

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

7/15/2026

2. Department

California Department of Rehabilitation

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Specialized Services Division

4. CEA Position Title

Assistant Deputy Director

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose.
(2-3 sentences)

The proposed Assistant Deputy Director position provides executive level leadership and oversight for the Specialized Services Division, ensuring high quality, consistent program delivery across multiple statewide programs serving individuals who are blind, deaf, hard of hearing, or who have other specialized service needs. By guiding policy development, strengthening operational processes, and supporting program managers in meeting federal and state performance measures, the position ensures alignment with the Department's mission to advance independence and employment for Californians with disabilities. This role directly enhances the Division's ability to deliver equitable, high impact services through strong leadership, stakeholder engagement, and continuous improvement.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Deputy Director – CEA B

7. Relationship with Department Director (*Select one*)

- ☐ Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- ☒ Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(*Explain*):

Although not a member of the Executive Management Team, the role regularly engages with EMT because specialized services policy issues—such as ADA compliance, BEP governance, and statewide access standards—require continuous executive consultation and alignment. The role also serves as an acting member of the EMT in the absence of or as delegated by the CEA-B they report to.

8. Organizational Level (*Select one*)

- ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☒ 4th ☐ 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The CEA serves as an Assistant Deputy Director providing executive leadership, strategic oversight, and operational support to the Specialized Services Division, which includes Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section, Business Enterprises Program, Orientation Center for the Blind, and the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program. The position directs and coordinates divisional activities by guiding program managers, overseeing the development and implementation of policies and procedures, and ensuring that all programs meet or exceed federal and state performance requirements. For example, the CEA evaluates program effectiveness, identifies opportunities to streamline service delivery, and leads projects that improve outcomes for specialized disability populations.

The position advises the Deputy Director, Chief Deputy Director, and Director on issues with significant policy, programmatic, or fiscal impact, including trends in consumer service needs, barriers to equitable access, and emerging risks affecting program accountability. This includes elevating operational challenges identified through audits, recommending corrective actions, and ensuring consistent implementation across all programs. The CEA also represents the Division with state, federal, and local entities, building collaborative partnerships with community organizations, advisory bodies, and disability advocates to strengthen program visibility and responsiveness.

Additionally, the CEA leads cross divisional and cross departmental initiatives that advance the Department's strategic vision, including efforts to modernize services, strengthen succession planning, and support diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility goals. The position promotes a culture of innovation and continuous improvement by coaching program leaders, facilitating change management, and ensuring transparent communication. Through these responsibilities, the CEA ensures that specialized programs operate efficiently, remain aligned with departmental priorities, and consistently provide high quality services to individuals with disabilities across California.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- ☒ Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- ☐ Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- ☐ Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The Specialized Services Division plays a central role in fulfilling the Department of Rehabilitation's mission to advance employment, independence, and equity for Californians with disabilities. The programs under this Division—including Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section, the Business Enterprises Program, the Orientation Center for the Blind, and the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program—provide highly specialized, legally mandated services that directly support some of the state's most underserved disability communities. Because these programs deliver unique expertise and interventions not available elsewhere in the Department, their effective operation is essential to ensuring that DOR meets federal and state performance requirements, maintains compliance with the Rehabilitation Act, and delivers equitable access to vocational rehabilitation and independent living services.

The CEA is critical to the Department's ability to execute this mission by providing executive leadership, strategic oversight, and consistent policy and program direction across all Specialized Services programs. The position ensures statewide consistency in service delivery, guides the implementation of complex federal and state mandates, and strengthens operational processes that support program accountability, performance reporting, and audit responsiveness. The CEA also facilitates strong partnerships with community organizations, advisory bodies, and other state and federal agencies—relationships that are essential to meeting statutory obligations and expanding service access.

Additionally, the CEA contributes to the long term health of the Department through leadership development, change management, and succession planning. These efforts support a stable, high performing workforce capable of responding to evolving needs and ensuring continuity in specialized service delivery. Collectively, the work of this program and its executive leadership are indispensable to the Department's ability to meet its statewide mission and to deliver high quality, high impact services to individuals with disabilities.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

The previous Assistant Deputy position—formerly a Governor appointed role—was reallocated in June 2026 due to shifting priorities of the Department in partnership with the Governor’s Office and the Health and Human Services Agency. The request for this CEA position is necessary not only in replacing the position vacated, but due to significant changes in the scope, complexity, and statewide importance of the Division.

Over the past several years, the Division has expanded its programmatic responsibilities across Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section, the Business Enterprises Program, the Orientation Center for the Blind, and the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program. These programs serve highly specialized populations with unique statutory requirements, and this expansion has increased the need for coordinated statewide leadership, uniform policy development, and stronger oversight of program performance, regulatory compliance, and service quality.

At the same time, federal and state expectations have become more stringent, requiring enhanced accountability, improved performance outcomes, and more robust monitoring of program operations. These evolving demands necessitate a dedicated executive leader capable of guiding complex policy implementation, addressing emerging compliance risks, and ensuring that specialized programs consistently meet mandated performance measures.

The Division has also experienced increasing stakeholder engagement needs, including heightened coordination with advisory bodies, community partners, and other state entities. This expanding external interface further elevates the need for high level leadership and consistent communication at the executive level.

In addition, the Department is prioritizing innovation, succession planning, and stronger alignment with statewide equity, accessibility, and inclusion goals. Implementing these priorities within specialized programs requires focused executive capacity to support managers, advance strategic initiatives, and lead organizational change across multiple distinct program areas.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

1. Specialized Service Delivery Policies for Blind, Deaf, and Hard of Hearing Populations:

The CEA will serve as a principal policy maker for statewide service delivery standards within Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section, and the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program. This includes policies governing eligibility pathways, assessment protocols, communication access, and individualized service planning for consumers with highly specialized needs. Decisions in this area directly influence consistency, equity, and quality of services across California and ensure ongoing compliance with federal mandates, including the Rehabilitation Act and ADA requirements.

2. Policies Governing the Business Enterprises Program (BEP):

The CEA will lead the development and interpretation of policies related to vendor operations, facility selection, training standards, and program compliance under the Randolph Sheppard Act. For example, the CEA may establish statewide procedures for vendor licensing or determine criteria for program expansion into new sites. These policies have a significant statewide impact by shaping entrepreneurial opportunities for blind vendors, maintaining legal compliance, and influencing the financial stability of a program that operates on federal property statewide.

3. Training, Curriculum, and Operational Policies for the Orientation Center for the Blind (OCB):

The CEA will develop and oversee policies that define statewide training standards, instructional models, program eligibility, and residential operations for OCB. This may include decisions about curriculum modernization, assistive technology integration, or health and safety expectations for residential students. Because OCB serves consumers from every region of California, policy decisions in this area directly affect statewide access to blindness skills training and the Department's ability to prepare consumers for independent living and employment.

4. Performance Accountability, Compliance, and Quality Assurance Policies:

The CEA will establish policies related to program performance measurement, quality assurance reviews, and corrective action expectations across all Specialized Services programs. For example, the CEA may develop protocols for case review sampling, statewide performance dashboards, or required corrective actions following compliance findings. These policies ensure that specialized programs consistently meet federal and state performance measures and safeguard the Department's ability to maintain funding and fulfill its statutory obligations.

5. Statewide Policies on Collaboration with Advisory Bodies, Community Partners, and Stakeholder Groups:

The CEA will develop and implement policies guiding the Division's engagement with key advisory and community partners, such as the Blind Advisory Committee, Deaf and Hard of Hearing advisory groups, community based rehabilitation organizations, and local service agencies. This may include establishing standardized consultation processes, communication expectations, or protocols for integrating stakeholder input into program improvements. Statewide impact is substantial, as these policies strengthen trust, enhance community alignment, and improve service accessibility for diverse disability populations across California.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

The CEA has delegated authority to develop, interpret, and implement Division level policies that directly shape service delivery across Blind Field Services, the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Section, the Business Enterprises Program, the Orientation Center for the Blind, and the Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program. The position exercises independent judgment in addressing complex programmatic, policy, and compliance issues, resolving operational barriers, and determining how statewide mandates should be applied across diverse specialized service areas. Although major policy shifts are elevated to Executive Leadership, the CEA is entrusted with making high impact decisions that guide program standards, stakeholder engagement, and resource planning and has authority to recommend new policies, initiate corrective actions, and set Division wide operational expectations.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The CEA will be responsible for both developing new policy and interpreting and implementing existing policy. The position interprets federal and state requirements governing specialized programs and ensures that policies are applied consistently across all Divisional program areas. At the same time, the CEA identifies operational gaps, emerging trends, and stakeholder concerns—such as changes in assistive technology, evolving communication access needs, or new federal guidance—and drafts policy recommendations for Executive Leadership. Implementation occurs through program manager direction, written guidance, statewide training, collaboration with advisory bodies, and oversight of program compliance and performance measures.