



Office of
Financial Management
STATE OF WASHINGTON

Budget Activity Assessment

Department of Services for the Blind

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Executive Summary

- The agency has done a good job selecting relevant subject matter for these budget activity performance measures.
- Six of the ten performance measures show abnormal variation patterns that indicate something has changed in the underlying processes being monitored. In these instances, it is always a good practice to make a comment in the footnotes about whether the change was something caused by the agency or something from the outside that is affecting the measurement data.
- There are a few instances where the current data patterns are stable and not changing, but the results are not capable of meeting or exceeding the stretch targets indicated. In these instances, it is a good idea to make note of any initiatives aimed at changing and improving the underlying processes.
- The agency is commended for having enough data in all instances to perform some analysis. However, the most recent actual data entered into the Performance Measure Tracking System (PMT) is at least 4 quarters old at the time of this assessment.

Budget Activity Measure Qualitative Evaluation Summary

Budget Activity Number & Title	Evaluation Criteria						
	Relevance	Understandability	Comparability	Timeliness	Consistency	Reliability	Performance
A001 – Department of Services for the Blind Administration							
A006 – Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind							
A007 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind							
A008 – Community Independent and Child and Family Programs							

Meets or Exceeds OFM Expectations

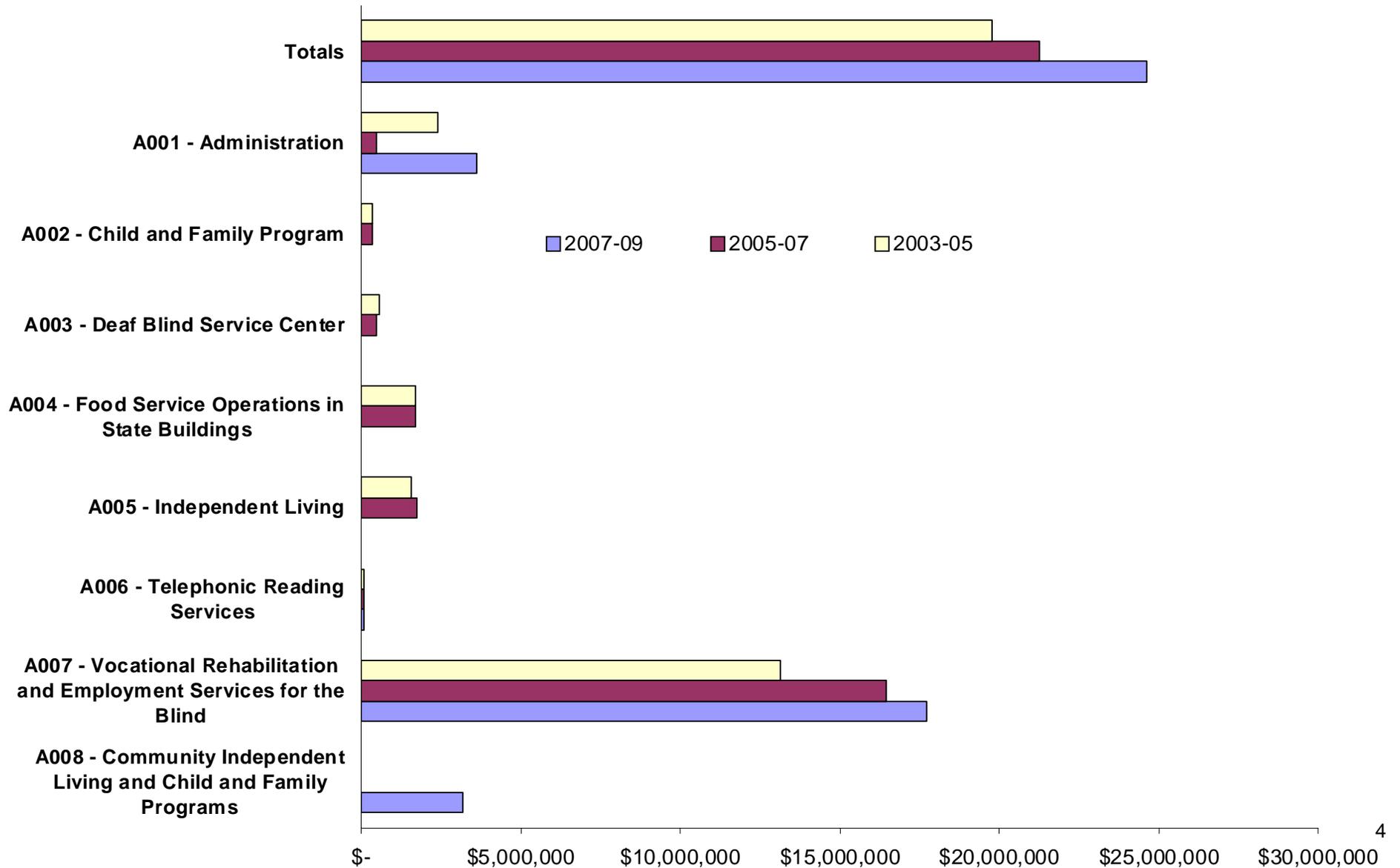
Marginally meets OFM Expectations

Needs Improvement to Meet OFM Expectations

Evaluation Criteria Definitions	
Relevance	Useful to a budget/policy development audience in assessing the level of accomplishment
Understandability	Clear, concise, and easy for a non-expert to understand
Comparability	Do the data, targets, and footnotes provide the reader with enough context to tell whether performance is getting better, worse, or staying the same?
Timeliness	Is the data current and reported frequently enough to be of value in assessing accountability and making decisions?
Consistency	Is the data collection method standardized and is the operational definition for data calculations adhered to?
Reliability	Is the information verifiable, free from bias, and a faithful representation of what it purports to represent?
Performance	Is actual performance in reference to the stated targets getting better, worse, or staying the same over time?

Budget History by Activity

Department of Services for the Blind Budget Allocations 2003-05 to 2007-09



Agency Comments and Reactions

- We appreciate the feedback that we were provided by OFM and will work with our budget analyst to incorporate the suggestions.
- Individual comments have been included in the Budget Activity and Measure Critique section.
- Several staff member have provided performance data. DSB will establish written procedures for each measure and will recalculate historical information reporting any significant variances.

Specific Opportunities for Improvement

Budget Activity Number and Title	Measures	Improvement Suggestions
A001 – Department of Services for the Blind Administration	3FA0 – Ratio of dollars allocated to direct services over dollars allocated to support services in the Department of Services for the Blind	Ratios are difficult to understand from a perspective outside the agency. Some explanation in the footnotes needs to be added to explain if more or less is desirable, or the measure could be changed to report the percent of dollars allocated to direct services.
A006 – Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind	1AE0 – Number of users of the National Federation of the Blind’s telephonic reading services	An explanation about the high targets for 2005-07 and a justification for lowering the targets for 2007-09 would be appropriate.
A007 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind	0IF0 – Average hourly wage of successful Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participant employment outcomes 1AD0 – Number of business enterprise program clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind 0IA0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients obtaining employment 0IB0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients served 0IE0 – Percentage of employment outcomes for Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participants at or above minimum wage	Since all the current and past actual data for 0IE0 is at 100%, the agency should consider placing the measure into inactive status unless it expects the current economic climate to lower future performance levels. It would also be appropriate to use the footnotes feature in PMT to make note of the causes for the abnormal variation patterns in the performance measures.
A008 – Community Independent and Child and Family Programs	2A00 – Hours of service provided to deaf-blind participants by the Deaf Blind Service Center 1AB0 – Number of child & family clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind 02B0 – Number of clients served in the independent living program of the Department of Services for the Blind	Two of the three performance measures display stable data patterns and performance levels that are not capable of regularly meeting or exceeding the performance targets. The agency and the OFM analyst need to make sure plans and budgets are in place to fundamentally change something in the underlying processes in order to gain the magnitude of improvement indicated.

Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A001 – Department of Services for the Blind Administration

Budget Activity Summary: Staff provide administrative support and management for the Department of Services for the Blind. Functions include: budget and accounting, personnel, training, and information technology. Also includes support for the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind.

Related Performance Measures

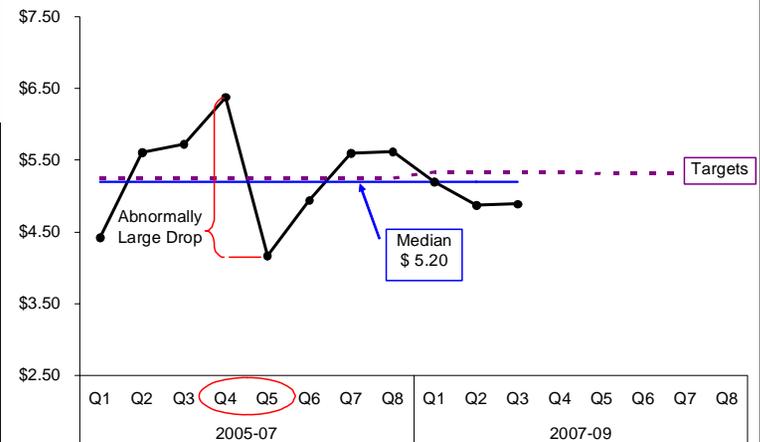
Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
3FA0 – Ratio of dollars allocated to direct services over dollars allocated to support services in the Department of Services for the Blind	Process	The abnormally large drop between the 4 th and 5 th quarters of 2005-07 usually indicate something changed in the underlying process. Since the current targets are almost identical to the median value of the actual data, it is likely the process will hit its targets roughly 50% of the time in the future.

OFM Assessor Comments: Most audiences find ratios difficult to interpret. The agency should consider adding some context in the footnotes to explain whether more or less is better and why, or change the measure to report the percent of dollars allocated to direct services.

What caused the drop between the 4th and 5th quarters in 2005-07?

Agency Contextual Comments: It appears that the abnormal drop can be attributed to differing interpretations of the measure by different staff. DSB will revise this measure from an expenditure ratio to direct services as a percentage of total expenditures.

3FA0 - Ratio of dollars allocated to direct services over dollars allocated to support services in the Department of Services for the Blind



Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A006 – Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind

Budget Activity Summary: Reading services for blind individuals through the use of phone lines. The service is operated by the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in Baltimore, Maryland.

Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
1AE0 – Number of users of the National Federation of the Blind's telephonic reading services	Workload	The abnormal shift in the actual data levels between the 7 th and 8 th quarters of 2005-07 is an indicator that something may have changed in the underlying process. The current performance levels meet or exceed the 2007-09 targets.

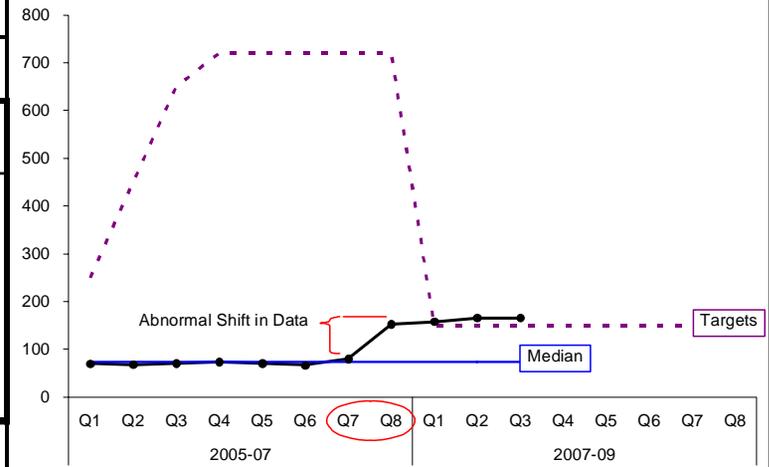
OFM Assessor Comments: **What caused the increase between the 7th and 8th quarters of 2005-07?**

Why were the targets set so high compared to the actual data in 2005-07?

Agency Contextual Comments: The spike in users between the 7th and 8th quarters of 2005-07 coincide with the addition of television listings to the service.

The initial targets were set up as a cumulative, duplicated headcount. Reported users are quarterly, unduplicated counts.

1AE0 - Number of users of the National Federation of the Blind's telephonic reading services



Budget Activity and Measure Critique

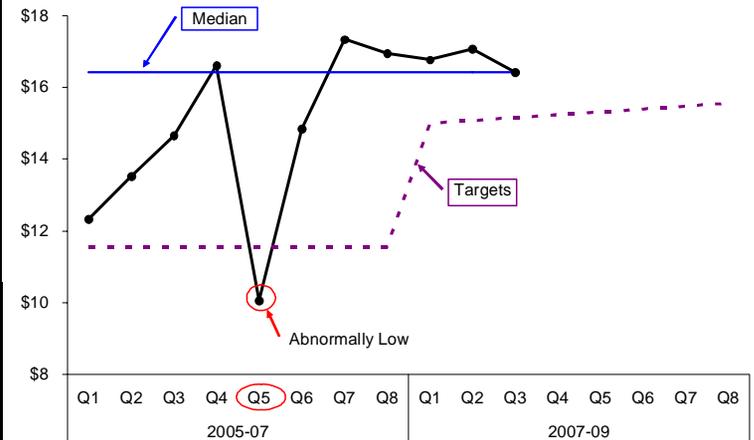
Budget Activity Number & Title: A007 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind

Budget Activity Summary: Enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become competitively employed by developing their skills, independence, and self-confidence. Services include: vocational counseling, assistive technology assessment and training, training of adaptive skills of blindness and adult basic skills, transition services, assistance with small business development, mental health counseling, transportation, assistance with job search, development, and placement, workplace accommodations, and employer follow-up.

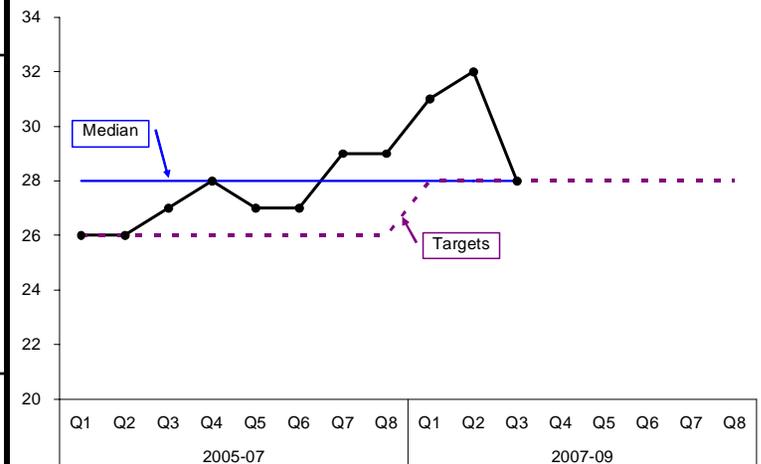
Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
0IF0 – Average hourly wage of successful Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participant employment outcomes	Outcome	The abnormally low data point in the 5 th quarter normally indicates something changed in the underlying process Aside from that one point, the process appears to be capable of consistently achieving its targets
1AD0 – Number of business enterprise program clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind	Input - Workload	Stable and predictable – Nothing is changing. Future results should be similar to current performance levels. Since the current targets are almost identical to the median value of the actual data, it is likely the process will hit its targets roughly 50% of the time in the future.
0IE0 – Percentage of employment outcomes for Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participants at or above minimum wage	Outcome	No chart – All reported actual data = 100%; targets are 95%

0IF0 - Average hourly wage of successful Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participant employment outcomes



1AD0 - Number of business enterprise program clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind



Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A007 – Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind (cont.)

Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
OIA0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients obtaining employment	Outcome	The abnormally large jump between the 8 th quarter of 2005-07 and the 1 st quarter in 2007-09 usually indicates something changed in the underlying process. The targets seem more like estimates, since they mirror the variation patterns in the actual data.
OIB0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients served	Input - Workload	The abnormally large jump between the 8 th quarter of 2005-07 and the 1 st quarter in 2007-09 usually indicates something changed in the underlying process. The jump appears to coincide with a jump in the targets.

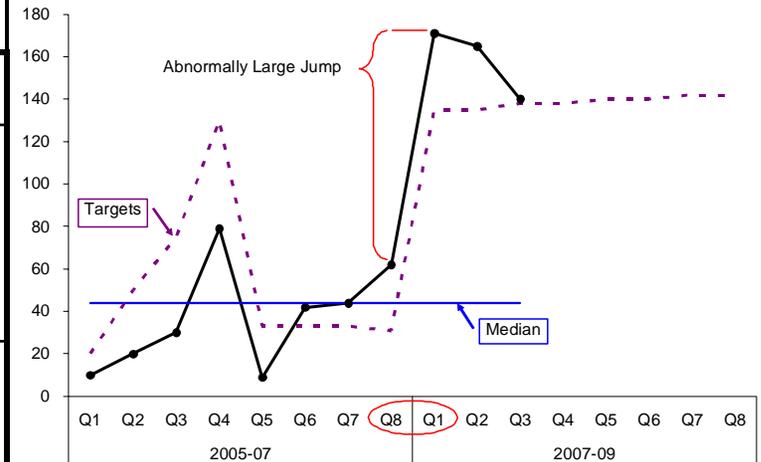
OFM Assessor Comments: Is there a correlation or a logic model that connects the five measures used for this budget activity?
What caused the abnormal variation patterns in 3 out of the 5 measures?
What is going to change in order for the agency to be able to consistently meet or exceed the stretch target for clients served in OIB0?

Agency Contextual Comments: All of the charts except 1AD0 have correlation and relate to the overall logic model for vocational rehabilitation. For instance, placements increase with an increased number of clients served, but at a declining percentage of overall clients and closures due to higher individual counselor caseloads. Also, the volatility of wages often spike when the number of closures is low resulting in fewer wages to average.

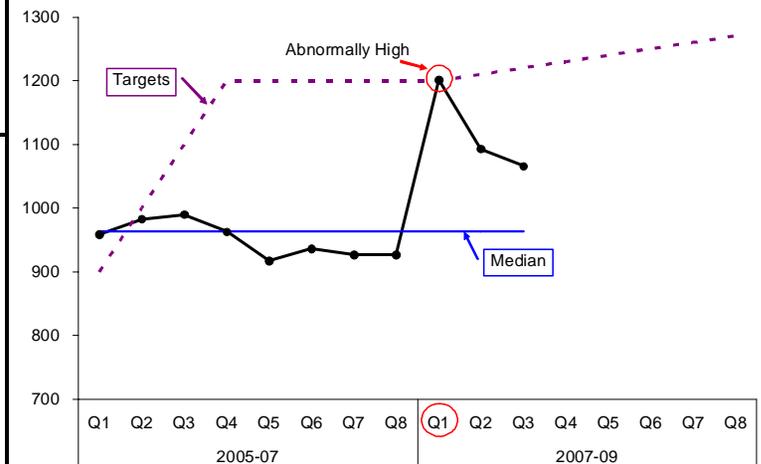
It appears that the abnormal jumps can be attributed to differing interpretations of the measures by different staff. DSB will submit revised, consistent data to OFM.

The target was set as an annual cumulative number. DSB will request a revision of the target to a quarterly basis.

OIA0 - Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients obtaining employment



OIB0 - Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients served



Budget Activity and Measure Critique

Budget Activity Number & Title: A008 – Community Independent and Child and Family Programs

Budget Activity Summary: The Community Independent Living Program teaches recently blinded residents how to continue living in their homes after vision loss. The Child and Family Program provides support, advice, and information to families of blind children, teachers, and others about training, educational programs, and resources.

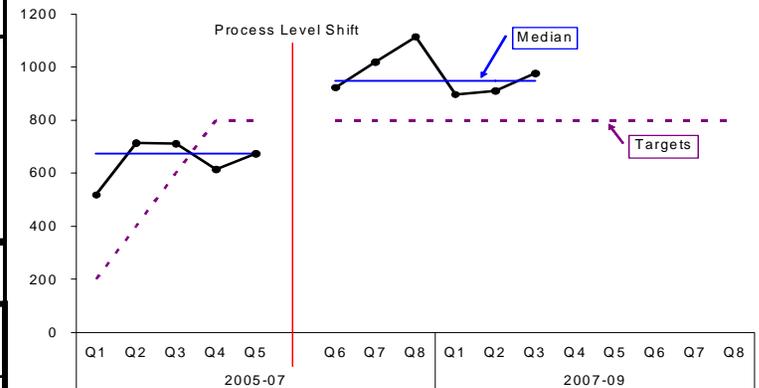
Related Performance Measures

Number & Title	Type	Analysis Comments
2A00 – Hours of service provided to deaf-blind participants by the Deaf Blind Service Center	Output	The process level shift is an indication that something changed in the underlying process. With the change, the actual data now appear to be capable of consistently meeting or exceeding the targets.
1A00 – Number of child & family clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind	Input - Workload	Stable and predictable – Nothing is changing. Future results should be similar to current performance levels. The targets appear to indicate an anticipated increase and subsequent change in 2007-09.
02B0 – Number of clients served in the independent living program of the Department of Services for the Blind	Input - Workload	Stable and predictable – Nothing is changing. Future results should be similar to current performance levels. The targets appear to indicate an anticipated increase and subsequent change in 2007-09.

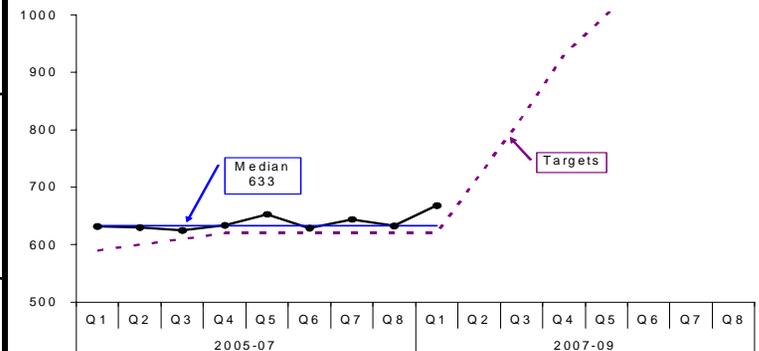
OFM Assessor Comments: Two of the three performance measures related to this activity are not currently capable of consistently meeting or exceeding the indicated targets.

Agency Contextual Comments: Two significant change took place in 2007-09 which should stabilize in 2009-11. The Child & Family Program received funding on a decision package for the 2007-09 biennium which doubled their state funding and provided them with a new client target. Budget cuts forced the agency to abandon the program expansion. The federal reporting rules for the Independent Living program has resulted in significant revisions to our provider contracts. The result has been a significant drop in the number of clients served, but also has resulted in a significant improvement in the level of service and reported information.

2A00 - Hours of service provided to deaf-blind participants by the Deaf Blind Service Center



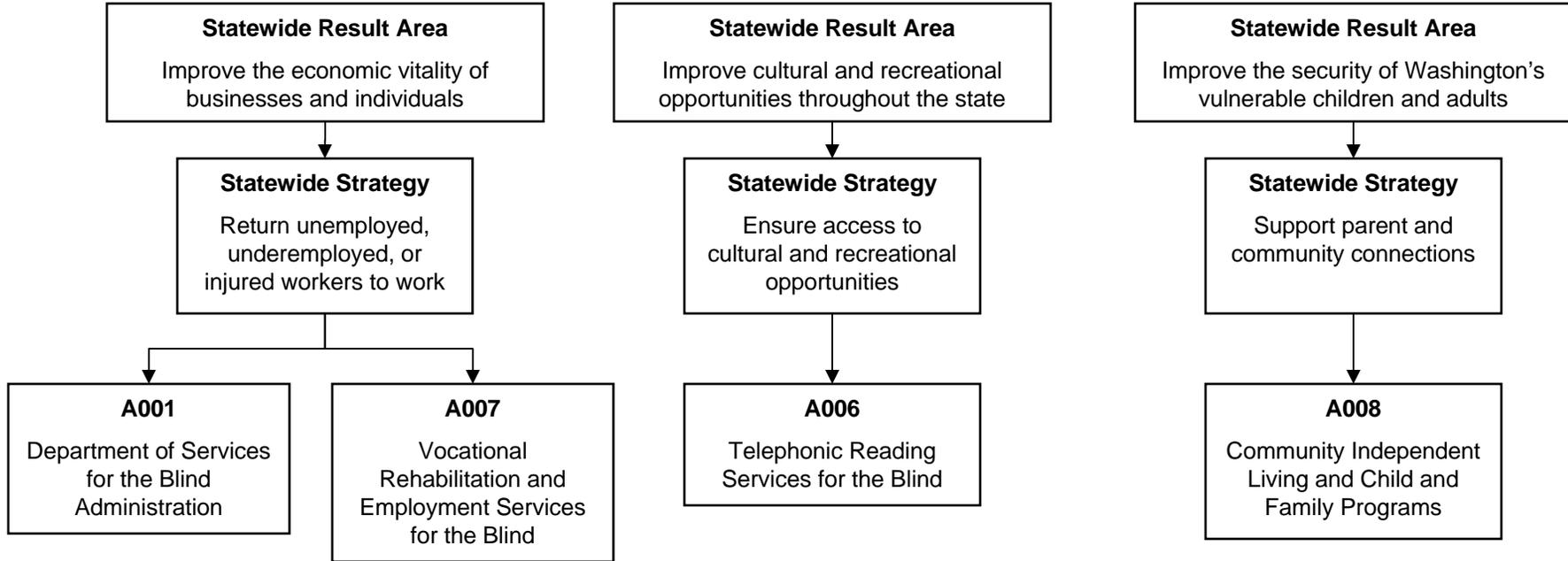
1A00 - Number of child & family clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind



02B0 - Number of clients served in the Independent Living Program of the Department of Services for the Blind



Alignment Overview – Budget Activity Structure



Input/Workload Measures

- 1AE0 – Number of users of the National Federation of the Blind's telephonic reading services
- 1AD0 – Number of business enterprise program clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind
- 0IB0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients served
- 1AB0 – Number of child & family clients served by the Department of Services for the Blind
- 02B0 – Number of clients served in the independent living program of the Department of Services for the Blind

Process/Efficiency Measures

- 3FA0 – Ratio of dollars allocated to direct services over dollars allocated to support services in the Department of Services for the Blind

Output Measures

- 2AO0 – Hours of service provided to deaf-blind participants by the Deaf Blind Service Center

Outcome Measures

- 0IF0 – Average hourly wage of successful Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participant employment outcomes
- 0IA0 – Number of Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation clients obtaining employment
- 0IE0 – Percentage of employment outcomes for Department of Services for the Blind Vocational Rehabilitation participants at or above minimum wage

Alignment Overview – Agency Strategic Plan Structure

