



**AGENCY OF HUMAN SERVICES
DEPT. OF DISABILITIES, AGING & INDEPENDENT LIVING**

Department Overview for the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare
January 28, 2025



DAIL Mission



To make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or live with a disability, with dignity, respect, and independence.

Guiding Principles

DAIL is committed to strengthening the continuum of care for people with disabilities and older Vermonters, including enabling people to choose where they receive supports and services and to be fully included as members of their communities. This commitment is underlined by State and Federal mandates such as:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- The Developmental Disabilities Act (DD Act).
- The Older Americans Act (OAA) & Older Vermonters Act (OVA).
- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- The Vermont Health Care Administrative Rules (HCAR).
- The Medicaid Global Commitment 1115 Waiver.
- The CMS Settings Rule.
- The Olmstead Decision: Requires states to provide services to people in the least restrictive environments possible.

What is DAIL?

Commissioner's Office and 5 Divisions: ~340 staff

- ➔ Adult Services Division
- ➔ Developmental Disabilities Services Division
- ➔ Division for the Blind & Visually Impaired
- ➔ Division of Licensing & Protection
- ➔ HireAbility Vermont

Adult Services Division (ASD)

The Adult Services Division is responsible for managing a full array of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) for older Vermonters and adults with physical disabilities.

- Vermont Medicaid, the federal Older Americans Act and State General Funds are the primary sources of funds for these services.

ASD's primary partners include the Area Agencies on Aging, the Designated and Specialized Service Agencies, the Home Health Agencies, the Adult Day Centers, SASH and Long-Term Care Facilities.

Together with our community partners, ASD served thousands of Vermonters in SFY24. Some highlights include:

- 48,502 people received a variety of Older Americans Act Services.
- 8,695 people received home-delivered meals.
- 6,663 people received Choices for Care services across all settings.
- 4,755 people received SASH services.
- 374 people participated in Adult Day programs.



Developmental Disabilities Services Division

The Developmental Disabilities Services Division (DDSD) supports people to live, work and participate as integrated citizens in their local communities, pursuing their own choices, goals, aspirations, and preferences.

- DDSD plans, coordinates, administers, monitors, and evaluates state and federally funded services for people with developmental disabilities and their families within Vermont. Services are individualized to address the goals, capacities, needs, and values of each person.
- DDSD provides funding for services, systems planning, technical assistance, training, quality assurance and program monitoring and standards compliance.
- DDSD provides court-ordered public guardianship to adults with developmental disabilities and older Vermonters aged 60 and over on behalf of the Commissioner.

DDSD by the numbers:

- 3,394 people were served in Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS).
- 1,017 people served by Flexible Family Funding.
- 646 people served by Family Managed Respite.
- 462 people served in Bridge program.
- 755 people received OPG public guardianship services.
- 328 people received OPG representative payee services.



Division for the Blind & Visually Impaired

DBVI assists individuals who are blind or visually impaired to meet their employment and independence goals by obtaining livable wage jobs and income.

- Provides training to improve employment skills and higher education that leads to degrees or certificates.
- Helps transition high school students from school to the world of work. DBVI's statewide approach for younger students helps to ensure that all blind and visually impaired high school students have pre-employment transition skills.
- Helps individuals of all ages to build adaptive skills related to their visual impairment through assistive technology, low vision, orientation and mobility, and independent living skills.

How many DBVI served (SFY2024):

- 1,163 (Includes DBVI VR; DBVI Independent Living; and Older Blind programs).
- Total Training Hours, LEAP FFY2024: 2,344

Division of Licensing and Protection

DLP has two branches that work to protect vulnerable adults and individuals receiving care:

- [Survey and Certification](#) (S&C) is the State Survey Agency for the State of Vermont. In this role, S&C licenses and certifies health care organizations to ensure that they meet minimum state and federal regulatory compliance.
- [Adult Protective Services](#) (APS) investigates allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of vulnerable adults and implements protective services, as necessary, to limit future maltreatment.

DLP by the numbers: in SFY24:

Survey and Certification

- S&C conducted 266 onsite investigations at 492 combined complaints and self-reports across all State and federal provider groups - an increase of 4.5% from previous year.

Adult Protective Services

- APS received 3,947 reports alleging abuse, neglect, or exploitation of vulnerable adults, a decrease of 1% from the previous year.
- APS completed 402 investigations and 424 assessments. This is the first-year assessments have been conducted (added in the APS statute revision effective 7/1/23). Though investigations decreased by 19.9% from the previous the combination of investigations and assessments exceeds last year's investigations alone by 65%.

HireAbility

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation's (DVR's) mission is to help Vermonters with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain meaningful careers and to help employers recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. DVR rebranded as HireAbility Vermont in SFY 2022.

HireAbility serves people with disabilities in Vermont who face barriers to employment and helps participants figure out what types of career pathways will work for them, through assessment, counseling, and guidance. HireAbility also invests heavily in post-secondary training and education to help participants gain credentials that will lead to high wage and high-quality employment.

- About 150 staff located in 12 district offices around the State.
- Collaborates with other service providers to reach people with disabilities facing challenges to employment.
- Partners with multiple organizations to serve youth, offenders, veterans, people receiving public benefits, and those who need ongoing support.

HireAbility by the numbers:

- 6,734 individuals served in SFY 2024. 6,324 served in SFY 2023.
- 6,172 people were served in the core HireAbility program in SFY 2024. 5,762 served in SFY 2023.
- 1,598 high school students served through the Pre-Employment Transition Services program in SFY 2024. 1,479 were served in SFY 2023.



2024 Recent Successes

- Act 186 pilot housing project grants – expanding housing models people with I/DD
- [MissionCare at Bennington](#), a new specialty care facility serving those with complex needs or justice-involved – the first of its kind in Vermont – opened in Sept 2024
- New grants to AAAs for home-delivered meals expansion to reach the most food insecure.
- DAIL part of multi-state collaborative to support Direct Care Workforce.
- Fully staffed nurse survey team and newly adopted rules, bringing more oversight for health and safety at state licensed facilities.
- Pathways to Partnership (P2P) \$10 Million Grant from DOE to DBVI to strengthen transitions from school to work for students with disabilities.
- HireAbility's Opioid Employment Pilots – employment counseling and career services for Vermonters in treatment/recovery through community partnerships.

Important ongoing work

- Age Strong Vermont implementation. [Age Strong VT](#) is a 10-year, multi-sector plan developed collaboratively with the Department of Health and many state agencies and community partners.
- Continued work to develop supportive housing models.
- Transition to [conflict-free case management](#) for Choices for Care, Brain Injury Program and Developmental Services.
- Developmental Services Payment Reform: <https://ddsd.vermont.gov/project-initiatives/dds-payment-reform>
- Collaboration with and support of providers across the continuum of care.

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