

# Protecting HOPE for Disabled Californians

The BVI and Disabled Communities are coming together to protect the future of their **H**ealthcare, **O**IB funding, **P**roviders of services, and **E**mployment opportunities (**HOPE**). Please help!

**What's at stake:** A significant funding cut to OIB (Older Individuals Who Are Blind) and the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) jeopardizes community-based programs and critical services that help people live independently with dignity and remain employed. The domino effect is catastrophic; people will not get the services they need, and organizations that serve our community will crumble because they rely on this funding. This is not a distant policy issue. It is already affecting real people. Organizations that offer critical services supporting independence, employment, and community for people with disabilities are at risk of closure. Across California, individuals who rely on these services are already facing delays, reduced access, and growing uncertainty.

**Take Action:** We urge California leaders to protect and restore OIB funding, preserve Priority Category 1, strengthen investment in community-based disability services, protect specialized blindness services from further erosion and support providers that deliver critical independence and employment services statewide.

## Order of Selection (OOS) – Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)

Nearly 100% of blind and low vision people who receive DOR vocational services are in the Priority Category 1 (because they need many services over a long time period.) During a recent Blind Advisory Committee meeting, the California DOR shared their plans to close Priority Category 1 service delivery within the Order of Selection. This is devastating and as a result:

- It creates uncertainty about how to maintain services when current cases are closed
- An inability to open new cases and serve clients; waitlists may be indefinite
- Providers that serve the BVI and disability community may not be able to remain open and support their clients

## Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB) Funding

Funding for agencies that provide services and programming for blind, low vision, and Deafblind senior citizens of California are facing severe and ongoing reductions to the OIB program, which is drastically impacting the community.

- OIB has seen over a 60% decrease in funding since 2024–2025, with the Younger Individuals Who are Blind (YIB) funding experiencing even deeper cuts—exceeding 90% for some agencies
- These reductions will have significant long-term impacts on programs, staffing, and service delivery
- Risk of workforce loss, which could result in reduced services and long recovery timelines for the field

## How does this impact Blind and Disabled Californians?

The funding cuts threaten the independence, self-sufficiency, dignity, and basic human rights of blind, low vision, and disabled Californians. This is not about politics; this is about access to quality of life. Without stable investment in services:

- Consumers lose timely access to training and support
- Waitlists grow
- Independence declines and unemployment rises
- Safety risks increase
- More individuals ultimately require higher-cost interventions elsewhere in the system

**WE MUST PROTECT OUR HOPE!**

