



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

**2025 Annual Report to the
Legislative Commission on Indian Services and
Tribal Affairs Advisor, Office of Governor Kotek**

Sent electronically to:

lcis@oregonlegislature.gov

jane.cigarran@oregon.gov

Activities of the Agency under ORS 182.162 to 182.168

Key Contacts

Commission for the Blind

535 SE 12th Ave.

Portland OR 97214

971-673-1588

Dacia Johnson, MS, CRC

Executive Director

Angel Hale

Director of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Tribal Liaison, Manager

Tribal Cultural Items Contact

Jonathan Scrimenti, EdD

Workforce Innovation Manager

Tribal Liaison, Staff

Vallory Alter, MS, CRC

Mission, Vision, and Objectives

The mission of Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB) is to *Empower Oregonians who are Blind to Fully Engage in Life*. The agency provides vocational

Commission for the Blind

535 SE 12th Avenue

Portland, OR, 97214

Phone (971) 673-1588

Toll Free (888) 202-5463

Fax (503) 234-7468

ocb.mail@ocb.oregon.gov

www.oregon.gov/blind



rehabilitation and independent living services to individuals who are blind, in partnership and collaboration with the Department of Human Services, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (OVRs). We specialize in education for individuals who are blind (or have conditions which will progress to blindness) or those who have low vision (often due to age-related vision loss) to live independently and find and secure employment. Our consumers range in age from young adults to senior citizens.

Our vision is “Blindness without barriers: A state of inclusion for Oregonians with vision loss.”

Communication Between the State Agency and the Tribes:

Oregon Commission for the Blind is committed to ensuring equity in accessing services across Oregon, including among our citizens who are tribal members. As a part of our efforts and in collaboration with DHS/OVRs, we have established partnerships and/or cooperative agreements with the following tribes:

- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde: MOU with OCB, OVRs
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation: MOU with OCB, OVRs
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs: MOU with OCB, OVRs
- Klamath Tribes: Moved to MOU with local Workforce Development Board where the Agency is named (but not the owner of the agreement).

In the past year, Commission for the Blind’s Tribal Liaison Vallery Alter reported that she has provided:

- **Grand Ronde Tribal VR Program:** Provided updated Agency training. Their staff has been invited to tour our Portland facility and Training Center, but this has not yet been scheduled.
- **Warm Springs Tribal VR Program:** Collaborated for two clients.
- **Umatilla Tribal VR Program:** Greg Sublett, VR Counselor (Redmond) is serving some members in that geographic area, and the Liaison is providing active support for that counselor.

- Continued contact to check in with the other programs.

In past years, we have:

- Worked with transition-aged youth to provide career exploration services and blindness skills training.
- Collaborated with Tribal VR directors in the state and continue to reach out to new ones.
- Collaborated jointly on some cases, as needed, with Tribal VR programs.
- Provided Letters of Support, upon request, to the Tribal VR offices for the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Umatilla Indian Reservation, and Warm Springs.

In our Vocational Rehabilitation Program, we will share resources and case management services with our partners in Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) programs. This includes granting access to specialized services that are available at the agency's Orientation and Career Center for the Blind where individuals develop skills such as cane travel, Braille, techniques of daily living, technology, and adaptive devices. We also have been able to offer work experience opportunities to assist individuals who are preparing for employment in their home communities.

When a tribe applies for and is awarded a grant to provide VR services, we share our resources and case management services with the Tribal partner(s). In years when they are not funded, we provide the full scope of services to youth and adult members of the tribes (with individual residency in Oregon).

Tribal Cultural Items

We are unaware of any Tribal Cultural items that could be in the Agency's possession, either on display or in storage. Due to the nature of our operations and facilities, we do not have a collection or repository where such items could be stored. We have not embarked on a formal survey, but this topic will be integrated into our cultural awareness and sensitivity trainings for staff, going forward.

Our commitment to provide inclusive services and our interdisciplinary and inter-agency collaboration includes cultural awareness and training and will foster open communication about expectations if and when staff does encounter such items, whether in the field or in our facilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. The Commission for the Blind looks forward to continued development of these important tribal relationships.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dacia Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dacia" being more prominent than the last name "Johnson".

Dacia Johnson, MS, CRC
Executive Director