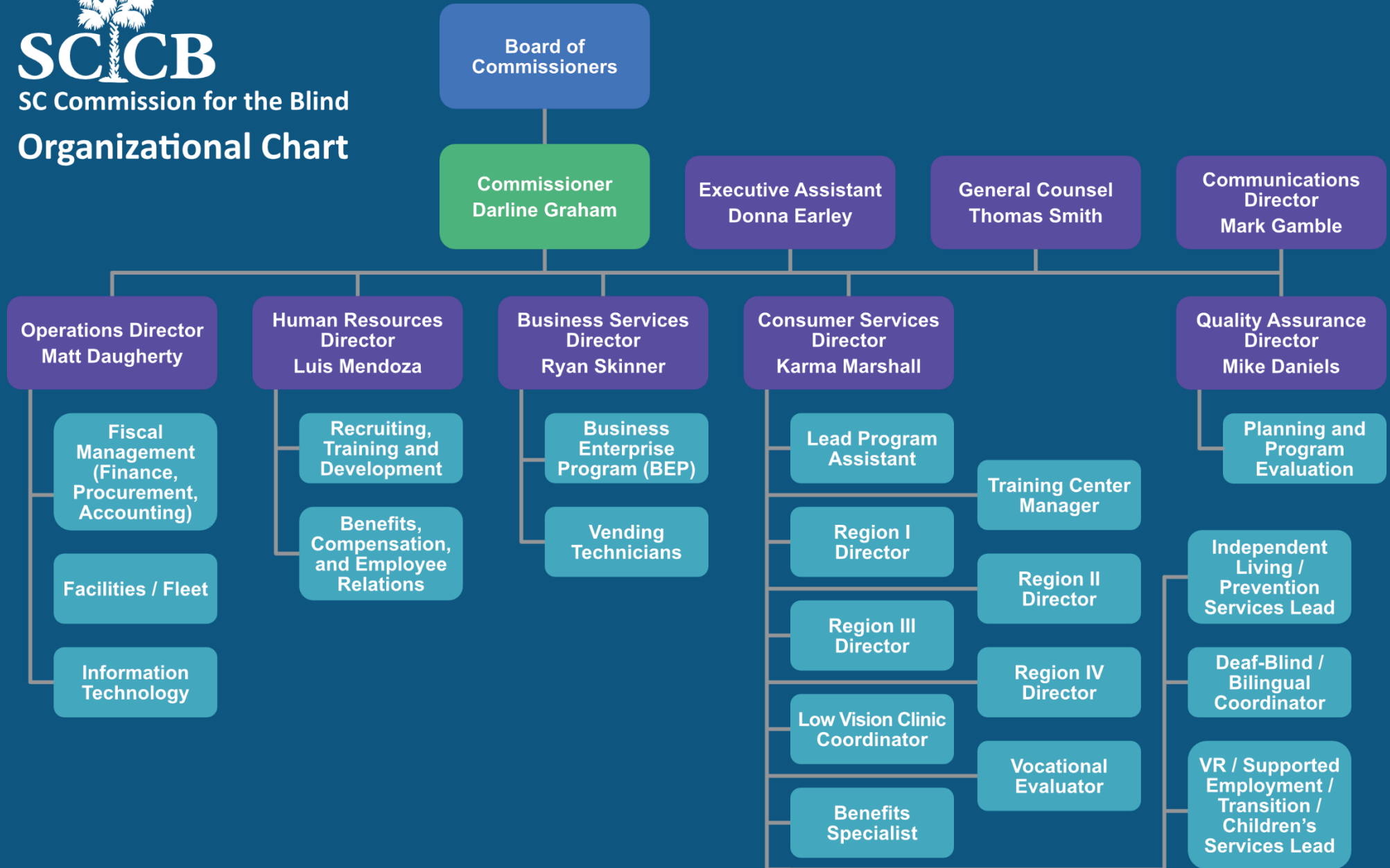
We offer **specialized and personalized services** that lead to employment and/or social and economic independence **for individuals age 3 and up who are blind or have vision loss** .

- ▶ **Employment:** In our Vocational Rehabilitation program, which includes a residential component, we help eligible consumers find, maintain, or regain employment. We provide counseling and guidance, educational opportunities, vocational training, and assistive technology to prepare them for career opportunities.
- ▶ Our Business Enterprise Program helps qualified individuals become entrepreneurs and operate their own vending or food service business.

# Agency Overview

## South Carolina Commission for the Blind

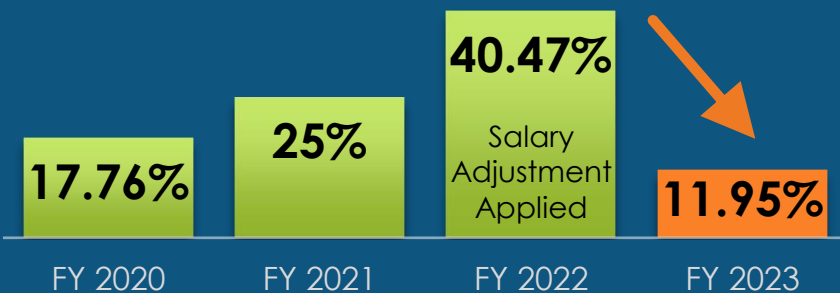
- ▶ **Independence:** We help consumers remain independent within their homes and communities:
  - ▶ Children's Services assists children ages 3 to 12, ensuring they have assistive technology available at home and with building confidence and self-sufficiency from an early age.
  - ▶ Older Blind Services assists those 55 and older in remaining independent by providing specialized training and low vision devices.
- ▶ **Prevention:** We provide financial assistance for sight-saving surgeries for individuals who don't have insurance, who are underinsured, or who otherwise could not afford it. Education on blindness prevention and eye safety is also provided around the state.



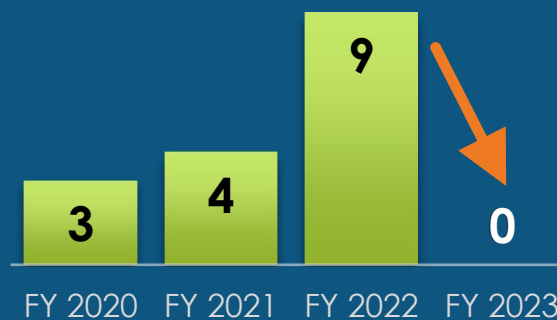
# FTE Breakdown

	State	Federal	Earmarked	Total (FY22)	Current (FY23)
Authorized	38.38	83.11	1.00	122.49	122.49
Filled	31.07	54.93	1.00	87.00	90.00
Vacant	7.31	28.18	0.00	35.49	32.49

## Overall Turnover Rate



## Counselor Turnover



## Equal Employment Opportunity Goal Attainment

89.6%

# Funding Streams

## Federal

Administration		
Vocational Rehabilitation Grant	\$9,785,887.00	17.62%
Older Blind Grant		
2 Supported Employment Grants (adult & children's)		

## State

Administration		
Children's Services (100% state funded)	\$5,403,083.00	9.73%
Prevention Services (100% state funded)		
Matching funds for federal grants		

## Earmarked

Federal dining contract at Fort Jackson (\$40 million pass-through: Army → SCCB → SC Treasurer → Blind Licensed Vendors)	\$40,344,500.00	72.65%
Donations		
Social Security reimbursements		
Vending Facility Program		
Sale of Surplus Assets		

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\$55,533,470.00

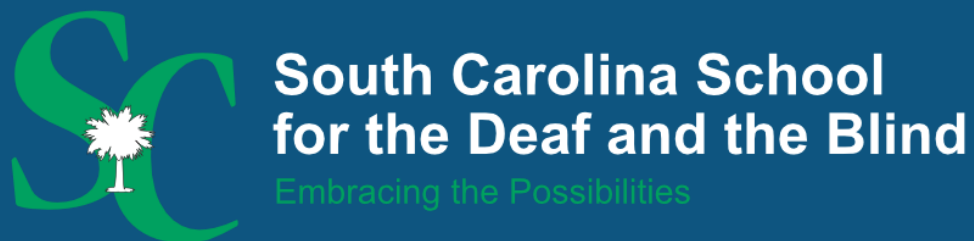


# Agency Highlights

## Partnerships

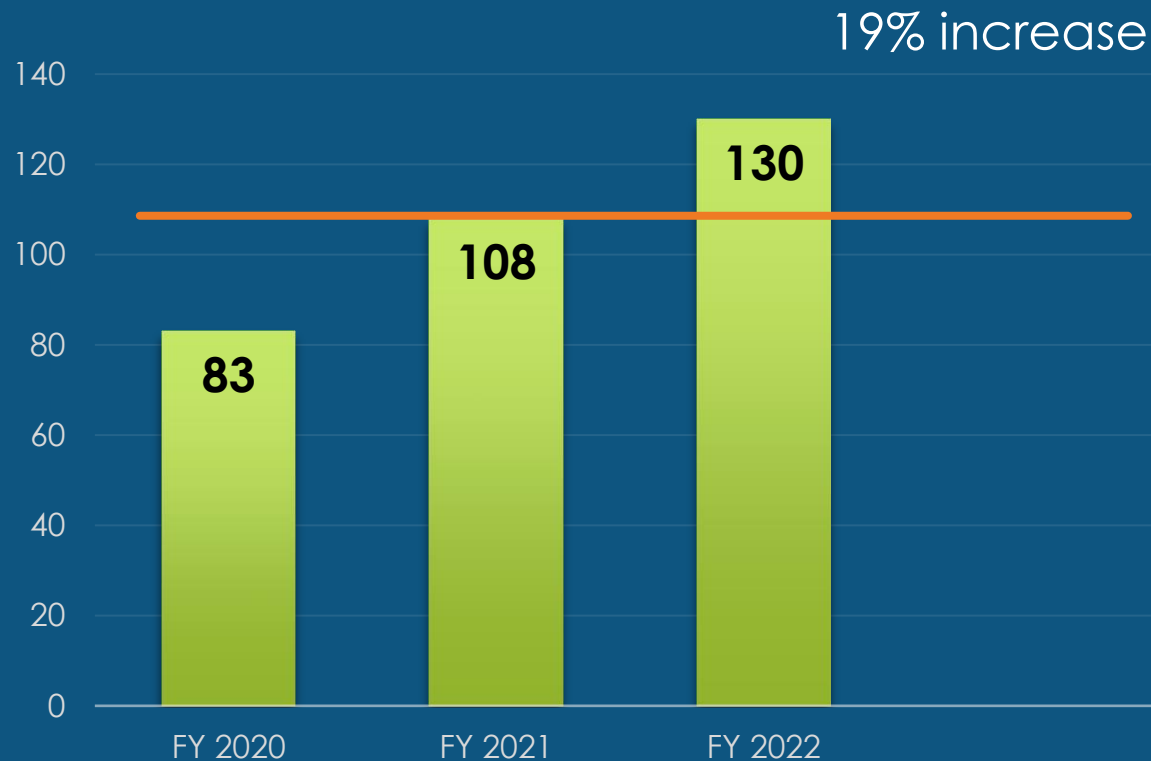


- ▶ National Federation of the Blind – Successful Transitions
- ▶ SC School for the Deaf and Blind
- ▶ Medical University of South Carolina – Storm Eye Institute
- ▶ Conduent Incorporated



# Agency Highlights

## Successful Employment Outcomes



Position	Hourly Wage
Regional Manager	\$72.12
Property Real Estate Manager	\$54.95
Computer Programmer	\$32.69
Middle School Teacher	\$31.88
Licensed Practical Nurse	\$29.00

Average hourly wage \$15.10

# Challenges

## Lack of Legal Support

- ▶ Contracts and agreements
  - ▶ Agreements (more than 50, totaling over \$40 million) with vendors or other agencies
  - ▶ Compliance with **complex** federal and state laws and regulations
- ▶ Personnel issues
  - ▶ Employment law
  - ▶ Disciplinary, grievance, termination
- ▶ Program support
  - ▶ Understanding and interpretation of federal and state laws and regulations
  - ▶ Policies and procedures

# Challenges

## Lack of Legal Support

- ▶ Agency consulted with multiple outside attorneys for legal needs
  - ▶ Resulted in delays providing services and responses to legal issues:
    - ▶ Time required to find appropriate counsel
    - ▶ Outside counsel must research the agency plus complex state and federal laws and regulations concerning programs and services offered by the agency

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To mitigate these challenges and risks to the agency:

- ▶ Agency hired an attorney utilizing limited available earmarked funds and a temporary FTE adjustment

Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
(As Amended Through P.L. 114-  
95, Enacted December 10, 2015

20 USC  
Title 20 - Education  
Chapter 6A - Vending Facilities  
for Blind in Federal Buildings

Sec. 107  
facilities Workforce Innovation and  
Opportunity Act  
Section 1.  
Title I - Workforce Development  
Activities

34 CFR Part 361 State Vocational  
Rehabilitation Program

Title 34 Education  
Subtitle B Regulations of the  
Offices of the Department of

34 CFR Part 395 Vending Facility  
Program for the Blind on Federal  
and Other Property  
Title 34 Education  
Subtitle B Regulations of the  
Offices of the Department of  
Education

SC Code of Laws  
Title 43 - Social services  
Chapter 25  
Commission for the Blind

SC Code of Laws  
Title 43 - Social services  
Chapter 26  
Operation of Vending Facilities  
by Blind Persons

SC Code of Regulations  
Chapter 18  
SC Commission for the Blind  
Title I - Business Enterprise  
Program

# Recurring Budget Request

## Agency Attorney

- ▶ Add one (1) FTE plus operating funds
- ▶ Provide timely legal advice/support to agency
- ▶ Ensure compliance with complex state and federal laws and regulations
- ▶ Provide guidance on regulations, policies and procedures
- ▶ Assist with contract development and employment law and personnel matters

$\$87,329 \text{ (1 FTE)} + \$39,298 \text{ (fringes)} + \$22,549 \text{ (operating)} = \$149,176$

# Proviso Request

- ▶ I: Reallotment Funds — Allow SCCB to utilize Vocational Rehabilitation funds that may be received after the initial grant period
- ▶ II: Deferred Maintenance — Create account with Treasurer's Office to store funds until needed for deferred maintenance, capital projects, ordinary repairs and maintenance
- ▶ III: Remodeling — Transfer unused funds allocated for canceled remodeling project to current capital improvement projects

# Carryforward

- ▶ \$63,226.45 — Regular carryforward
- ▶ \$30,000.00 — Capital project carryforward
- ▶ We plan to spend carryforward towards the state portion of:
  - ▶ Capital projects (ex: Columbia Complex renovations).

# Federal Relief Funds Summary

- ▶ No funds pending federal approval
- ▶ No relief funds requested



# Wrap-Up

- ▶ Thank you for your time and attention in considering our funding requests.
- ▶ SCCB provides services to SC citizens who may otherwise be reliant on greater public support.
- ▶ Federal mandates require us to obtain just over a 20% match from the state of SC in order to receive our full federal funding.
- ▶ Our programs offer specialized and personalized services that lead to employment and independence.

# SCCB Success Stories



Frances Wilson-Pierre  
Older Blind Services



Miriam Lozneau  
Deaf-blind Services

**Success stories included in notebook**