

Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council

Full Council Meeting Agenda

May 15, 2025
9:00 A.M. – 2:30 P.M.

Beyond Vision

1540 S. 108th Street
West Allis, WI 53214

Microsoft Teams Meeting Option

[Meeting Link](#)

Meeting ID: 282 296 909 044 **Passcode:** aW97Kp22

To join by phone only, call (608) 571-2209 **Phone Conference ID:** 784 732 199#

9:00 – 9:15

Roll Call and Introductions
Announcements
Quorum Check
Approval of Minutes – February 2025

9:15 – 9:45

Committee Updates and Committee Member Approvals:

- Council Engagement Committee
- Performance Measures and Quality Assurance Committee
- Policy Review and Administration Committee
- Services to Business Committee
- Executive Committee

9:45 – 10:15

Career Pathways Grant Update

Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator

10:15 – 10:30

Break

10:30 – 11:30

Ticket to Work, Partnership Plus and Social Security Overview

Tania Hanford, DVR Program and Policy Analyst

11:30 – 12:00

WRC Officer Elections

12:00 – 12:30

Lunch Break

12:30 – 12:45

Public Comment

- 12:45 – 1:15 **DVR Administrative Update**
Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator
- 1:15 – 1:45 **CSNA Response Review**
Meredith Dressel, DVR Administrator
- 1:45 – 2:15 **CAP Report**
Jen Espinoza Forlenza, Advocacy Specialist for Disability Rights Wisconsin
- 2:15 – 2:30 **Review Action Items and Identify Future Agenda Topics**
- 2:30 **Adjourn**

*Public comment is limited to the time listed on the agenda. Comments can be sent at any time to: DVRWIRehabCouncil@dwd.wisconsin.gov.

*Comments sent to that e-mail box will be read to the full council at the next meeting unless a specific subcommittee is listed. If a specific subcommittee is listed, comments will be sent directly to them and reviewed at their next committee meeting.

A Statement of Mission

The Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council, working on behalf of Wisconsin residents with disabilities, will review, analyze, and advise the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) regarding the performance of its responsibilities in providing quality services to persons with disabilities.



Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR Quarterly Update

MEREDITH DRESSEL

DVR Administrator

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council | May 15, 2025 | Microsoft Teams

Program Year (PY) 2024 Outcomes

For cases closed **07/01/2024 – 04/23/2025:**

PY 2024 Closures	All Cases	All SE Cases	All Non-SE Cases
Total Successful Closures	2,593	511	1,805
Average Wages Earned Per Week	\$466	\$175	\$535
Average Wage Per Hour	\$17.06	\$12.56	\$18.13
Average Hours Worked Per Week	25	13	27
Private Insurance	863	106	757



Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) DVR Budget

- FFY 2024 budget reflects final federal award and applicable state match.
- FFY 2025 budget reflects available federal award and applicable state match through 4/22/2025 AK0

FFY	TOTAL Budget	TOTAL Spending
2023	\$89,605,936	\$89,605,936
2024 to date	\$89,605,936	\$89,605,936
2025 to date	\$99,977,420	\$46,606,836

**Data current as of 4/22/2025. Budget for 2025 includes all applicable state match. State GPR match funding has not changed during the reporting period.*



Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

Total Purchased Expenses FFY25: \$5,680,229

WDA	Consumers	Expenses
1	165	\$289,399
2	220	\$498,633
3	340	\$914,974
4	290	\$798,307
5	223	\$534,843
6	213	\$737,180

WDA	Consumers	Expenses
7	51	\$62,754
8	180	\$403,630
9	104	\$223,555
10	296	\$957,762
11	80	\$259,191

**Data current as of April 23, 2025*



RSA Negotiated Measures

Indicator	PY2024 Year to Date	PY2024 Negotiated Level	PY2025 Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	51.5%	57.1%	57.4%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	50.8%	54.9%	55.1%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$3,569	\$3,537	\$3,645
Credential Attainment Rate	41.6%	41.0%	41.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	43.1% AK0	61.5%	62.0%



Top Things Happening in DVR

- Time Study
 - Reviewing and analyzing results
- Service Provider Qualifications
 - DVR/DSPN collaboration on survey to providers
 - Service Provider Advisory Group to assist/provide input
 - Finalize/communicate requirements and timing by September 2025
- Project SEARCH Graduations
 - Over 200 graduates
 - May and June
- Rebranding Progress
 - Interviewed other states
 - Focus group scheduled for DVR staff
 - Other stakeholder focus groups next



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Policy Academy

- Met in March 2025
- Reviewed:
 - Due Process and Appeals Guidance
 - Education Resource Guide for Students and Families
 - FAQ on Purchase of Computer Goods and Services
- Asked for feedback from the field on denials, due process, and appeal rights.
- When to give decisions in writing and provide appeal rights?
 - When to give formal denials in writing?
 - What do you consider a denial?
 - What do you consider a reduction of services?



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Quality Assurance

- Met in April 2025
- Last Review: Repeat Consumers
- Next Review: Cases Closed "Unsuccessfully"
 - Investigate why case are closed to help inform actions that would reduce these types of closures.



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

START

- Met in February 2025 for a combined meeting with the County Communities on Transition (CCOT) staff.
- Explored key topics regarding youth transition.
- Brainstormed solutions to pre-identified barriers.
- Developed strategies and tools enhance role AKO in transition.



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

AsTec

- Last meeting was April 10.
- Reviewed Team Charter and Mission.
- Discussed which resources the team should be reviewing.
- Next steps for project and goals of the team.
- Presentation on new Assist Technology resource/credentialling program.



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

SenseAbility

- Last Meeting was April 8.
- Presentation from Jean Kenevan from the Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- QA case reviews for deaf and hard of hearing transition students.
- Discussed success stories and case consults.



DVR Internal Workgroup Updates

Workplace Wellness

- Met in February and April 2025.
- Reviewed wellness resources available through Well Wisconsin to include meQuilibrium.
- Promoted wellness activities related to National Reading Month in March and Earth Month in April.
- Shared Wellness and Engagement Activities completed with team members since last meeting.



DVR Staff Trainings Update

- **February 2025:** AT, Employment and Ethics: Making our Information Accessible with Laura Plummer
- **March 2025:** Employment Retention and Potentially Eligible Policies, Working with Consumers who are Blind or Visually Impaired
- **April 2025:** Client Assistance Program Training, Overcoming Personality Disorder Challenges in Employment with Dr. Daniel Fox
- **May 2025:** TBD
- **June 2025:** TBD



New Mediation Requests

- DVR received **one** mediation request between **01/01/25** and **03/31/25**:
 - This did not move forward as it was able to be resolved internally.



New Appeals Requests

- DVR received **four** appeals request between **01/01/25** and **03/31/25**:
 - One did not move forward as it was able to be resolved internally.
 - One is an open case in which the consumers request to dismiss, was granted.
 - One is an open case that is being moved to a hearing.
 - One is a closed case that is being moved to a hearing.



Appeal Hearing Outcomes FFY 2025

- **Six** Total Appeals:
 - **Two** – DVR motion to dismiss granted
 - **Two** – Consumer motion to dismiss granted
 - **Two** – Pending



DVR Senior Leadership Team Visits

- Meredith, Deanna, Allison, Anna, and Jennifer are attending one local DVR meeting in all 11 WDAs.
- Visits occurring June through September 2025.
- Gives local staff the opportunity to have direct contact with SLT.



CIE Two-Year Plan SFY 2026-2027

- Act 178 requires DVR, DHS, and DPI to create a plan every two years that contains collaborative agency objectives and targets to increase CIE for working age individuals with disabilities.
- WRC Policy Review and Administration will hold a special meeting in May to review the plan and provide their input.
- Public input session will be held on May 27, 2025.
- Plan is due to the legislature on June 30, 2025, and will be posted to the [CIE website](#).



Questions?





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Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment: Next Steps

MEREDITH DRESSEL

DVR Administrator

Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council | May 15, 2025 | Microsoft Teams

Further Understand Barriers and Needs

PCG recommends further exploration and analysis to clarify and confirm unserved and underserved populations, building on the work that DVR is currently implementing and based on assessments done in 2020 and 2022.

1. Determine when individuals from underrepresented groups stop receiving services.
2. Schedule qualitative interviews with providers, advocates, and consumers from racial/ethnic minority populations.
3. Perform linear regression of service spending by race.
4. Perform a comprehensive analysis to understand how much of the difference in case outcome is attributable solely to different labor market conditions.



Align Resources to Support Priorities

PCG recommends that DVR explore payment structures that support the programmatic priorities of the agency.

1. Create a unique expense category for mileage expenses reported by service providers with a statewide service agreement.
2. Consider expanding successful rate schedule improvements to reward providers for serving Order of Selection (OOS) priority populations (Category 1).



Examine and Adjust Policies / Procedures

PCG recommends that DVR review policy and in-the-field practice with the goal of improving services for underserved populations.

1. Explore additional communication methods and work with providers to implement them across DVR's stakeholder networks.
2. Examine and evaluate efficiencies (common criteria) between DVR and Tribal VR eligibility determinations.
3. Develop a standardized correctional institution approach.
4. Provide additional VR assistance for the incarcerated population.
5. Identify additional sources of mental health services.
6. Align job pipelines with Wisconsin "50 Hot Jobs" and in-demand occupations.



Training Needs for DVR Staff

PCG recommends that DVR explore training opportunities for VR and service provider staff that target identified areas of need.

1. Improve DVR staff communication and understanding of provider operations.
2. Explore providing mental health training for DVR staff so they can more effectively serve individuals with mental health needs.
3. Support DVR staff advancement through caseload specialization.



Training Needs for Service Provider Staff

PCG recommends that DVR explore training opportunities for VR and service provider staff that target identified areas of need.

1. Create opportunities for provider understanding of DVR operations.
2. Support the development and delivery of cultural competency training for provider staff.



Improve Recruitment and Collaboration

PCG recommends that DVR explore opportunities for collaboration within Wisconsin and at the national level to adopt cutting-edge practices in recruitment and retention.

1. Establish a Wisconsin-based workgroup.
2. Connect at the national level.



Examine and Adjust Policies / Procedures

PCG recommends DVR examine and revise policies and procedures to increase capacity of VR and provider services.

1. Continue DVR's ongoing VRC and VRS job restructuring efforts.
2. Explore expansion of virtual services.
3. Collaborate with existing service providers to determine if they can offer underprovided services.



Continue Provider Collaboration

PCG recommends continuing to collaborate with providers to streamline processes and documentation.

1. Continue the use of the Service Provider Advisory Group.



Increase Consistent Interpretation

PCG recommends improving consistent interpretation of technical specifications between offices and within DVR staff and making consistent clarifications available to service providers and other stakeholders, as necessary.

1. Identify specific technical specifications for improved consistency.
2. Develop training content and schedule for statewide delivery.



Add Revised Case Markers

PCG recommends adding revised case markers to capture more VR successes as well as tracking signed Individual Plans for Employment, progress in measurable skills gains and progress in credential attainment.

1. Determine a list of additional case markers.
2. Amend the current case management system to reflect new markers or write these markers into requirement for new case management system.
3. Train appropriate staff on definitions and processes.



Continue DVR Education

PCG recommends that DVR continue to strengthen training and resources for secondary and post-secondary settings to increase education and outreach and get information to potentially eligible individuals as quickly as possible.

1. Review and revise informational approaches.
2. Continue to educate and coordinate with secondary and postsecondary organizations.
3. Review DVR policy about secondary and post-secondary services and amend if necessary to fit post-pandemic operations.



Explore Transportation Barriers

PCG recommends DVR explore systemic and individual solutions for circumventing transportation barriers.

1. Work with transportation and community partners to support systematically improved access to services and systems.
2. Identify successful transportation strategies or strategies changing the need for transportation in different Wisconsin localities and situations and post them on DVR's website.
3. Educate staff on local strategies that meet or partially meet transportation needs of DVR consumers.



Build Stronger Ties with Housing Groups

PCG recommends that DVR collaborate with housing partners to increase knowledge of and access to available housing.

1. Build stronger ties with community housing groups and advocacy organizations.
2. Provide community-specific housing resources to area offices.



Questions?





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The Client Assistance Program

FY 2024 data and trends

Presented to the
Wisconsin Rehabilitation Council
May 15, 2025



Protection and Advocacy for The Client Assistance Program (PA-CAP)

About the PA-CAP Grant

This grant allows us to fund CAP advocates to provide information and advocacy to ensure the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities who are applying for, eligible for, or receive, services from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Centers, or other projects, programs, or activities funded under the Rehabilitation Act.

[Client Assistance Program \(CAP\) | Rehabilitation Services Administration](#)



PA-CAP Program Data





FY 2024-Protection and Advocacy for the Client Assistance Program (PA-CAP)

TYPE:
Information
and Referral

43 service requests

TYPE:
Full Cases

45 service requests for 43 individuals

TYPE:
All Cases

88 total service requests

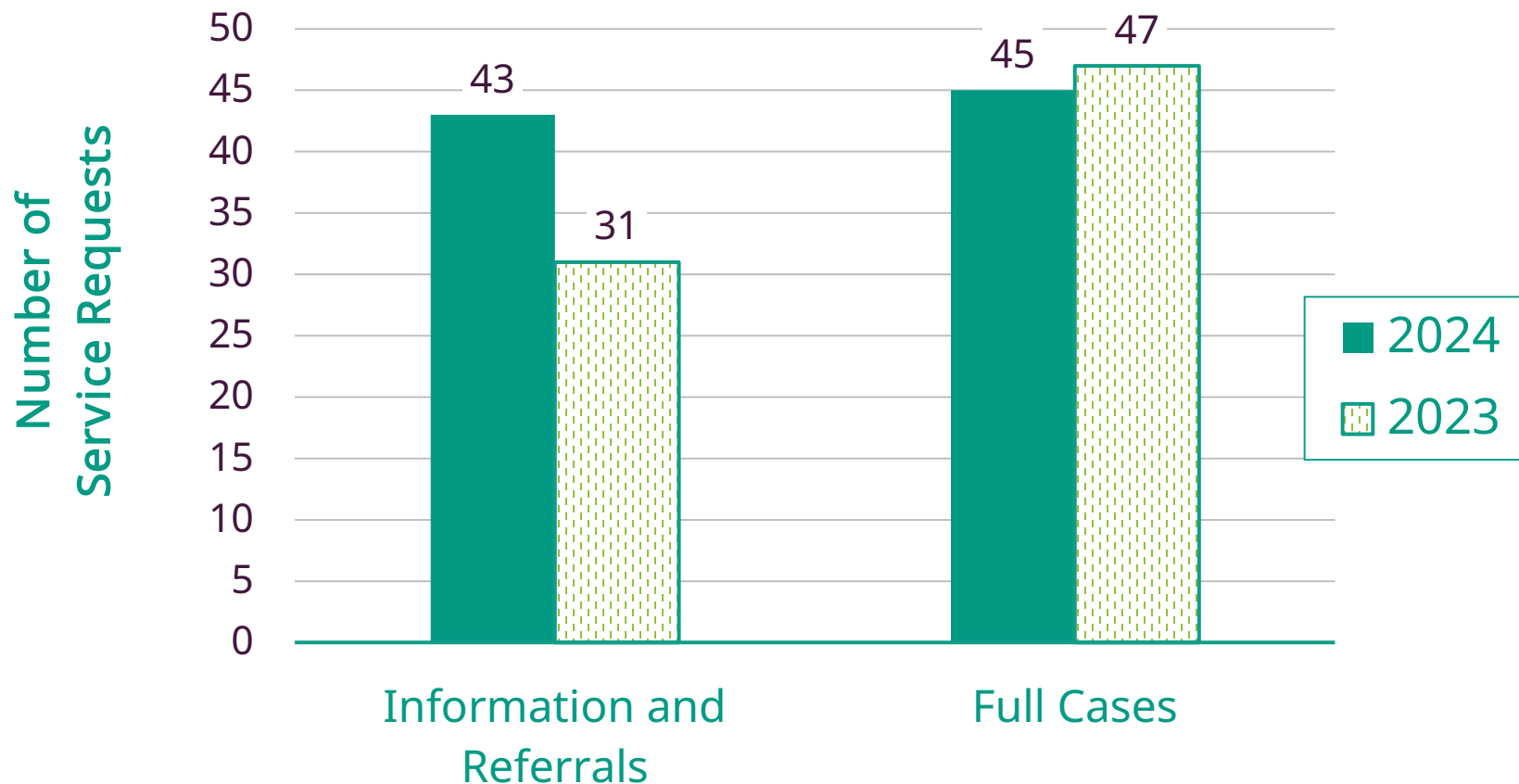


CHART:

Comparison between service request types based on fiscal year

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing # of service requests for two different case types: 1-Information and Referrals, and 2-Full Cases.



Fiscal Year	Information and Referrals Cases	
	Full Cases	
2024	43	45
2023	31	47



NOTES:

Comparison
between service
requests based on
FY 24 and FY 23

- ⊕ The number of full cases remained consistent in FY 24 and FY 23.
- ⊕ The number of I/Rs rose by 28% in FY 24.
- ⊕ Trends in type of information requested.



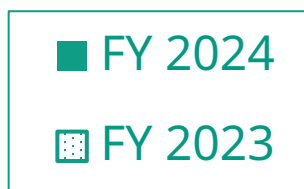
CHART:

Information and Referral Topics

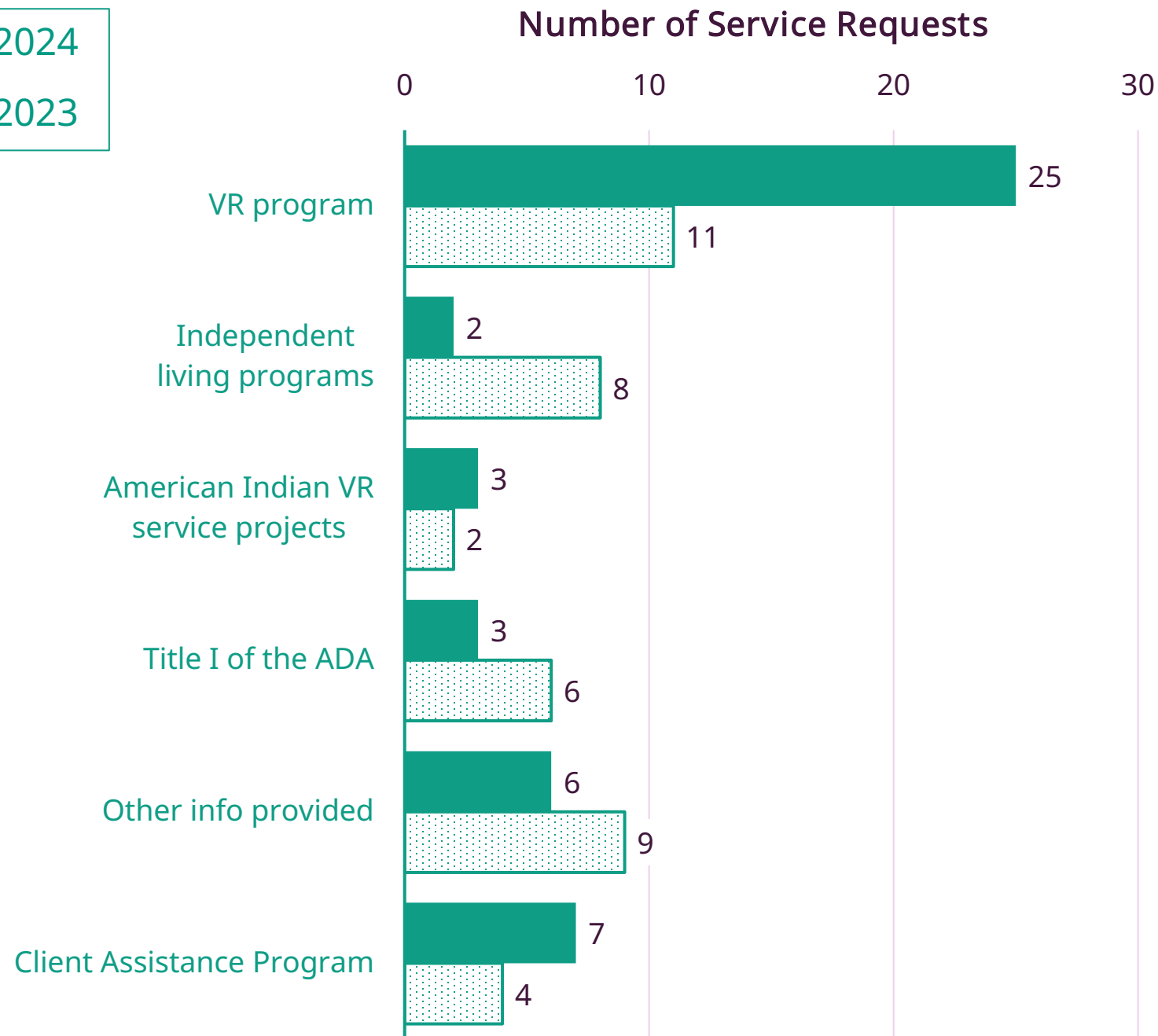
FY 2024 had 43 I and Rs
FY 2023 had 31I and Rs

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing the number of service requests between Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023 for each information and referral topic.



Information and Referral Topic





NOTES:

Comparison
between service
requests based on
fiscal year

- ⊕ Number of requests for information on the VR program up by 14 callers.
- ⊕ Number of requests for information on CAP increased.
- ⊕ Number of requests for info on ILCs down by 6 callers.



CHART:

Problem Areas Reported in Full Cases

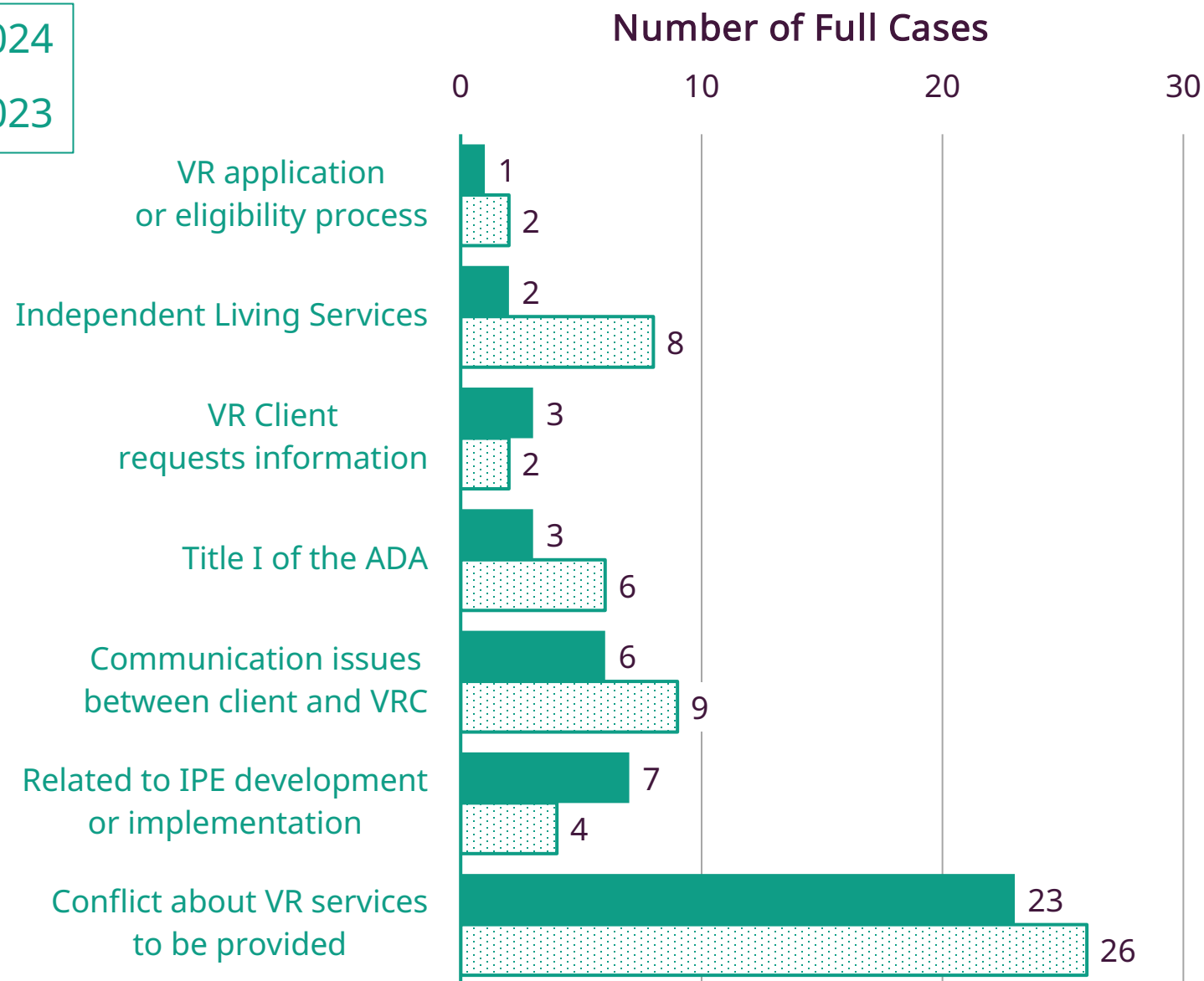
FY 24 had 45 full cases
FY 23 had 47 full cases

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing the number of full cases for each reported problem area between Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023.



Reported Problem Area



Note: Multiple problem areas could be selected.



DATA TABLE:

Problem Areas Reported in Full Cases

Reported Problem Area	FY 2024	FY 2023
VR application or eligibility process	1	2
Independent Living Services	2	8
VR Client requests information	3	2
Title I of the ADA	3	6
Communication issues between client and VRC	6	9
Related to IPE development or implementation	7	4
Conflict about VR services to be provided	23	26

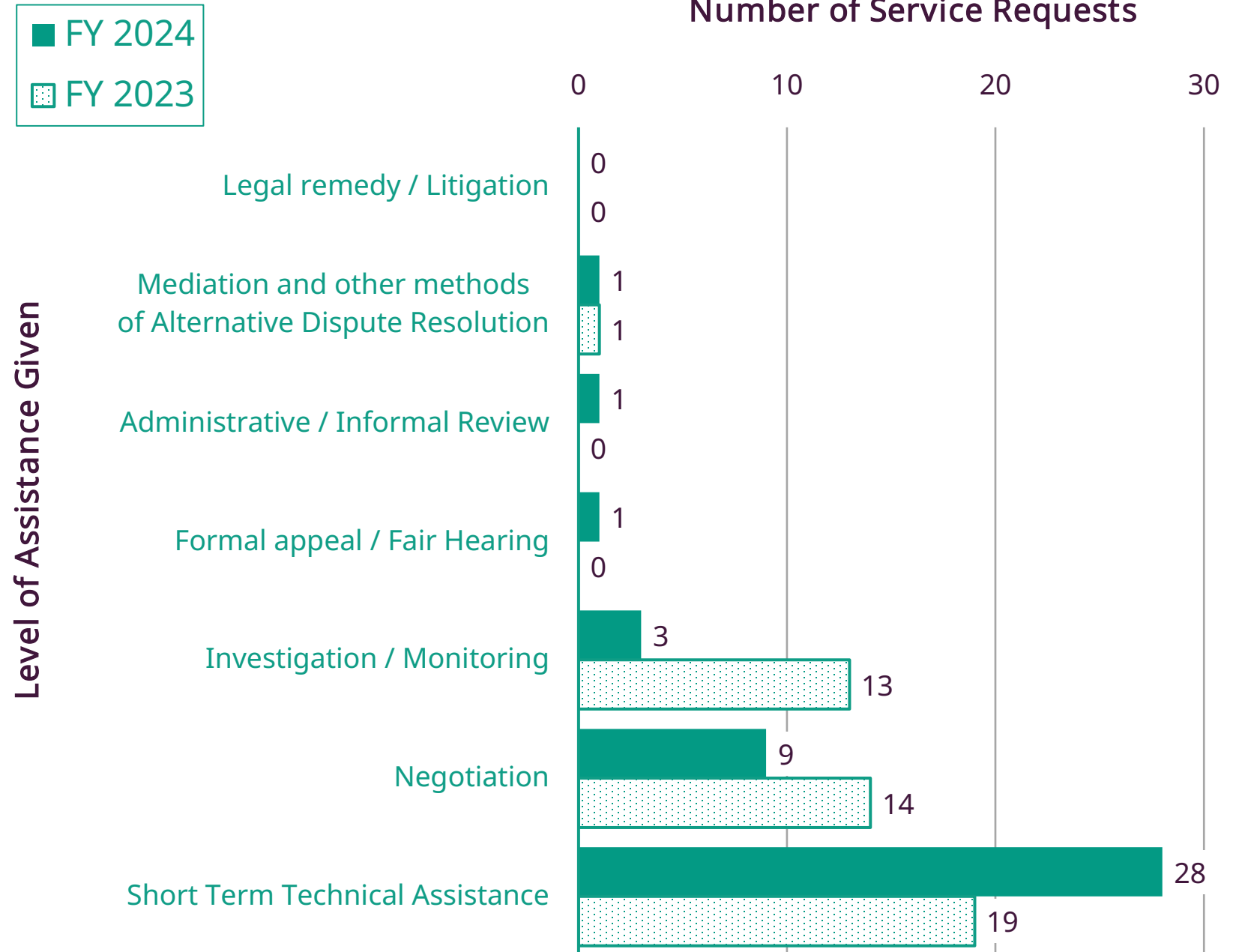


CHART:

Level of Assistance Given in Cases

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing the number of service requests between Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023 for each level of assistance given in cases.





DATA TABLE:

Level of Assistance Given in Cases

Level of Assistance Given	FY 2023	FY 2024
Legal remedy / Litigation	0	0
Mediation and other methods of Alternative Dispute Resolution	1	1
Administrative / Informal Review	0	1
Formal appeal / Fair Hearing	0	1
Investigation / Monitoring	13	3
Negotiation	14	9
Short Term Technical Assistance	19	28

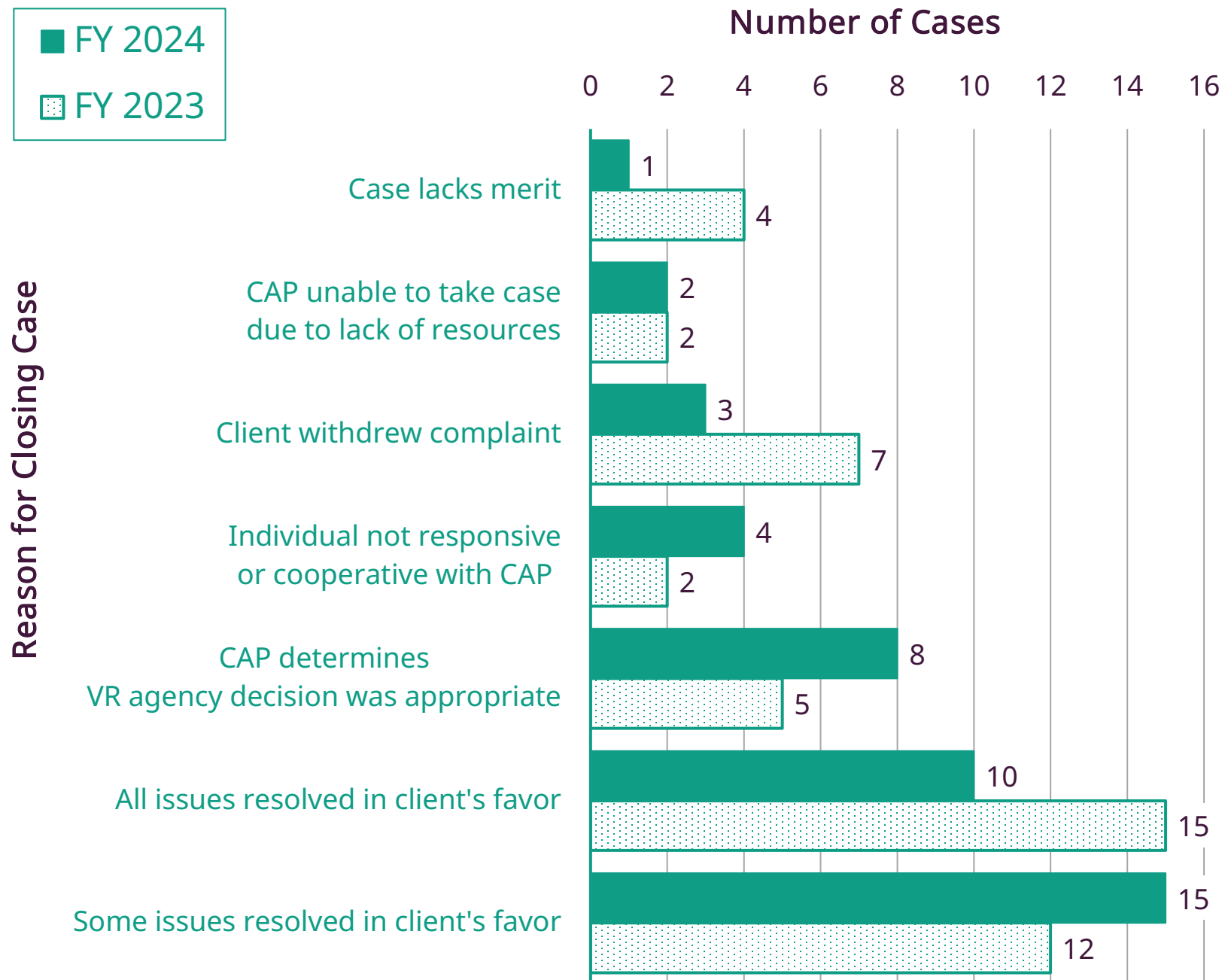


CHART:

Reason for Closing Case

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing the number of cases in Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023 for each reason given for closing a case.





DATA TABLE:

Reason for Closing Case

Reason for Closing Case	FY 2024	FY 2023
Case lacks merit	1	4
CAP unable to take case due to lack of resources	2	2
Client withdrew complaint	3	7
Individual not responsive or cooperative with CAP	4	2
CAP determines VR agency decision was appropriate	8	5
All issues resolved in client's favor	10	15
Some issues resolved in client's favor	15	12

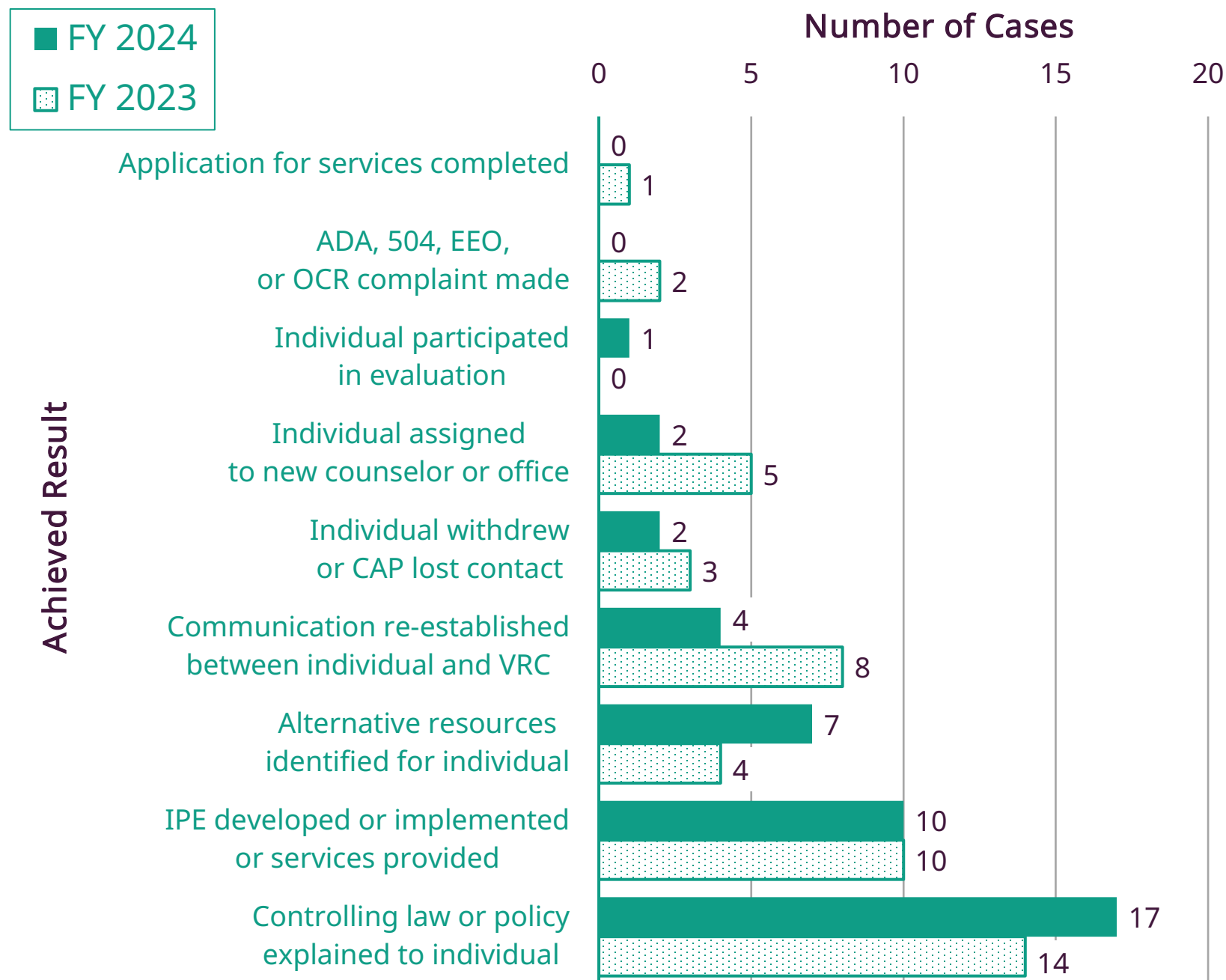


CHART:

Results that Were Achieved for Individual Clients

About This Chart

Bar graph comparing between Fiscal Year 2024 and 2023 for each outcome that was achieved for each case.





DATA TABLE:

Results that Were Achieved for Individual Clients

Results achieved for Individual	FY 2024	FY 2023
Application for services completed	0	1
ADA, 504, EEO, or OCR complaint made	0	2
Individual participated in evaluation	1	0
Individual assigned to new counselor or office	2	5
Individual withdrew or CAP lost contact	2	3
Communication re-established between individual and VRC	4	8
Alternative resources identified for individual	7	4
IPE developed or implemented or services provided	10	10
Controlling law or policy explained to individual	17	14



Demographic Information





TABLE:
Age of Individuals
Served

About This Table
The chart on this page displays the count of individuals by each age range and the total individuals served.

Age of individuals served	FY 2024	FY 2023
Up to 18	2	3
19-24	3	6
25-40	8	9
41-64	26	20
65 and over	4	11
TOTAL	43	49



TABLE:
Race and Ethnicity of
Individuals Served

About This Table
The chart on this page displays the count of individuals by race and ethnicity, and the total individuals served.

Race or Ethnicity	FY 2024	FY 2023
Hispanic and Latino of any race	0	3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0
Asian	0	3
Black or African American	10	13
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0
White	29	30
Two or more races	1	0
Race or ethnicity unknown	2	0
TOTAL	43	49



TABLE:
Primary Disability
Reported for FY 2024
(Part 1)
22/43

About This Table

The chart on this page is part 1 of 2. It displays the count of individuals by each primary disability in alphabetical order. Note: individuals may have more than the primary disability that is listed.

Primary Disability	Count
Acquired Brain Injury	1
ADD / ADHD	3
Amputation or Absence of Extremity	1
Arthritis or Rheumatism	1
Anxiety Disorder	3
Autism Spectrum Disorder	7
Other visual impairment (not blind)	1
Cerebral Palsy	3
Deafness	2
Subtotal	22



TABLE:
Primary Disability
Reported for FY 2024
(Part 2)
21/43

About This Table

The chart on this page is part 2 of 2. It displays the count of individuals by each primary disability in alphabetical order. Note: individuals may have more than the primary disability that is listed

Primary Disability	Count
Hard of Hearing or Hearing Impaired (not Deaf)	1
Multiple Sclerosis	1
Muscular or Skeletal Impairment	2
Neurological Disorders or Impairment	3
Orthopedic Impairments	8
Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD)	3
Speech Impairments	1
Substance Abuse (alcohol or drugs)	1
Other Disability	1
Subtotal	21



Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security (PA-BSS)

About the PA-BSS Grant

This grant allows us to serve individuals receiving Social Security benefits.

Individual gained or maintained access to Employment services from an Employment network, VR agency or other employment service provider

TYPE:
Full Cases

FY 2024: 14 service requests for 14 individuals







Systems Work





Our Systems Work

-  Cases involving denial of training grant requests.
-  Case involving Self-Employment Policy 3.0.
-  CAP training to VRCs and all staff on CAP's role and Due Process. Part of on-going training series.
-  CAP and DVR Senior Leadership dialogue on:
 - Revisions to Consumer Rights Statement
 - Review of practices/guidance on the issuing and content of denial letters



Questions?

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