

Massachusetts Commission for the Blind

Consumer Survey Report

June 30, 2021

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# Executive Summary

In early 2021, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) contracted with Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to administer an existing fifty-one (51) question Voluntary Survey to consumers in MCB’s Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Social Rehabilitation (SR) programs for the purpose of evaluating MCB consumers’ socioeconomic status, level of impairment, overall health and wellbeing, activities of daily living, social interactions and technology use.

This report serves as a baseline for MCB to administer this survey and analyze the resulting data on an annual basis in order to track and monitor trends over time and ultimately improve the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired in Massachusetts.

Our 2021 Consumer Survey Report benefitted from our analysis of trends occurring between the 2020 and 2021 voluntary surveys which, when combined with our human services program knowledge, allowed us to analyze survey findings, identify notable highlights from those findings, and identify trends for MCB to monitor going forward, as summarized in the table below.

| **Survey Topic** | **Highlights** | **Trends to Watch** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics** | * Survey responses were diverse in gender, race, sexual orientation, primary language, age groups, educational levels, marital status and experience, and socioeconomic backgrounds. * Females were represented slightly higher in responses. * 77% of respondents were classified as ‘White’ and 10% were classified as ‘African American’. Almost 7% of respondents were Hispanic/Latino. * Nearly half of respondents were older than 65, but there was an increase in respondents aged 14 to 21. * 2021 respondents had higher levels of education compared to 2020. Overall, almost half of respondents had a bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degree. * All marital statuses were represented, but respondents in 2021 were more likely to be single. Nearly one-third of respondents noted living alone in 2021, a higher percentage than in 2020. * Nearly one-third of respondents were currently working. * Almost half of respondents reported total household incomes of $50,000 to $100,000 or more, with 17.9% above $100,000. * Almost half of respondents reported being able to see large but not regular print. * More than half of respondents noted using large print, braille, talking materials, white canes, and magnifiers. | * Ongoing surveys should strive to mirror ACS race and ethnic representations compared to the Massachusetts population. * MCB should continue helping individuals achieve the educational goals they need for individualized employment outcomes while ensuring they support *all* individuals’ educational endeavors, including those who seek vocational training. * MCB should monitor the changing use in visual aids to ensure MCB services are keeping up with trends. |
| **Health Status and Disabilities** | * The majority of respondents (99.4%) reported having health insurance. * Compared to 2020, respondents reported being in better physical health (more respondents reported ‘Excellent, ‘Very good’ and ‘Good’ physical health statuses). * Compared to 2020, respondents reported being in better mental health (more respondents reported ‘Excellent and ‘Good’ mental health statuses. * The majority, 83.5% reported either ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’ or ‘Good’ quality of life ratings. | * MCB should continue to support individuals in the current manner to continue the positive trend of overall improvements in health and quality of life. |
| **Use of Assistive Technologies** | * Over half of respondents reported using smart phones or laptop computers regularly, and nearly half reporting using tablets or desktop computers regularly. * Nearly 90% reported checking e-mail daily or at least several times a week. * More than 50% of respondents reported using a smart phone, and nearly half reported laptop computer and tablet use. * Over half of respondents reported using VoiceOver technology. | * MCB should explore how respondents interpret the question “use the internet daily’ because survey responses to ‘use the internet daily’ and ‘checking e-mail daily’ do not align (67% compared to 77%). This suggests individuals may interpret using the internet differently than checking e-mail, although both are technically using the internet. * Given the trend towards increased technology usage, MCB should assess whether the currently available accessibility settings and software services are sufficient and available to all consumers who want or need them. |
| **Activities of Daily Living** | * In 2021, more than half of respondents still require assistance with grocery shopping and nearly half required assistance with taking a walk outdoors and doing house cleaning. * Overall, nearly half of respondents reported needing no assistance with managing finances. | * MCB should consider implementing or expanding programs that can help individuals perform activities of daily living in order to increase independence, such as grocery shopping, navigating the outdoors, house cleaning, and managing finances. |
| **Orientation, Mobility and Travel** | * Over half of respondents reported having a driver’s license at one point. * Nearly half of respondents reported using a white cane, while the majority using a long cane. * Half of respondents reported feeling safe crossing the streets or traveling independently, but the other half reported that crossing the streets or traveling independently was ‘too complex to do independently’. | * MCB should explore how it can continue helping individuals meet their orientation and mobility needs, particularly for those who consider crossing the street or traveling independently to be too complex to do independently. |
| **Social Relationships** | * Almost half of respondents reported being part of a community group. * One-third of respondents reported that participating in social activities was ‘Somewhat difficult’. * One-third of respondents reported feeling lonely ‘Sometimes’. However, almost one-third reported feeling lonely ‘Rarely’. * 63.2% of respondents reported ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’ satisfaction with social relationships. | * MCB should explore further to identify specific difficulties in participating in social activities and identify resources to enhance community inclusion. Furthermore, exploration should integrate discussions on social activities in the workplace with individuals, managers, and organizations to help increase awareness of accessibility needs and inclusion. |
| **Service Utilization** | * The majority of respondents (91.8%) are currently using, or have used, MCB services. * Overall, more than half of respondents reported using MCB assistive technology services. * The majority of other Massachusetts services used were DTA services, however, DTA service usage in 2021 was 55.6% lower than in 2020. | * MCB should explore the root causes behind the decline in DTA service usage in order to understand what MCB services, if any, may be helping to facilitate this decline. * MCB should evaluate the need for additional or expanded assistive technology (possibly driven by increased use of smart phones and other devices) and deaf and blind extended support services, and the possible cause(s) of the decline in orientation and mobility, vision rehabilitation and therapy, employment counseling, peer support groups and ‘Other’ services to determine – and adjust if necessary – the level of need for these services moving forward. |

# INtroduction

This section provides background and context for the Consumer Survey Report and the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind’s programs.

## Acronyms and Glossary

The following terms are used throughout this document. The description of each of these commonly used acronyms is provided here for reader ease of reference.

| **Acronym** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| ACS | American Consumer Survey |
| AWARE | Accessible Web-Based Activity and Reporting Environment |
| DBES | Deaf Blind Extended Supports |
| DDS | Department of Developmental Services |
| DTA | Department of Transitional Assistance |
| HSRI | Human Services Research Institute |
| MCB | Massachusetts Commission for the Blind |
| PCG | Public Consulting Group, Inc. |
| MRC | Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission |
| SIPP | Survey of Income and Program Participation |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| SR | Social Rehabilitation |
| VR | Vocational Rehabilitation |

## Survey Purpose and Background

### Purpose

The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) was established under Section 129 of Chapter 6 of the Massachusetts General Laws. MCB is the point of entry for vocational and social rehabilitation services for residents of the Commonwealth who are declared to be legally blind by an eye professional. In addition, people who have low vision and have been diagnosed with progressive visual impairments leading to legal blindness are eligible to receive vocational rehabilitation (VR) services. MCB partners with local agencies, healthcare providers, employers, and clients’ relatives to provide services, including rehabilitation and social services and vocational assistance. These services help individuals to work toward independence and full community participation.

In early 2021, MCB contracted with Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to administer an existing fifty-one (51) question Voluntary Survey to consumers in MCB’s Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Social Rehabilitation (SR) programs to better understand needs, inform diverse stakeholders, and target effective service delivery mechanisms. PCG’s goal was to emulate the existing methodology as closely as possible (for data comparison purposes) while suggesting and implementing improvements – such as ways to improve participation among residents in the greater Boston area and Hispanic individuals – to produce highly reliable data with a low margin of error.

PCG’s representative survey sample achieved statistical validity while improving MCB consumer survey participation under an aggressive timeframe. Our 2021 Consumer Survey Report benefitted from our analysis of trends occurring between 2020 and 2021 which, when combined with our extensive human services program knowledge, allowed us to make recommendations that will support sustained, data driven change.

This report serves as a baseline for MCB to administer this survey and analyze the resulting data on an annual basis in order to track and monitor trends over time and ultimately improve the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired in Massachusetts.

### Background

In 2019, MCB contracted with the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) to conduct an environmental scan of validated survey items and measures for collecting data from MCB consumers on their socioeconomic status, level of impairment, overall health and wellbeing, activities of daily living, social interactions, and technology use.

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, MCB sought to develop a short list of questions to be administered to all consumers at the time of registration, to enhance its Accessible Web-Based Activity and Reporting Environment (AWARE) database with information on the background and service needs of its consumers. Additionally, MCB planned to use the results of the study to develop a longer consumer survey to be administered to a sample of its consumers periodically. In addition to monitoring potentially changing demand for services and supports within the state’s population of people who are blind or visually impaired, the survey was designed to provide data comparable to benchmarks established by national surveys such as the American Community Survey (ACS) and the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP).

A year later, HSRI designed and conducted the 2020 survey, culminating in the 2020 Consumer Survey Report.

# Methodology

This section explains how PCG collected and analyzed 2021 survey data – and compared it to 2020 survey findings and tables – to produce the results and recommendations in this report. As explained in detail below, PCG conducted this survey via e-mail contact with consumers. Prior to beginning the survey, a PCG team member was designated as survey contact (for questions, troubleshooting issues, etc.), and MCB staff were made aware of the survey. PCG also created a separate electronic link to a telephone version of the survey (with identical questions) for MCB staff to use on behalf of consumers having trouble completing the online survey. However, no consumers contacted either MCB or PCG to request survey completion by phone.

## Sampling Design

PCG designed the survey sampling methodology with the intention of gathering the largest number of responses possible. The design favored completed surveys over proportional representation of individuals across any understood traits. MCB approved PCG’s email-only method (vs. the 2020 multi-method survey approach) due to COVID-19 constraints, and after a PCG pre-survey data review demonstrated that using an e-mail only survey collection methodology would be representative of the consumer population.

PCG reviewed race and ethnicity data and found no meaningful differences between who did, and did not, have an e-mail address. PCG did discover that VR cases are more likely to have e-mail addresses than SR cases. In addition, MCB was more likely to have e-mail addresses for individuals living in Boston or greater Boston. This larger Boston / greater Boston sample size was seen as a positive because these individuals were found to be less likely to respond to the 2020 version of this survey; PCG theorized that contacting more individuals living in the Boston / greater Boston area could result in a larger sample size for this region. Finally, PCG found that MCB was less likely to have e-mail addresses for older consumers vs. younger consumers, but in general, it is known that younger individuals are less likely to respond to surveys. As such, e-mailing electronic surveys was seen as a way to achieve a more representative, overall sample.

For the reasons outline above, PCG recommended that MCB conduct post-2021 voluntary surveys electronically, via e-mail (or even SMS text message for consumers who have “opted in” to receiving MCB communications) given that in 2021 PCG was able to achieve population coverage without resorting to a time-consuming, low yield telephone outreach approach.

PCG analyzed records from MCB-provided case management data. While MCB did provide PCG with a large number of records, (over 13,000) most of these were cases that had been inactive for some time (i.e. MCB had only continued interaction with some of these consumers on an informal basis such as e-mail, newsletters, or social media). PCG eliminated records that had not had an update to their case status within two years prior to the sample selection date of June 1, 2021. These consumers were seen as the least likely to respond to a survey administered on MCB’s behalf. This edit eliminated all but 4,497 records. Of these records, 25.9% (1,163) consumers had an e-mail address, while the rest did not.

In order to address concerns about sample representativeness given the limited contact methods for this survey, PCG analyzed the case management records by the presence or absence of an e-mail address to evaluate whether there were any notable differences between the population of individuals who did and did not have an e-mail address on record. Results of this analysis are delineated in the tables below.

Table 1 shows the racial demographic of emails present. The majority of emails present, 28% classified as non-white. Overall, a quarter of participants had emails present.

Table 1: Presence of E-mail Address by Race

|  | E-mail not present | E-mail present |
| --- | --- | --- |
| White | 73.3% | 26.7% |
| Non-White | 72.0% | 28.0% |
| Unknown | 81.9% | 18.1% |
| Total | 74.1% | 25.9% |

Table 2 shows presence of email by ethnicity. Response was proportionate by ethnicity, with Hispanic or Latino groups slightly represented higher with emails present.

Table 2: Presence of E-mail Address by Ethnicity

|  | E-mail not present | E-mail present |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hispanic or Latino | 73.0% | 27.0% |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 74.2% | 25.8% |
| Total | 74.1% | 25.9% |

Table 3 shows the presence of email addresses by region. Emails were fairly proportionate by region ranging between 20-38%, with region 7,6,and 4 being slightly over represented.

Table 3: Presence of Email Address by Region

|  | Email not present | Email present |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Western Mass - Region 1 | 77.3% | 22.7% |
| Central Mass - Region 2 | 80.2% | 19.8% |
| Northeast - Region 3 | 76.5% | 23.5% |
| Greater Boston - Region 4 | 66.3% | 33.7% |
| Southeast Mass and Cape - Region 5 | 80.1% | 19.9% |
| Boston - Region 6 | 67.5% | 32.5% |
| DBES - Region 7 | 62.3% | 37.7% |
| Total | 74.1% | 25.9% |

Table 4 shows presence of email by age. Age groups 17 and under, 18-29, and 40-49 were represented higher in emails present. Age group 66 and older were represented lowest with emails present.

Table 4: Presence of Email Address by Age Category

|  | Email not present | Email present |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 17 and younger | 27.7% | 72.3% |
| 18 to 29 | 37.7% | 62.3% |
| 30 to 39 | 39.8% | 60.2% |
| 40 to 49 | 49.8% | 50.2% |
| 50 to 59 | 57.5% | 42.5% |
| 60 to 65 | 66.7% | 33.3% |
| 66 and older | 85.3% | 14.7% |
| Total | 74.1% | 25.9% |

In summary, the only traits by which the presence of an e-mail address in the case data differed meaningfully among populations was by age. Younger individuals involved with MCB are much more likely than older individuals to have an e-mail address listed in their case management data. While this is not ideal, it is unlikely to have any meaningful impact on overall survey representativeness because young individuals are generally much less likely to respond to surveys than older individuals. This was also true for the survey data collected by HSRI on behalf of MCB for the 2020 Voluntary Survey.

PCG included all viable e-mail addresses for individuals age 18 and older in our sample in order to drive the maximum number of responses. As such, no weighting adjustment was necessary to normalize results to the population.

PCG’s sampling methodology was different from the sampling methodology employed by HSRI during the 2020 Voluntary Survey. HSRI used a stratified probability sampling strategy. Using MCB’s AWARE data, HSRI extracted a de-identified list of 9,810 eligible past or current consumers who received social or vocational rehabilitation services. HSRI then stratified this sample by Massachusetts’ six human services regions and four age groups within each region (yielding 24 strata), drawing a simple random sample from each stratum, with a sampling ratio of 0.08. The final sample consisting of 833 consumers was similar to PCG’s sampling frame in terms of distributions by age, gender, race/ethnicity, service type, and region of residence. Although MCB services are available to individuals of all ages, HSRI’s sampling frame, and thus the sample, were restricted to ages 14 and above.

## Data Collection

PCG created two surveys for 2021: an electronic survey (distributed by PCG via e-mail) and a phone survey for administration by MCB case counselors over the telephone, if needed. MCB did not use the phone survey method as no consumers requested it.

PCG began with the 51-question voluntary survey that HSRI conducted in 2020. We reviewed all questions, submitted recommended improvements to MCB, discussed and finalized these improvements with MCB, then updated the survey to reflect all agreed-upon changes. The survey was designed to collect:

* Basic demographic characteristics
* Individuals’ experiences working with MCB
* Technology use
* General physical, mental and emotional health and well-being
* Services that consumers used and / or required
* Other groups that consumers partnered with in the community

PCG made several survey instrument changes designed to simplify the process of taking the survey. We incorporated skip patterns to avoid asking respondents unnecessary questions. We divided the 2020 question on gender into two separate questions – one on sex assigned at birth and one on gender identity – to better align with best practices for understanding survey gender minority groups[[1]](#footnote-2). Finally, we excluded two questions on why (reasons) respondents were not working to address a programming error in the survey instrument.

Questions varied somewhat depending upon a respondent’s specific answer patterns. Most questions featured multiple choice responses. Some multiple-choice questions included open text fields for data entry of “Other” in the event a respondent’s answer was not included among one of the choices. Respondents were also allowed proxy responses. Parents, spouses or caretakers familiar with the targeted individual’s situation, preferences, and concerns were invited to complete the survey on the respondent’s behalf.

PCG hosted the survey on our Qualtrics survey software platform. PCG and MCB tested the draft surveys so that final versions ensured functionality and question logic in order to achieve the highest degree of accessibility for respondents who used assistive technologies. On average, the survey took twenty-six minutes to complete.

We have included both electronic and phone survey instruments in the Appendix section of this report.

## Telephone Version

At MCB’s request, PCG also developed a version of the survey that MCB case counselors could administer over the telephone. The purpose of the phone survey was to give individuals who were unable to use the online version an option to complete the survey, and so MCB counselors could conduct outreach to solicit more survey responses. The phone and e-mail surveys used similar instruments, and PCG modified the phone version to provide instructions to counselors. Questions were similar in intent, but some were re-worded so they could be asked aloud rather than read. We hosted both surveys on our Qualtrics survey software platform

While no surveys were ultimately conducted or completed using this instrument, the instrument may have value for future survey administrations.

## Response Rate

PCG invited 1,103 individuals with valid e-mail addresses to participate in the survey. Of these, 202 individuals began the process of completing the survey. Data collection began on June 2, 2021 and continued through June 14, 2021. The compressed timeframe of this project dictated that PCG kept the survey open for only two weeks. During this time, PCG sent three e-mails reminding individuals to complete the survey.

PCG received a total of 177 surveys, a 16% response rate. Of these 177 surveys, 101 were fully completed and 76 were partially completed. PCG reviewed the 76 partially completed surveys and determined we could use 49 of these in our data analysis (discarding 27) due to problems with survey logic that, with more extensive testing, we could have identified and corrected up front. In total, PCG used 150 survey responses in our analysis (101 fully completed surveys plus 49 partially completed surveys.

## Limitations

The total project timeframe from start to finish spanned two months (5/1/21 through 6/30/21). This compressed timeframe did not give PCG sufficient time to test usage and accessibility by imputing test data and more fully de-bug the survey instrument. We also chose to focus our efforts on soliciting electronic survey responses, a more efficient method.

MCB was not provided with the raw survey data generated from HSRI’s 2020 survey, although detailed survey results do exist in HSRI’s 2020 Consumer Survey Report. While this does allow for trending on top-line survey responses, it is not ideal for analysis. As such, PCG’s analysis was somewhat limited by our inability to compare raw 2020 and 2021 survey data.

# Survey Findings / Results

In this section we provide a detailed description of the results of our research. This data was collected from survey responses, with comparison data from a prior survey completed in 2020. Please refer to the Methodology section of this report for a detailed discussion of data sources. To note, the overall number of responses to surveys in both 2020 and 2021 was relatively low. In both 2020 and 2021, weighting was not applied to make the data completely representative of the population. Not every question was answered by every respondent. As such, the potential error in every measurement/comparison presented here is large. Some questions have overall error estimates of +/-10-percentage points. Where the narrative describes percentage changes greater than 100%, we have included the difference in the number of respondents between years so that a truer understanding of the data can be gained. Thus, comparisons of findings, and findings of change between survey years, should be viewed with a healthy skepticism given the small size of these survey respondents.

## Results

### Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics

#### Gender and Race/Ethnicity

Table 5 and Figure 1 show respondents by gender for 2020 and 2021. In 2021, there was an increase in female responses by 6.8%, with females representing over half of survey responses.

Table 5: Respondent Gender

| **Gender** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Female | 49.5% | 56.3% |
| Male | 49.5% | 40.7% |
| Non-Binary | 1.0% | 3.0% |

Figure 1: Respondent Gender

Table 6 and Figure 2 display responses by ethnicity. As reflected, responses by ethnic groups are similar between 2020 and 2021. The majority of respondents classified as Non-Hispanic/Latino.

Table 6: Respondent Ethnicity

| **Ethnicity** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Hispanic/Latino | 6.6% | 6.8% |
| Non-Hispanic/Latino | 93.4% | 93.2% |

Figure 2: Respondent Ethnicity

Table 7 and Figure 3 note responses by race, and respondents’ racial backgrounds show minimal variance between 2020 and 2021. Overall, more than three-fourths of respondents classified themselves as ‘White’ and one-tenth classified themselves as ‘African American’.

Table 7: Respondent Race

| **Race** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| African American or Black | 11.7% | 10.3% |
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 0.0% | 2.1% |
| Asian | 3.2% | 2.7% |
| Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| White | 73.4% | 77.4% |
| Other | 5.3% | 7.5% |
| More Than One Race | 6.4% |  |

Figure 3: Respondent Race

#### Age and Sexual Orientation

Table 8 and Figure 4 show respondents by age group. In comparison of 2020 to 2021 responses, there was a slight increase in respondents aged 14 to 21 and 65 and older, and a slight decrease in respondents aged 22 to 54. Overall, nearly half of respondents were aged 65 and older, and one fourth were either in the 22 to 54, or 55 to 64 age groups.

Table 8: Respondent Age

| **Age** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 14 to 21 | 1.1% | 5.6% |
| 22 to 54 | 31.5% | 23.3% |
| 55 to 64 | 25.8% | 23.3% |
| 65 or older | 41.6% | 47.8% |

Figure 4: Respondent Age

Table 9 and Figure 5 show the sexual orientation of respondents. Responses from 2020 and 2021 are comparable in representation of sexual orientation. Overall, heterosexual orientation was represented highest in respondents. However, respondents represented all sexual orientation groups, including ‘Gay or Lesbian’, ‘Bisexual’, and ‘Other’.

Table 9: Respondent Sexual Orientation

| **Sexual Orientation** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Heterosexual | 95.6% | 92.1% |
| Gay or Lesbian | 1.1% | 3.2% |
| Bisexual | 2.2% | 1.6% |
| Other | 1.1% | 3.2% |

Figure 5: Respondent Sexual Orientation

#### Primary Language and Education

Table 10 and Figure 6 show respondents’ primary language spoken at home. Data from 2020 and 2021 have similar representations. Overall, English as a primarily language represents nearly 90% of respondents.

Table 10: Primary Language Spoken at Home

| **Primary Language** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | 92.6% | 88.9% |
| Spanish | 3.2% | 4.0% |
| Other | 4.4% | 7.1% |

Figure 6: Primary Language Spoken at Home

Table 11 and Figure 7 show respondents’ educational attainment. In comparison to 2020, a higher percentage of 2021 respondents have a bachelor’s degree. Overall, 2021 respondents display a higher degree of education compared to 2020, as almost half of respondents have a bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degree.

Table 11: Educational Attainment

| **Highest Level of Education** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Less than High School | 11.6% | 8.1% |
| High School or Equivalent | 22.1% | 23.7% |
| Some College or Associate Degree | 32.6% | 17.0% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 12.6% | 22.2% |
| Graduate or Professional Degree | 21.1% | 28.9% |

Figure 7: Educational Attainment

#### Marital Status and Living Arrangement

Table 12 and Figure 8 show respondents’ marital status. In 2021, a higher percentage of respondents were single or never married compared to 2020. Overall, 2021 respondents are more likely to be single compared to 2020, with over half of respondents identifying as ‘Single, Never Married’, ‘Single, Divorced’, or ‘Single, Widow/Widower’.

Table 12: Marital Status

| **Marital Status** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Married, Currently Living with Partner | 45.3% | 37.8% |
| Married, Currently Not Living with Partner | 9.5% | 5.2% |
| Single, Never Married | 22.1% | 28.9% |
| Single, Divorced | 10.5% | 11.9% |
| Single, Widow/Widower | 12.6% | 16.3% |

Figure 8: Marital Status

Table 13 and Figure 9 show respondents’ current living arrangements. Compared to 2020, a higher percentage of respondents noted living alone in 2021. Overall, more than half of respondents are living with family member(s) or a partner, and over one-third indicate they are living alone.

Table 13: Current Living Arrangement

| **Current Living Arrangement** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Living Alone | 25.5% | 31.8% |
| Living with Family Members or Partner | 67.0% | 61.2% |
| Living with Roommates | 3.2% | 3.9% |
| Living in a Group Home |  | 1.6% |
| Living in a Nursing Facility | 3.2% | 0.8% |
| Homeless, Living in a Shelter or Temporary Housing | 1.1% | 0.8% |

Figure 9: Current Living Arrangement

#### Status in the U.S. and Military Services

Table 14 and Figure 10 show respondents’ citizenship status. A slightly higher percentage of respondents in 2021 classified as ‘Citizen’ compared to 2020. Overall, the majority of respondents classified as ‘Citizen’, with some identifying as ‘Lawful permanent residents’. No respondents identified as ‘Lawful temporary residents’.

Table 14: Respondent Citizenship Status

| **Status in the United States** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Citizen | 93.7% | 97.8% |
| Lawful Permanent Resident | 5.3% | 2.2% |
| Lawful Temporary Resident | 1.1% | 0.0% |

Figure 10: Respondent Citizenship Status

Table 15 and Figure 11 show respondents’ military status. Compared to 2020, a higher percentage of respondents have ‘Never Served’. Overall, the majority of respondents have ‘Never Served’, but 6% indicated they were ‘On Active Duty in the Past but not Currently’. No respondents were ‘Currently on Active Duty’.

Table 15: Respondent Military Service Status

| **Military Status** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Currently on Active Duty | 1.1% | 0.0% |
| On Active Duty in the Past but not Currently | 11.6% | 6.0% |
| Never Served | 87.4% | 94.0% |

Figure 11: Respondent Military Service Status

#### Employment Status

Table 16 and Figure 12 show respondents’ enrollment status in vocational training programs. Like 2020, most respondents (94.5%) were not enrolled in a vocational training program. However, the percentages of respondents attending either full time (0.8%) or part time (4.7%) vocational training programs increased slightly from 2020 to 2021.

Table 16: Enrollment in Vocational Training Program

| **Enrolled in Vocational Training** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes, Full Time | 0.0% | 0.8% |
| Yes, Part Time | 1.1% | 4.7% |
| No | 98.9% | 94.5% |

Figure 12: Enrollment in Vocational Training Program

Table 17 and Figure 13 show respondents’ current employment status. Compared to 2020 respondents, there was a decrease in ‘worked for pay in the past but not currently by 23.5% (or 3 respondents) and an increase in ‘currently working full time’ by 66.7% (or 14 respondents), ‘currently working part time’ by 107.8% (or 11 respondents), and ‘never had a paid job’ by 37.8% (or 6 respondents). Overall, more than half of the respondents noted they ‘worked for pay in the past but not currently’, followed by nearly one fifth noting they were ‘currently working full time’.

Table 17: Current Employment Status

| **Employment Status** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Currently Working Full Time | 11.7% | 19.5% |
| Currently Working Part Time | 6.4% | 13.3% |
| Worked for Pay in the Past but not Currently | 74.5% | 57.0% |
| Never Had a Paid Job | 7.4% | 10.2% |

Figure 13: Current Employment Status

#### Annual Household Income

Table 18 and Figure 14 show respondents’ total household income ranges. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 reported higher household incomes; nearly 75% had a total household income of $20,000 or more. From 2020 to 2021 there was an 83.95% increase in household incomes over $50,000 and a decrease of 29.3% for ‘Below $20,000’ household incomes.

Table 18: Total Household Income

| **Total Household Income** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Below $20,000 | 40.2% | 28.4% |
| Between $20,000 and $49,999 | 35.4% | 26.9% |
| Between $50,000 and $74,999 | 8.5% | 13.4% |
| Between $75,000 and $100,000 | 2.4% | 13.4% |
| Above $100,000 | 13.4% | 17.9% |

Figure 14: Total Household Income

### Health Status and Disabilities

#### Visual Functioning

Table 19 and Figure 15 display respondents’ self-assessed level of visual function. Compared to 2020, 2021, 36.5% more respondents are more likely to see large print but not regular print, and 58% fewer respondents are ‘Not able to see any print but can identify objects’. Overall, almost half of respondents noted they can see large print but not regular print.

Table 19: Self-Assessed Level of Visual Function

| **How Would You Describe Your Ability to See in Adequate Light?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Can see regular print in newspaper and books | 9.7% | 9.5% |
| Can see large print but not regular print | 30.1% | 41.1% |
| Not able to see any print but can identify objects | 22.6% | 9.5% |
| May not identify objects accurately but can detect motion, color, and/or shape | 12.9% | 16.8% |
| Light perception only | 12.9% | 9.5% |
| No vision | 11.8% | 13.7% |

Figure 15: Self-Assessed Level of Visual Function

#### Age at Onset of Visual Impairment

Table 20 and Figure 16 display respondents’ self-assessed age of first occurrence of visual difficulty. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 were more than twice as likely (15 respondents compared to 32 respondents) to have ‘Had vision difficulties since birth’. Overall, however, respondents in 2021 were less likely to have developed vision difficulties later in life.

Table 20: Self-Assessed Age of First Occurrence of Visual Difficulty

| **When did you first notice having vision difficulties?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Had vision difficulties since birth | 16.5% | 34.4% |
| Vision difficulties developed later in life | 83.5% | 65.6% |

Figure 16:Self-Assessed Age Of First Occurrence of Visual Difficulty

Table 21 and Figure 17 show respondents’ age of first occurrence of visual difficulty if not at birth. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 were almost twice as likely to have vision difficulties at age 19 or younger, and less than half as likely to have vision difficulties at age 70 or older. Overall, the majority of 2021 respondents experienced vision difficulties at age 19 or younger.

Table 21: Age of First Occurrence of Visual Difficulty if Not at Birth

| **Age when vision difficulties started for those who were not born with an impairment** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 19 and younger | 21.1% | 39.3% |
| 20 to 29 | 7.9% | 9.8% |
| 30 to 39 | 10.5% | 6.6% |
| 40 to 49 | 13.2% | 9.8% |
| 50 to 59 | 18.4% | 13.1% |
| 60 to 69 | 7.9% | 13.1% |
| 70 and older | 21.1% | 8.2% |

Figure 17: Age of First Occurrence of Visual Difficulty if Not at Birth

#### Use of Visual Aids

Table 22 and Figure 18 display respondents’ technology use. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 were more likely to use ‘Telescopic or prescriptive lenses’, ‘Large print, braille, or talking materials’, ‘Magnifiers’ and ‘Guide dog’, and less likely to use ‘CCTV’, ‘White cane’, and ‘Sunglasses’. Overall, more than half of respondents noted they used large print, braille, or talking materials, white canes, and magnifiers.

Table 22: Technologies Used

| **Do you use any of the following to help with your visual impairment?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Telescopic or Prescriptive Lenses | 30.1% | 38.2% |
| Magnifiers | 49.5% | 52.9% |
| Large Print, Braille, or Talking Materials | 51.6% | 58.8% |
| CCTV | 29.0% | 23.5% |
| White Cane | 64.5% | 54.9% |
| Guide Dog | 4.3% | 5.9% |
| Sunglasses | 58.1% | 44.1% |
| Other | 7.6% | 10.8% |

Figure 18: Technologies Used

#### Prevalence of Additional Disabilities among Survey Participants, Compared to the State and the Nation

Table 23 displays the presence of respondents’ other disabilities compared to state and national averages. Overall, respondents were significantly more likely to have the presence of other disability characteristics (hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living difficulty) compared to national averages. 2021 respondents were almost twice as likely to have hearing difficulties as 2020 respondents. Overall, nearly one-third of 2021 respondents noted ambulatory difficulties, and over one-fourth noted hearing difficulties.

Table 23: Presence of Other Disabilities Compared to State and National Averages

| **Characteristic** | | **United States** | **Massachusetts** | **2020 MCB Consumer Survey** | **2021 MCB Consumer Survey** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Additional Disabilities of the Survey Participants Compared to the Total Non-Institutionalized Civilian Population of the State and the Nation** | **Hearing Difficulty** | **3.6%** | **3.1%** | **13.7%** | **28.3%** |
| **Cognitive Difficulty** | **5.2%** | **5.0%** | **15.6%** | **20.8%** |
| **Ambulatory Difficulty** | **6.9%** | **5.8%** | **35.8%** | **32.1%** |
| **Self-Care Difficulty** | **2.6%** | **2.4%** | **22.1%** | **17.9%** |
| **Independent Living Difficulty** | **5.9%** | **5.3%** | **71.6%** | **56.6%** |

#### Health Insurance Coverage

Table 24 and Figure 19 display respondents’ presence of health insurance. 2020 and 2021 percentages are strikingly similar, with approximately 99% of respondents having health insurance in both years.

Table 24: Presence of Health Insurance

| **Do You Have Health Insurance?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 98.9% | 99.4% |
| No | 1.1% | 0.6% |

Figure 19: Presence of Health Insurance

Table 25 and Figure 20 display the types of health insurance among insured respondents. Compared to 2020, 2021 respondents were less likely to have state or federal Affordable Care Act, Medicare, or self-paid insurance, and more likely to have employer-provided plans or some other type of health insurance. Overall, over half (52.9%) of respondents reported having Medicare.

Table 25: Type of Health Insurance Among Those Insured

| **Type of Health Insurance if Covered** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| State (MassHealth) or Federal Affordable Care Act Exchange | 47.3% | 34.3% |
| Medicare | 59.1% | 52.9% |
| Medicaid or CHIP | 7.5% | 8.8% |
| Self-paid private insurance plan | 18.3% | 11.8% |
| Employer-provided insurance plan | 18.3% | 30.4% |
| VA health care | 4.3% | 2.9% |
| TRICARE or other military health plan |  | 1.0% |
| Indian Health Service |  | 1.0% |
| Some other type of health insurance | 7.6% | 14.7% |

Figure 20: Type of Health Insurance Used Among Those Insured

#### Physical Health Status

Table 26 and Figure 21 display respondents’ physical health status. In 2021 respondents reported being in better physical health than 2020, with increases in ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, and ‘Good’ physical health statuses. Overall, the majority (72.7%) of respondents reported being in excellent, very good, or good physical health.

Table 26: Physical Health Status

| **How Would You Rate Your Physical Health?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Excellent | 11.7% | 15.1% |
| Very Good | 23.4% | 23.6% |
| Good | 29.8% | 34.0% |
| Fair | 25.5% | 24.5% |
| Poor | 9.6% | 2.8% |

Figure 21: Physical Health Status

#### Mental Health Status

Table 27 and Figure 22 display respondents’ mental health status. Respondents reported being in better mental health in 2021 than in 2020. Overall, the majority (78.9%) of respondents reported being in ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’ mental health.

Table 27: Mental Health Status

| **How Would You Rate Your Mental Health, Including Your Mood and Ability to Think?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Excellent | 18.1% | 25.0% |
| Very Good | 31.9% | 20.2% |
| Good | 24.5% | 33.7% |
| Fair | 20.2% | 15.4% |
| Poor | 5.3% | 5.8% |

Figure 22: Mental Health Status

#### Overall Quality of Life

Table 28 and Figure 23 display respondents’ quality-of-life. Compared to 2020, there was an increase in ‘Very good’, ‘Good’ and ‘Fair’ responses, and a decrease in ‘Excellent’ and ‘Poor’ responses. Overall, in 2021more than 83.5% of respondents reported either ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’ or ‘Good’ quality of life. Less than 2% of respondents reported ‘Poor’ quality of life.

Table 28: Quality of Life

| **How Would You Rate Your Quality of Life?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Excellent | 18.3% | 14.6% |
| Very Good | 26.9% | 30.1% |
| Good | 36.6% | 38.8% |
| Fair | 12.9% | 14.6% |
| Poor | 5.4% | 1.9% |

Figure 23: Quality of Life

### Use of Assistive Technologies

#### Regularly Used Devices

Table 29 and Figure 24 display the technology devices regularly used by respondents. Compared to 2020, respondents reported higher usage of laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, smart watches, ATMs, smart speakers, and desktop computers, and lower usage of non-smart cell phones. Overall, over half of respondents reported using smart phones or laptop computers regularly, and nearly half reported using tablets or desktop computers regularly.

Table 29: Technological Devices Regularly Used

| **Regularly Used Communication Devices** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Desktop Computer | 33.3% | 42.0% |
| Laptop Computer | 25.9% | 52.3% |
| Tablet (like iPad) | 34.6% | 46.6% |
| Cell Phone (not smartphone) | 30.9% | 21.6% |
| Smartphone | 66.7% | 73.9% |
| Smartwatch | 7.4% | 11.4% |
| Smart Speaker (like Alexa or Google Home) | 28.4% | 37.5% |
| Bank ATM Machines | 25.9% | 30.7% |

Figure 24: Technological Devices Regularly Used

#### Frequency of Internet Use

Table 30 and Figure 25 display the frequency of internet use by respondents. Nearly two-thirds of respondents reported using the internet every day. Compared to 2020, 16.6% fewer respondents reported they were likely to use the internet daily in 2021.

Table 30: Frequency of Internet Use

| **How Often Do You Use the Internet?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Every Day | 80.3% | 67.0% |
| Several Times a Week | 4.5% | 14.0% |
| Several Times a Month | 4.5% | 2.0% |
| Several Times a Year | 0.0% | 4.0% |
| I Don't Use At All | 10.6% | 13.0% |

Figure 25: Frequency of Internet Use

#### Frequency of Email Use

Table 31 and Figure 26 displays respondents’ frequency of e-mail use. Compared to 2020, 27.6% more respondents in 2021 reported that they were likely to use the internet daily. Overall, nearly 90% reported checking e-mail every day or at least several times a week.

Table 31: Frequency of Email Use

| **How Often Do You Check Your Email Account?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Every Day | 60.6% | 77.3% |
| Several Times a Week | 7.7% | 10.2% |
| Several Times a Month | 12.3% | 0.0% |
| Several Times a Year | 6.2% | 3.4% |
| I Don't Have an Email Account | 13.8% | 9.1% |

Figure 26: Frequency of Email Use

#### Device Used for Navigating the Web

Table 32 and Figure 27 display the devices used by respondents to access the internet. Nearly 52% more respondents in 2021 reported they were more likely to use a laptop computer, than in 2020, and 5.7% of respondents reported using Braille Notetaker, where no respondents used it in 2020.Respondents’ usage of the remaining devices (desktop, chrome book, tablet, smart phone, and other) did not change much between 2020 and 2021. Overall, more than half of respondents reported using a smart phone and nearly half reported using a laptop computer and tablet.

Table 32: Devices Used for Internet Access

| **Which of the Following Devices do you Ordinarily Use for Navigating the Web?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Desktop Computer | 42.6% | 39.1% |
| Laptop Computer | 29.5% | 44.8% |
| Chromebook | 4.9% | 2.3% |
| Tablet | 41.0% | 42.5% |
| Smartphone | 60.7% | 64.4% |
| Braille Notetaker | 0.0% | 5.7% |
| Other | 1.6% | 4.6% |

Figure 27: Devices Used for Internet Access

#### Assistive Technologies Used

Table 33 and Figure 28 display respondents’ use of assistive technologies. Compared to 2020, use of many assistive technologies increased in 2021. For example, use of screen magnification software increased by nearly 80%, use of hearing aids increased by 186% (or increased by 15 respondents from 7 to 22), and use of large print materials increased by 28.1%. 2021 respondents were also slightly more likely than 2020 respondents to use braille tools or materials, speech recognition software, assistive listening devices, talking thermometers, accessibility calculators, audio textbooks, smart speakers, and communication devices. Overall, nearly half of respondents reported using screen magnification software and large print materials.

Table 33: Assistive Technologies Used

| **Which of the Following Assistive Technologies do you Currently Use?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Large Print Materials | 33.0% | 43.8% |
| Braille tools or materials (like Brailler, Slate and Stylus, Braille notetaker, Braille display, hard copy Braille book) | 6.8% | 15.6% |
| Speech recognition software (like Dragon) | 11.4% | 14.6% |
| Screen magnification software | 25.0% | 44.8% |
| PenFriend | 10.2% | 7.3% |
| Alternative keyboard and mouse | 5.7% | 0.0% |
| Head pointing device | 1.1% | 0.0% |
| Communication devices | 5.7% | 9.4% |
| Hearing aid | 8.0% | 22.9% |
| Assistive listening devices | 2.3% | 3.1% |
| Talking watches | 29.5% | 20.8% |
| Talking thermometer | 14.8% | 15.6% |
| Text-to-speech screen reader (like JAWS) | 23.9% | 30.2% |
| Smart speaker (like Alexa, Google Home) | 30.7% | 34.4% |
| Accessible calculator | 9.1% | 18.8% |
| CCTV magnification system | 26.1% | 22.9% |
| Audio textbooks | 37.5% | 39.6% |

Figure 28: Assistive Technologies Used

#### Use of Accessibility Settings on Smartphones or Tablets

Table 34 and Figure 29 display respondents’ use of accessibility settings on tablets and mobile devices. Compared to 2020, nearly 84% of respondents reported they were more likely to use accessibility settings or accessibility software on a mobile phone or tablet than they were in 2020 (63.2%). Overall, the majority of respondents reported using accessibility settings or accessibility software on a mobile phone or tablet.

Table 34: Use of Accessibility Settings Among Those Using Tablets and Mobile Devices

| **Do you use the accessibility settings or accessibility software on a mobile phone or tablet?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 63.2% | 83.9% |
| No | 36.8% | 16.1% |

Figure 29: Use of Accessibility Settings Among Those Using Tablets and Mobile Devices

#### Primary Smartphone/Tablet Screen Reader

Table 35 and Figure 30 display the types of primary screen reading technologies used by respondents that use tablet and mobile devices. Compared to 2020 where nearly one quarter of respondents reported they were likely to use VoiceOver, more than half (56.5%) of 2021 respondents report using the technology. The use of Mobile Accessibility for Android also increased considerably (from 2.5% in 2020 to 13% in 2021), and the use of “Other” methods also increased considerably, from 2.5% in 2020 to over a quarter of respondents using “Other” technologies in 2021. Most of these individuals reported resetting their default text displays.

Table 35: Primary Screen Reading Technology Among Tablet and Mobile Device Users

| **Which of the following is your primary mobile/tablet screen reader?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| VoiceOver | 22.2% | 56.5% |
| TalkBack for Android | 8.6% | 4.3% |
| Mobile Accessibility for Android | 2.5% | 13.0% |
| Mobile Accessibility for Apple | 3.7% | 0.0% |
| ZoomText | 1.2% | 0.0% |
| Other | 2.5% | 26.1% |

Figure 30: Primary Screen Reading Technology Among Tablet and Mobile Device Users

#### Extent of Braille Use

Table 36 and Figure 31 displays the extent of braille use among respondents. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 were more likely to read braille on a specified frequency or use it at all. While respondents did increase their braille usage, the majority (66.3%) reported that they did not use braille.

Table 36: Extent of Braille Use

| **Which one of the following statements best describes your use of braille?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| I use braille at least once a week | 2.2% | 10.5% |
| I read braille but use it less than once a week | 7.9% | 10.5% |
| Other | 3.4% | 12.6% |
| I don't read braille | 86.5% | 66.3% |

Figure 31: Extent of Braille Use

### Activities of Daily Living

#### Preferred Reading Medium

Table 37 and Figure 32 displayed respondents’ preferred reading mediums. Compared to 2020, respondents were more likely use large print and less likely to use audio in 2021. Overall, over half of respondents reported using audio (e.g. recorded books, magazines) and over one-third use large print.

Table 37: Respondent Preferred reading Medium

| **What is your preferred reading medium?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Audio (like recorded books, magazines) | 63.5% | 51.8% |
| Braille | 1.2% | 5.9% |
| Large print | 27.1% | 37.6% |
| Regular print | 8.2% | 4.7% |

Figure 32: Respondent Preferred reading Medium

#### Activities of Daily Living for which Assistance is Needed

Table 38 and Figure 33 display the activities of daily living where respondents require assistance. Compared to 2020, respondents in 2021 reported being more independent across all activities; the largest decreases in need of help were in ‘Preparing meals’, ‘Washing and ironing clothes’, ‘Doing grocery shopping’, and ‘Doing house cleaning’. Overall, more than half of respondents still required assistance with grocery shopping, and nearly half required assistance with taking a walk outdoors and house cleaning.

Table 38: Activities of Daily Living Requiring Help

| **Do you need help with any of the following activities:** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Moving around the house | 20.5% | 12.2% |
| Taking a walk outdoors | 50.0% | 46.9% |
| Preparing meals | 59.0% | 37.8% |
| Doing house cleaning | 61.5% | 44.9% |
| Washing and ironing clothes | 47.4% | 28.6% |
| Doing grocery shopping | 80.8% | 62.2% |

Figure 33: Activities of Daily Living Requiring Help

#### Need for Assistance in Managing Finances

Table 39 and Figure 34 display respondents’ level of assistance needed to manage finances. Compared to 2020, a higher percentage (19.4% more) of respondents reported needing ‘None’ in regard to assistance. Those in 2021 who reported needing ‘A lot’ of help were slightly less. Overall, nearly half of respondents reported needing no assistance with managing finances.

Table 39: Need for Help Managing Finances

| **How much assistance do you need in managing your finances?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| None | 37.6% | 44.9% |
| Some | 34.4% | 26.5% |
| A lot | 28.0% | 26.5% |

Figure 34: Need for Help Managing Finances

### Orientation, Mobility and Travel

#### Ever had a Driver’s License?

Table 40 and Figure 35 display the number of respondents that had a driver’s license at any point. Compared to 2020, respondents were less likely (22.2%) to have a driver’s license. Overall, approximately 55.2% reported having had a driver’s license at one point.

Table 40: Presence of Driver's License at Any Point

| **Have you ever had a driver’s license?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 71.0% | 55.2% |
| No | 29.0% | 44.8% |

Figure 35: PRESENCE OF DRIVER'S LICENSE AT ANY POINT

#### Primary Orientation and Mobility Aid

Table 41 and Figure 36 display the primary orientation and mobility devices used by respondents. Compared to 2020, respondents were less likely to use ‘No orientation and mobility aid used’, ‘Other’ aids, or a ‘White cane’. However, nearly half of respondents reported using a white cane.

Table 41: Primary Orientation and Mobility Device Used

| **Which is the primary orientation and mobility device that you use?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| White Cane | 58.6% | 44.9% |
| Dog Guide | 3.4% | 3.1% |
| White Cane in Combination with Dog Guide | 1.1% | 1.0% |
| Other | 14.9% | 3.1% |
| No Orientation and Mobility Aid Used | 21.8% | 2.0% |

Figure 36: Primary Orientation and Mobility Device Used

#### Type of Cane Among White Cane Users

Table 42 and Figure 37 display the type of white cane used by respondents who used white canes. Compared to 2020, respondents were slightly more likely to use long canes and less likely to use short canes. Overall, the majority of respondents reported using long canes.

Table 42: Type of White Cane Among White Cane Users

| **If You Use a White Cane, What Type do you Use?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Long Cane | 78.3% | 88.2% |
| Short Cane for ID (goes up to hip) | 21.7% | 11.8% |

Figure 37: Type of White Cane Among White Cane Users

#### Feel Safe Traveling or Crossing the Street?

Table 43 and Figure 38 display respondents’ feelings of safety when crossing streets or traveling independently. Compared to 2020, respondents reported feeling slightly more safe crossing streets or traveling independently. Overall, exactly 50% of respondents reported feeling safe crossing the streets or traveling independently.

Table 43: Safety Crossing Streets or Traveling Independently

| **Do you feel safe traveling or crossing streets independently?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 43.5% | 50.0% |
| No | 56.5% | 50.0% |

Figure 38: Safety Crossing Streets or Traveling Independently

#### Reasons for Feeling Unsafe Traveling or Crossing the Street

Table 44 and Figure 39 display respondents’ reasons for feeling unsafe traveling independently. Compared to 2020, the percentage of respondents who reported feeling unsafe increased across all responses: ‘It is too complex for me to do independently’ (85.6% more), ‘I never learned to travel or cross streets independently’ (111.8% more) or by 3 respondents more, and ‘There are no accessible routes available to me’ (274.3%more) or by 5 respondents more.

Table 44: Reasons for Feeling Unsafe Traveling Independently

| **Why do you feel unsafe traveling or crossing streets independently?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| It is too complex for me to do independently | 31.4% | 58.3% |
| I never learned to travel or cross streets independently | 5.9% | 12.5% |
| There are no accessible routes available to me | 3.9% | 14.6% |

Figure 39: Reasons for Feeling Unsafe Traveling Independently

### Social Relationships

#### Participates in Community Groups

Table 45 and Figure 40 display the percentage of respondents who are part of a community group. Compared to 2020, respondents reported they were more likely (28.5% more) to be part of a formal or informal community group. Overall, almost half of respondents reported being part of a community group.

Table 45: Membership in Community Groups

| **Are you part of any formal or informal community groups?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yes | 38.5% | 49.5% |
| No | 61.5% | 50.5% |

Figure 40: Membership in Community Groups

#### Difficulty Participating in Social Activities

Table 46 and Figure 41 display the difficulties reported by respondents when participating in social activities. Responses from 2020 to 2021 were notably similar, with the exception of respondents that ‘Can’t do these things at all’, which reduced by 45.1%. Overall, one-third of respondents reported that participating in social activities was ‘Somewhat difficult’.

Table 46: Difficult Participating in Social Activities

| **How difficult is it for you to participate in social activities such as visiting friends, attending clubs and meetings, going to parties?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Not at all difficult | 18.5% | 21.3% |
| Only a little difficult | 18.5% | 21.3% |
| Somewhat difficult | 32.6% | 33.0% |
| Very difficult | 18.5% | 20.2% |
| Can’t do these things at all | 12.0% | 4.3% |

Figure 41: Difficult Participating in Social Activities

#### Feels Like There is Nobody to Talk to

Table 47 and Figure 42 display respondents’ frequency of feelings of loneliness. 2020 and 2021 responses were notably similar. Overall, one-third of respondents reported feeling lonely ‘Sometimes’ and almost one-third reported ‘Rarely’ feeling lonely.

Table 47: Frequency of Feelings of Loneliness

| **How often do you feel like you don’t have anyone to talk to?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Very often | 10.9% | 9.4% |
| Sometimes | 31.5% | 37.5% |
| Rarely | 29.3% | 31.3% |
| Never | 28.3% | 21.9% |

Figure 42: Frequency of Feelings of Loneliness

#### Overall Quality of Social Relationships

Table 48 and Figure 43 display respondents’ satisfaction with social relationships. 2020 and 2021 responses were similar. Overall, 29.5% of respondents ranked their satisfaction with social relationships as ‘Good’. Collectively, 63.2% of respondents rated their satisfaction with social relationships as ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’.

Table 48: Satisfaction with Social Relationships

| **How would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Excellent | 13.8% | 11.6% |
| Very Good | 27.7% | 22.1% |
| Good | 29.8% | 29.5% |
| Fair | 18.1% | 27.4% |
| Poor | 10.6% | 9.5% |

Figure 43: Satisfaction with Social Relationships

### Service Utilization

#### Current Use of MCB Services

Table 49 and Figure 44 display respondents’ use of MCB services. Compared to 2020, there was a 45.1% decrease from respondents who used MCB services in the past but are not currently using MCB services. This is most likely attributed to the sampled population, looking only participants that had not had an update to their case status within two years. Overall, the majority (91.8%) of respondents are currently using, or have used, MCB services, with more than half of respondents currently using MCB services.

Table 49: Use of MCB Services

| **Ever Used MCB Services?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No | 7.5% | 8.2% |
| Yes, used MCB services in the past but not currently | 60.2% | 33.0% |
| Yes, currently using MCB services | 32.3% | 58.8% |

Figure 44: Use of MCB Services

#### MCB Services Used Among Current Users

Table 50 and Figure 46 display the types of MCB services used by respondents. Compared to 2020, there was an increase in usage of ‘Assistive technology’ and ‘Deaf and blind extended supports’, and a decrease in usage of ‘Orientation and mobility’, ‘Vision rehabilitation and therapy’, ‘Employment counseling’, ‘Peer support groups’ and ‘Other’ services. Overall, more than half respondents reported using MCB assistive technology services.

Table 50: MCB Services Used

| **Which of the following MCB services do you currently use?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Assistive technology | 51.6% | 60.7% |
| Orientation and mobility | 38.7% | 23.2% |
| Vision rehabilitation and therapy | 22.6% | 7.1% |
| Employment counseling | 12.9% | 7.1% |
| Pre-employment transition services | 3.2% | 3.6% |
| Peer support groups | 6.5% | 1.8% |
| Deaf and blind extended supports | 0.0% | 10.7% |
| Other services | 16.2% | 12.5% |

Figure 45: MCB Services Used

#### Other State Agencies’ Services Used

Table 51 and Figure 46 display the other Massachusetts services used by respondents. Compared to 2020, the largest increase in usage was Department of Developmental Services (DDS) services increasing overall by 88.3% and the largest decrease in usage was Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) services by 55.6%. Overall, the majority of other Massachusetts services used were DTA services.

Table 51: Other Massachusetts Services Used

| **Do you currently receive services from any of the following state agencies?** | **2020** | **2021** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Department of Developmental Services (DDS) | 12.0% | 22.6% |
| Department of Children and Families (DCF) | 0.0% | 3.2% |
| Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) | 80.0% | 35.5% |
| Department of Mental Health (DMH) | 0.0% | 12.9% |
| Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) | 8.0% | 3.2% |
| Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) | 0.0% | 9.7% |
| Other | 12.0% | 16.1% |

Figure 46: Other Massachusetts Services Used

#### Open-Ended Consumer Responses

Table 52 (included in the Appendix section of this report) contains the responses to Q52, “What else would you like to let us know about your experience working with MCB or any of the services you have received?”. Results have been alphabetized but are otherwise unedited.

There were 45 responses to this question, the majority of which (approximately 84%) were positive, or positive / neutral with constructive suggestions for improvements. Positive comments included:

*“I have been a client of MCB since the 70s and have used itinerant teachers of the blind as a children, O&M, learned Braille, received employment counseling and AT training from MCB over the years and would not have been able to achieve the levels of independence, education, mobility and employment without MCB being there when I needed help. Thank you.”*

*“Legally blind since birth—state paid for me to attend Perkins School and my undergraduate education. I went on to earn a doctorate degree and had a productive professional career as a clinical gerontologist for more than 45 years. Thank you”*

Topics for improvement mentioned included:

* Better vocational services needed
* Housing opportunities
* More training on Voice Over (and a desire for additional technology support in general)
* Support for employment counseling or transition

Specific comments regarding desired improvements included:

* “One of the challenges I’ve found as a DeafBlind person with additional disabilities is that the systems are very siloed. MCB is great at blind only things, but struggles with people with multiple disabilities.”
* “Some of the registrations are difficult to accomplish cuz there’s embedded links which a blind person cannot see to tap on and I asked why would a blind agency think a blind person can register or able to use embedded links if we cannot see them?”
* “DeafBlind individuals receive support through DeafBlind extended supports. However, no one in the Boston area extended supports office actually knows ASL.”
* “It is difficult to get information about services.”
* “There is an any new needs to be social groups of people with vision issues.”

# Analysis, Highlights and trends to watch

In the section below, we describe our analysis of the survey findings, identify notable highlights from the findings, and identify trends for MCB to monitor going forward.

## Demographic and Socioeconomic Characteristics, Tables 5-23

***Analysis:***

Overall, survey responses were representative of several populations with diversity in gender, race, sexual orientation, primary language, age groups, educational levels, marital statuses, military experience, and different socioeconomic backgrounds.

From 2020 to 2021 there was a slight increase in female responses, with females representing slightly over half of survey responses.

When looking at racial groups of respondents, more than three-fourth of respondents were classified as ‘White’ and one-tenth classified as ‘African American’. Although the majority of respondents were classified as ‘Non-Hispanic/Latino’, 6.8% of respondents were ‘Hispanic/Latino’. In looking at primarily language spoken at home, English represented nearly 90% of respondents, however, ‘Spanish’ and ‘Other’ were also represented.

From 2020 to 2021 there was a 409% increase in respondents aged 14 to 21, and almost a 15% increase in those 65 and older. Nearly half of respondents were aged 65 and older.

Overall, respondents in 2021 had higher levels of education compared to respondents in 2020, with the highest increase seen in those with a bachelor’s degree. In 2021, almost half of respondents had a bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degree. However, with regard to vocational training programs, respondents reported low enrollment, with just over 5% enrolled.

In 2021, 32.8% of respondents were either working full or part-time. However, the majority (57%) of respondents were not currently working but had worked in the past. This is most likely contributed to the sampling pool, as the majority of the sample were active cases, most likely seeking employment with MCB assistance. In regard to income levels, almost half of respondents reported total household incomes of $50,000 to $100,000 or more, and of those, 17.9% reported household incomes above $100,000. The increase in higher income levels correlates with the higher educational attainment levels seen in responses.

In regard to sexual orientation groups, all sexual orientation groups were represented in the 2021 survey, which included ‘Heterosexual’, ‘Gay or lesbian’, ‘Bisexual’, and ‘Other’. In comparison to 2020, respondents in 2021 were more likely to be single, with over half of respondents identifying as ‘Single, never married’, ‘Single, divorced’, or ‘Single, widow/widower’. Nearly than one-third of respondents reported living alone, a higher percentage than in 2020. This suggests respondents may be more equipped with the skills or assistance they need to live independently.

Overall, the majority of respondents indicated they are citizens while some identified as ‘Lawful permanent residents’. The majority of respondents have ‘Never served’ in the military, but 6% reported serving ‘On active duty in the past but not currently’.

Nearly half of respondents reported being able to see large print but not regular print, an increase from 2020. Further, more than half of respondents reported developing vision difficulties later in life, a decrease of 21.4% from 2020. Overall, respondents appeared to have better visual functioning that occurred later in life, which may have contributed to the level of increased independence noted in the data above.

Respondents in 2021 reported being more likely to use telescopic or prescriptive lenses, large print, braille, or talking materials, magnifiers, and guide dogs and less likely to use CCTV’s, white canes, and sunglasses.

***Highlights:***

* Survey responses were diverse in gender, race, sexual orientation, primary language, age groups, educational levels, marital status and experience, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
* Females were represented slightly higher in responses.
* 77% of respondents were classified as ‘White’ and 10% were classified as ‘African American’. Almost 7% of respondents were Hispanic/Latino.
* Nearly half of respondents were older than 65, but there was an increase in respondents aged 14 to 21.
* 2021 respondents had higher levels of education compared to 2020. Overall, almost half of respondents had a bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degree.
* All marital statuses were represented, but respondents in 2021 were more likely to be single. Nearly one-third of respondents noted living alone in 2021, a higher percentage than in 2020.
* Nearly one-third of respondents were currently working.
* Almost half of respondents reported total household incomes of $50,000 to $100,000 or more, with 17.9% above $100,000.
* Almost half of respondents reported being able to see large but not regular print.
* More than half of respondents noted using large print, braille, talking materials, white canes, and magnifiers.

***Trends to Watch:***

* Ongoing surveys should strive to mirror ACS race and ethnic representations compared to the Massachusetts population.
* MCB should continue helping individuals achieve the educational goals they need for individualized employment outcomes while ensuring they support *all* individuals’ educational endeavors, including those who seek vocational training.
* MCB should monitor the changing use in visual aids to ensure MCB services are keeping up with trends.

## Health Status and Disabilities (Tables 24-28)

***Analysis:***

In 2021 the majority of respondents had medical insurance and were in better overall physical and mental health. They also reported better quality of life.

The majority of respondents (99.4%) reported having health insurance. Compared to 2020, respondents were less likely to have state or federal Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and self-paid insurance, and more likely to have employer-provided insurance plans or some other type of health insurance.

Regarding overall health, 2021 respondents reported being in better physical health, with higher percentages indicating their physical health status was ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’. Overall, the majority (72.7%) of respondents reported being in excellent, very good, or good physical health. When looking at mental health, compared to 2020, respondents reported being in better mental health, with the majority (78%) reporting being in either ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’ or ‘Good’ mental health. For overall quality of life, a higher percentage of respondents in 2021 reported their quality of life as either “Very good’ or ‘Good’. Overall, the majority, 83.5% reported either ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’ or ‘Good’ quality of life ratings.

***Highlights:***

* The majority of respondents (99.4%) reported having health insurance.
* Compared to 2020, respondents reported being in better physical health (more respondents reported ‘Excellent, ‘Very good’ and ‘Good’ physical health statuses).
* Compared to 2020, respondents reported being in better mental health (more respondents reported ‘Excellent and ‘Good’ mental health statuses.
* The majority, 83.5%, reported either ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’ or ‘Good’ quality of life ratings.

***Trends to Watch:***

* MCB should continue to support individuals in the current manner to continue the positive trend of overall improvements in health and quality of life.

## Use of Assistive Technologies (Tables 29-36)

***Analysis:***

Overall, advanced technology use among respondents is trending upward, with an increased use of smart mobile phones and computer applications. Compared to 2020, 2021 respondents reported higher usage of laptop computers, tablets, smart phones, smart watches, ATM machines, smart speakers, and desktop computers, and decreased usage of non-smart mobile phones. Over half of respondents reported using smart phones or laptop computers regularly, while another (nearly) half reporting using tablets or desktop computers regularly.

Compared to 2020, 2021 respondents were less likely to report using the internet daily (16.5% less likely). However, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported using the internet every day. In contrast, nearly 90% of respondents reported checking e-mail every day or at least several times a week. Because survey responses to ‘use the internet daily’ and ‘checking e-mail daily’ do not align (67% compared to 77%), individuals may have interpreted using the internet differently from checking e-mail.

Regarding devices, overall, more than half of respondents noted using a smart phone and nearly half also reported laptop computer and tablet use. Compared to 2020, 2021 respondents reported they were more likely to use screen magnification software, hearing aids, and large print materials .

2021 saw an increase in accessibility settings and accessibility software usage, likely in conjunction with increased use of smart phone technology. Overall, the majority of respondents reported using accessibility settings or software on a mobile phone or tablet. Compared to 2020, respondents reported increases in VoiceOver, ‘Other’, and Mobile Accessibility for Android technologies, with over half of respondents in 2021 reported using VoiceOver technology.

***Highlights:***

* Over half of respondents reported using smart phones or laptop computers regularly, and nearly half reporting using tablets or desktop computers regularly.
* Nearly 90% reported checking e-mail daily or at least several times a week.
* More than 50% of respondents reported using a smart phone, and nearly half reported laptop computer and tablet use.
* Over half of respondents reported using VoiceOver technology.

***Trends to Watch:***

* MCB should explore how respondents interpret the question “use the internet daily’ because survey responses to ‘use the internet daily’ and ‘checking e-mail daily’ do not align (67% compared to 77%). This suggests individuals may interpret using the internet differently than checking e-mail, although both are technically using the internet.
* Given the trend towards increased technology usage, MCB should assess whether the currently available accessibility settings and software services are sufficient and available to all consumers who want or need them.

## Activities of Daily Living (Tables 37-39)

***Analysis:***

Regarding daily activities, in 2021 respondents reported being more independent compared to 2020. The largest decreases in need were washing and ironing clothes (39.6% less), preparing meals (35.9% less), grocery shopping (23% less), and doing house cleaning (26.9% less). However, more than half of respondents still require assistance with grocery shopping, and nearly half also reported requiring assistance with taking a walk outdoors and doing house cleaning. In 2021 respondents reported being slightly more independent in regard to managing finances; those reporting ‘no help’ (19.4% less) and those reporting ‘some help’ (22.9% less) both saw reductions. Overall, nearly half of respondents reported needing no assistance with managing finances.

***Highlights:***

* In 2021, more than half of respondents still require assistance with grocery shopping and nearly half required assistance with taking a walk outdoors and doing house cleaning.
* Overall, nearly half of respondents reported needing no assistance with managing finances.

***Trends to Watch:***

* MCB should consider implementing or expanding programs that can help individuals perform activities of daily living in order to increase independence, such as grocery shopping, navigating the outdoors, house cleaning, and managing finances.

## Orientation, Mobility and Travel (Tables 40-44)

***Analysis:***

For orientation, mobility and travel, 2021 respondents were less likely to have had a driver’s license and more likely to use a white cane, specifically a long cane. Respondents also reported feeling safer crossing the streets or traveling independently. Just over half of respondents reported having a driver’s license at one point.

Compared to 2020, 2021 respondents reported feeling slightly safer (14.9%) crossing the streets or traveling independently. Overall, 2021 responses indicated exactly half of respondents felt safe crossing the streets or traveling independently. Regarding reasons for not feeling comfortable crossing the street, the 2021 survey elicited higher responses for all reasons, including ‘It is too complex to do independently’ (-85.6% more), ‘Never learned to travel or cross streets independently’ (111.8% more), and ‘No accessible routes available’ (274.3%more). Overall, more than half of respondents reported that crossing the street or traveling independently was too complex to do independently.

***Highlights:***

* Over half of respondents reported having a driver’s license at one point.
* Nearly half of respondents reported using a white cane, while the majority using a long cane.
* Half of respondents reported feeling safe crossing the streets or traveling independently, but the other half reported that crossing the streets or traveling independently was ‘too complex to do independently’.

***Trends to Watch:***

* PCG recommends that MCB explore how it can continue helping individuals meet their orientation and mobility needs, particularly for those who consider crossing the street or traveling independently to be too complex to do independently.

## Social Relationships (Tables 45-48)

***Analysis:***

Overall, social relationships and community connectedness increased from 2020 to 2021. In 2021, respondents reported they were more likely (28.5% more) to be part of a community group (formal or informal), and almost half of respondents in 2021 overall reported being part of a community group. Compared to 2020, respondents indicated similar levels of difficulty participating in social activities with the exception of respondents reporting that they ‘can’t do these things at all’, which decreased by 64.1%. In total, one-third of respondents reported that participating in social activities was ‘Somewhat difficult’.

Responses regarding overall feelings of loneliness were notably similar between 2020 and 2021. Overall, one-third of respondents reported feeling lonely ‘Sometimes’ and one-third reported feeling lonely ‘Rarely’. Satisfaction with social relationships in 2021 was similar to 2020. Overall, 29.5% of respondents ranked their satisfaction with social relationships as ‘Good’. Collectively, 63.2% of respondents reported their satisfaction with social relationships as ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’.

***Highlights:***

* Almost half of respondents reported being part of a community group.
* One-third of respondents reported that participating in social activities was ‘Somewhat difficult’.
* One-third of respondents reported feeling lonely ‘Sometimes’. However, almost one-third reported feeling lonely ‘Rarely’.
* 63.2% of respondents reported ‘Excellent’, ‘Very good’, or ‘Good’ satisfaction with social relationships.

***Trends to Watch:***

* MCB should explore further to identify specific difficulties in participating in social activities and identify resources to enhance community inclusion. Furthermore, exploration should integrate discussions on social activities in the workplace with individuals, managers, and organizations to help increase awareness of accessibility needs and inclusion.

## Service Utilization (Tables 49-51)

***Analysis:***

The majority of 2021 respondents (91.8%) reported that they are currently using, or have used, MCB services. Of these, more than half are currently using MCB services. Compared to 2020, 2021 saw an increase in assistive technology and deaf and blind extended supports services, and a decrease in orientation and mobility, vision rehabilitation and therapy, employment counseling, peer support groups and ‘Other’ services. More than half of respondents reported using MCB assistive technology services.

Compared to 2020, the largest increase in usage of other Massachusetts services in 2021 was Department of Developmental Services (DDS) services (88.3%), and the largest decrease in usage was Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) services by 55.6%. Overall, the majority of other Massachusetts services used were DTA services.

***Highlights:***

* The majority of respondents (91.8%) are currently using, or have used, MCB services.
* Overall, more than half of respondents reported using MCB assistive technology services.
* The majority of other Massachusetts services used were DTA services, however, DTA service usage in 2021 was 55.6% lower than in 2020.

***Trends to Watch:***

* MCB should explore the root causes behind the decline in DTA service usage in order to understand what MCB services, if any, may be helping to facilitate this decline.
* MCB should evaluate the need for additional or expanded assistive technology (possibly driven by increased use of smart phones and other devices) and deaf and blind extended support services, and the possible cause(s) of the decline in orientation and mobility, vision rehabilitation and therapy, employment counseling, peer support groups and ‘Other’ services to determine – and adjust if necessary – the level of need for these services moving forward.

# Survey Recommendations

This Consumer Survey Report can serve as a baseline for MCB to administer this survey and analyze the resulting data on an annual basis in order to track and monitor trends over time and ultimately improve the lives of those who are blind or visually impaired in Massachusetts. As such, PCG suggests that MCB consider the following improvements to future voluntary surveys.

1. The total project timeframe from start to finish spanned two months (5/1/21 through 6/30/21). This compressed timeframe did not give PCG sufficient time to test usage and accessibility by inputting test data and more fully de-bugging the survey instrument. PCG received a total of 177 surveys. Of these 177 surveys, 101 were fully completed and 76 were partially completed. PCG reviewed the 76 partially completed surveys and determined we could use 49 of these in our data analysis (discarding 27) due to problems with survey logic that, with more extensive testing, we could have identified and corrected up front. In total, PCG used 150 survey responses in our analysis (101 fully completed surveys plus 49 partially completed surveys.. In the future, we recommend allotting more time for the entire survey endeavor from start to finish, and in particular, for survey instrument testing.
2. PCG’s survey sample eliminated consumers that had not had an update to their case status within two years prior to the sample selection date of June 1, 2021 because these consumers were seen as the least likely to respond to a survey administered on MCB’s behalf. This edit eliminated all but 4,497 records and of these, 25.9% (1,163) consumers had an e-mail address on file, while the rest did not. MCB can increase both survey sample size and response rates by making a concerted effort to systemically collect e-mail addresses from all consumers who engage with MCB.
3. MCB indicated it would be helpful to translate future surveys into other languages such as Spanish.
4. At 51 questions, the current survey is lengthy and takes approximately 25-30 minutes for respondents to complete. The longer the survey, the more likely that respondents will either decline to participate or exit the survey before fully completing it. MCB should review survey questions on an annual basis for utility and applicability, to identify those that should be modified or are no longer relevant and those that can be eliminated.
5. In our experience, PCG has seen higher survey response rates for surveys distributed via mobile phone SMS text message. Currently, MCB has mobile phone numbers for only 30 to 40 consumers who have “opted in” to receive MCB communications. MCB may be able to increase response rates by modifying its current “opt in” communication strategy and making a concerted effort to systemically collect mobile phone numbers from all consumers who engage with MCB.
6. MCB was not provided with the raw survey data generated from HSRI’s 2020 survey, although detailed survey results do exist in HSRI’s 2020 Consumer Survey Report. While this does allow for trending on top-line survey responses, it is not ideal for analysis. As such, PCG’s analysis was somewhat limited by our inability to compare raw 2021 and 2021 survey data. Going forward, PCG recommends that MCB obtain a final, de-identified data set as a project deliverable. This will allow MCB, PCG, or any other vendor to run their own analysis and build their own internal data warehouse over time.
7. MCB should consider entering into a long-term contract (5 years) with one vendor to conduct the Consumer Survey on MCB's behalf. This consistency would eliminate the issues generated by a compressed timeline and would allow both MCB and the vendor to proactively identify new methods to recruit participants, communicate with them, and share trends and results on an ongoing basis.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Survey Correspondence

### MCB Counselor Awareness

PCG drafted language for MCB to present during the Friday, May 14, 2021 Coffee Hour to ask the MCB counselors to help raise awareness of the voluntary survey.

*MCB has partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to complete a voluntary survey of MCB consumers. This survey, which MCB hopes to complete annually, helps us identify what we do well, and how we can improve opportunities and services that support positive outcomes for individuals in Massachusetts who are blind or visually impaired.*

*We want to let you know that this electronic survey will be made available to MCB consumers this month. It is very important that we receive a robust survey response rate. As such, we are counting on you to help communicate this effort to the people you serve. While not all MCB consumers will be selected to participate, we ask that you communicate the importance of this effort to all those you work with, and encourage participation for those selected to complete the survey.*

*We will reach out shortly with further details. Thank you in advance for your collaboration, insight, and willingness to help us make this important initiative a success.*

### MCB Consumer E-mail Language

PCG drafted language for MCB to e-mail to consumers to alert them about the upcoming survey.

*Hello,*

*The Massachusetts Commission for the Blind wants to hear from you! We are collaborating with Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to complete a voluntary survey of MCB consumers. This survey helps us identify what we do well, and how we can improve opportunities and services for individuals in Massachusetts who are blind or visually impaired. By taking this survey, you will help MCB provide the best possible services.*

*This electronic survey will be made available soon to a random sample of individuals who receive MCB services. While not all those who receive MCB services will be selected to participate, we ask that you consider taking 20-30 minutes to complete this important survey if you are selected. It is very important that we receive as many survey responses as possible.*

*Your survey answers are confidential and will only be reported after being combined with other individuals who respond. No information you provide can be linked back to you personally by anyone at MCB. Your answers to this survey will not impact your eligibility for current or future MCB services. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer.*

*If you would like to take this survey on behalf of someone else, please answer the questions as if you were them. We are most interested in the experiences and views of MCB consumers.*

*We will reach out shortly to sampled individuals with further details. Thank you in advance for your collaboration, insight, and willingness to help us make this important initiative a success.*

### MCB Counselor Phone Survey Language and Instructions

PCG drafted language and instructions for MCB counselors to collect survey information via phone for consumers who have opted in to receiving MCB communication and for whom MCB has the consumer’s mobile phone number (approximately 30 to 40 individuals).

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# Voluntary Survey Project

## Project Background

MCB is collaborating with Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to complete a voluntary survey of MCB consumers. This survey will help MCB identify what we do well, and how we can improve opportunities and services for individuals in Massachusetts who are blind or visually impaired.

This survey was first administered in 2020. MCB intends for this latest survey iteration to be replicable and conducted on a periodic basis in pursuit of longitudinal data. The goal is to obtain highly reliable data with a low margin of error.

This electronic survey is being made available to individuals who receive MCB services. While not all those who receive MCB services will be selected to participate, It is very important that we receive as many survey responses as possible.

MCB would like to make the survey as widely available as possible, in a variety of formats. To help us achieve this goal, we are asking counselors to reach out to their consumers to conduct as many surveys as possible over the phone. While we do not wish to impose an undue burden on staff, we feel this is a valuable way to increase participation given the trust and good relationships MCB counselors have established with their consumers.

# Phone Survey Instructions for MCB COunselors

## Survey Request to Consumers (Script)

MCB is collaborating with Public Consulting Group LLC (PCG) to conduct a voluntary survey of MCB consumers. This survey will help us identify what we do well, and how we can improve opportunities and services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

This survey is being made available to individuals who receive MCB services. It is very important that we receive as many survey responses as possible. If you agree to participate, the survey should take about 20 to 30 minutes to complete over the phone. If you have received the survey via e-mail and have already responded, you do not need to respond again.

If a question makes you uncomfortable for any reason, you can ask to skip it and we will move on to the next question. At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to provide any other comments you may have.

If you would like someone else to take this survey on your behalf, they are welcome to answer the questions as if they were you. We are most interested in the experiences and views of MCB consumers.

Your survey answers are confidential and will only be reported after being combined with other individuals who respond. Your answers to this survey will not impact your eligibility for current or future MCB services. Choosing not to take this survey will also not impact your eligibility for current or future MCB services.

Your input is valuable to us and we would greatly appreciate your participation in this study.

## Phone Survey Interview Instructions for MCB Counselors

Below please find a link to the MCB voluntary survey. Please contact PCG’s Mark Noyes at [mnoyes@pcgus.com](mailto:mnoyes@pcgus.com) if you have any technical questions about the survey.

PCG INSERT SURVEY LINK HERE

* Please read all questions and available responses to consumers exactly as they are written on the survey.
* If a consumer asks you to clarify a question or provide meaning:
  + Repeat the question.
  + Repeat the response choices.
  + Discuss with the consumer what they think the question means.
* Do not read aloud the survey text that is presented in ALL CAPS – these are instructions meant for you, the interviewer.
* If a consumer answers without explicitly using one of the given response categories, offer the response categories again. “So, you would say you were…”
* On multiple response questions where the consumer can provide more than one answer, read each response and wait for the consumer to answer yes or no. Record each answer.
* Never assume you know an answer. Read each question to the consumer.
* For open-ended questions:
  + Transcribe the answer exactly as the consumer states it.
  + Ask follow-up questions if needed. “Can you tell me more about that?”
  + Ask the consumer to repeat themselves, if necessary.
* Thank the consumer for their participation.

## Appendix 2: Table 52: Responses to Open Ended Question on Experience and Services

Responses have been sorted in alphabetical order and reproduced here as written by the consumers.

Table 52: Responses to Open Ended Questions on Experience and Services

|  |
| --- |
| Better vocational services needed |
| Consumer’s answers have been provided by her daughter, who believes that MCB has been amazingly helpful and supportive. [*Name omitted for privacy]* has had two lessons from MCB on the Merlin digital magnifier, a wonderful assistive device, which she appreciates. Unfortunately, she lacks the memory to recall how it works, or, at times, what it is for. |
| Everyone has been great to work with and very helpful |
| For the services received, I was happy with the experience I had with MCB. My mobility instructor out of the Carroll Center was awesome. Caring and informative instructor!! |
| good people, very helpful |
| Housing Opportunities |
| I am just into my second month of association with MCB |
| I am very prond working with my MCB case worker......She work hard to get things I need and help a fine examples working on my goals and services are great.. |
| I appreciate MCB very much. I've heard so many people complain about MCB. I've always been very happy with any help they have given me. Five Stars \*\*\*\*\* for MCB!!! |
| I have always been very pleased with all of my interactions with MCB. However, I am really lucky, I have a loving and supportive family who are so good about helping me to just get through the day. I live in a seaside community where my neighbors are also friends and their kindness is oftentimes overwhelming. I'm legally blind but truly blessed. |
| I have been a client of MCB since the 70s and have used itinerant teachers of the blind as a children, O&M, learned Braille, received employment counseling and AT training from MCB over the years and would not have been able to achieve the levels of independence, education, mobility and employment without MCB being there when I needed help. Thank you. |
| I have been a vendor small business owner under the Massachusetts commission for the blind since 1978. I have enjoyed the services I received from MCB calmer and the service as I continue to receive from the staff. I would like to reach out and say thanks to all of them who help to administer the services to us. |
| I have been very unsatisfied with MCB since 2001 when i was diagnosed blind. Since then i have recieved little to no assistance. It took 20 years to get a labtop with no assistance in learning how to use it. |
| I have used MCB services in the past. Support for employment counseling or transition were lacking. Currently, I would like to learn about support groups or make connections with other blind or low vision individuals. The staff at MCB are always very kind. |
| I like the services provided from MCB. I’ve been attending virtual zoom Townhall‘s since Covid and other events they’ve been having in enjoying these since there’s no travel outside of the home involved. Some of the registrations are difficult to accomplish cuz there’s embedded links which a blind person cannot see to tap on and I asked why would a blind agency think a blind person can register or able to use embedded links if we cannot see them? To me this is shameful if it wasn’t tested before it was sent out to MCB’s consumers who are blind or visually impaired so shame on them is what I want to say. There was a question in the survey that asked about estimated income, when I try to put in the number it said it was invalid so I ended up leaving that blank. Why didn’t it except the number I entered? For example it wouldn’t except $28k or $28,000.00 |
| I pre-read the questions and now it wont let me go back and answer them :( ! I have just recently been working with MCB. Each and every person I have been in contact with has been WONDERFUL.. punctual, kind, knowledgeable, and thorough. I am looking forward to learning more practical and helpful life skills from them. Thank you. |
| I really appreciate MCB. they’ve been a great help to me both professionally and personally. That said, one of the challenges I’ve found as a DeafBlind person with additional disabilities is that the systems are very siloed. MCB is great at blind only things, but struggles with people with multiple disabilities. A lot of the programs and services that do focus on multi disabled are limited to individuals in the turning 22 program and age range. Which leaves out older individuals and people who are not originally from MA in a situation where they cannot easily obtain comprehensive services. The other feedback I have is in regards to ASL access. DeafBlind individuals receive support through DeafBlind extended supports. However, no one in the Boston area extended supports office actually knows ASL. Several of the staff have a few signs - but they cannot provide anything close to culturally competent services. That means that any signing DeafBlind consumer requires an interpreter for all of their meetings. This is really not a great way to provide services. |
| I used several services and had the opportunity to take part in the town halls on zoom. All were very helpful. They have improved my life. Thank you |
| I was employed in the Vending Facility's program for 35 years and was able to support and raise a family. |
| I wish MCB could respond faster and more reliably. |
| I wish they had more services available for daily living help and more staff to help me be more independent. I want to work it would be nice to have help with that. My mother filled this out for me. |
| I worked with MCB to get a Blind Access Charlie Card and am currently looking into The RIDE |
| I would like less bureaucracy and more prompt services. |
| I would like to receive more training on Voice Over. I've been able to read with aids until recently. I've had a severe loss of what vision I had been working with and can no longer identify things or read more than a few words at a time. I need to learn to use dictation and speech to text and text to speech. |
| I would like to see more technical assistance with devices like Braille displays and services like instkart which I need help with. |
| [*Name omitted for privacy]*, the person who helped me, was really nice and tried very hard to get me everything that would help. Unfortunately I can't really learn all the new technologies that would be of service but I appreciated her trying. Hard to lose your sight when you are also losing so many other things at the same time-- not so much room in my brain for learning adaptive tech. |
| Legally blind since birth—state paid for me to attend Perkins School and my undergraduate education. I went on to earn a doctorate degree and had a productive professional career as a clinical gerontologist for more than 45 years. Thank you |
| MCB provided me with various pieces of equipment which have been very helpful as my low vision deteriorates. Several MCB staff came to my house to assess my needs and to educate me on services they provide. They also had a person from Mass Association for the Blind come to my house to get me registered for BARD audio books and educate me in purchasing and using the IPhone 8. These two things have been tremendous! |
| MCB should have been there to assist us with COVID. |
| My experience has been positive - transition from full time work to retiree/part time consulting work has allowed me to continue accessing VR services. Am most pleased to have gotten recent support for new hearing aids through MCB. Technology support from MCB staff has been somewhat limited - more access to remote tech courses from Carroll Center would be helpful. Additional access to SR Clients would be helpful - especially for me as I wind down on consulting work. |
| New to using MCB. So far I'm very happy with what I've received. |
| Not sure |
| Nothing |
| nothing at thi time |
| Services are excellent and personal. |
| Thankful for their help and services. |
| The services are very good! |
| There’s service that I most used from the commission is mobility training. And that is the problem. Your building training can only be done if I have a case open. So whenever I need mobility training I have to have a case open. This is time consuming and makes the need for mobility training very difficult. I wish mobility was available without opening a case all the time. Fix that if you can. |
| They do not return my daughters calls |
| Very friendly, and helpful. |
| Want to thank you all for what you all do for us! |
| Was gaining confidence with mobility training and then funding ran out. And would like to take a vantage of counseling. |
| Why did you discontinue the service from the New Bedford Office? |
| Working with MCB has ben invaluable! I have a VR counsellor, at VR teacher, Assistive Technology Expert, and previously have had Orientation and Mobility. Everyone has been extremely accommodating, often going above and beyond. |
| You don’t make people aware of services that are available. It is difficult to get information about services. I was looking for a place to say that I had been in a local group of people with poor vision but those are pandemic started it and nothing is there is an any new needs to be social groups of people with vision issues. |

## Appendix 3: Survey Instruments – Phone and Electronic

PCG began with the 51-question voluntary survey that HSRI conducted in 2020 and created two surveys for 2021: an electronic survey (distributed by PCG via e-mail) and a phone survey for administration by MCB case counselors over the telephone. The purpose of the phone survey was to give individuals who were unable to use the online version an option to complete the survey, and so MCB counselors could conduct outreach to solicit more survey responses. The phone and e-mail surveys used similar instruments, and PCG modified the phone version to provide instructions to counselors. Questions were similar in intent, but some were re-worded so they could be asked aloud rather than read. We hosted both surveys on our Qualtrics survey software platform.

### Phone Survey

2021 MCB Voluntary Consumer Survey - MCB Staff

Start of Block: Default Question Block

MCBID ENTER RESPONDENT'S ID NUMBER

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

MCB NAME ENTER RESPONDENT'S NAME

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

INTERVIEWER ENTER YOUR NAME

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Introduction Thank you for participating in this survey from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. The survey will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. You don't have to answer any of the questions. We can skip a question and move to the next for any reason. At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to add additional comments. Your input is valuable to us and we greatly appreciate your participation in this survey to learn more about individuals who are blind and visually impaired in Massachusetts.   This survey is being conducted by the Public Consulting Group in partnership with MCB. If you have any questions about this survey, please reach out to Mark Noyes at Public Consulting Group. I can give you his email or telephone number if you need it.

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: Demographics

Q2a These first few questions are about you. They will be used to categorize responses. All information you provide will be reported only when combined with other responses.  
  
What is your sex assigned at birth as stated on your original birth certificate?

* Male (1)
* Female (2)
* Intersex (3)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q2b What is your current gender identity? I'm going to read a list of choices, please stop me when you hear the one that best fits you...

* Male/Man (1)
* Female/Woman (2)
* Transgender Male/Trans man (3)
* Transgender Female/Trans woman (4)
* Non binary (5)
* Another gender (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q3 Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

* Heterosexual or straight (1)
* Gay or lesbian (2)
* Bisexual (3)
* Other (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q4 What is your race?    
  
READ ALL OPTIONS AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* White (1)
* Black or African American (2)
* American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
* Asian (4)
* Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
* OTHER (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q5 Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q6 What language do you mostly speak at home?

* English (1)
* Spanish (2)
* OTHER (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q7 Which of the following best describes your current status in the United States?

* Citizen of the United States (1)
* Lawful permanent resident (LPR/Green Card holder) (2)
* Lawful temporary resident (3)
* Has approved employment authorization (4)
* OTHER (Please specify) (5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q8 What is your marital status? Would you say you are...

* Married or in a domestic partnership, currently living with spouse/partner (1)
* Married or in a domestic partnership, currently NOT living with spouse/partner (2)
* Single, never married (3)
* Single, divorced (4)
* Single, widow/widower (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q9 Did you ever serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

* Yes, currently on active duty (1)
* Yes, on active duty in the past but not now (2)
* Never served (3)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q10 What is your current living situation? Are you...

* Living alone (1)
* Living with family members or domestic partner (2)
* Living with roommates (3)
* Living in a group home (4)
* Living in a nursing facility (5)
* Living in an institution (6)
* Homeless, living in a shelter or in temporary housing (7)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Education

Q11 What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

* Less than high school (1)
* High school or equivalent (2)
* Some college or Associate degree (3)
* Bachelor’s degree (4)
* Graduate or professional degree (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Display This Question:

If Q11 != Less than high school

Q12 In what year did you receive your diploma or highest degree?  
  
  
ENTER THE 4-DIGIT YEAR. ENTER 9999 FOR UNSURE/REFUSE

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q13 Are you currently enrolled in a vocational or on-the-job training program?  
IF YES, FOLLOW UP: Is that program full time or part time?

* Yes, full time (1)
* Yes, part time (2)
* No (3)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

End of Block: Education

Start of Block: Labor Force and Income

Q14 Do you have a paid job?  
  
IF YES, FOLLOW UP: Is that full time or part time?

* Yes, currently working full-time, meaning 35 hours or more each week (1)
* Yes, currently working part-time (2)
* No, worked for pay in the past but not currently (3)
* No, never had a paid job (4)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Display This Question:

If Q14 = No, worked for pay in the past but not currently

And Q14 = No, never had a paid job

Q15 What is your employment situation now?

* On layoff from a job (1)
* Waiting for a new job to begin (2)
* Retired (3)
* Taking care of home and family full-time (4)
* In school full-time (5)
* Not able to work because of illness or disability (6)
* Something else (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Display This Question:

If Q14 = No, worked for pay in the past but not currently

And Q14 = No, never had a paid job

Q16 Do you want to work?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q17 What was your total household income from all sources last year -- before taxes? Your best estimate is fine.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

End of Block: Labor Force and Income

Start of Block: Health and Wellness

Q18 The next several questions are about your health and wellness.   Are you deaf or do you have serious difficulty hearing?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Use Reusable Choices

Q19 Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Use Reusable Choices

Q20 Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing the stairs?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Use Reusable Choices

Q21 Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Use Reusable Choices

Q22 Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q23a Are you currently covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans?   
  
READ ALL OPTIONS, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* State (MassHealth) or Federal Affordable Care Act Exchange (10)
* Medicare (11)
* Medicaid or CHIP (12)
* Self-paid private insurance plan (13)
* Employer-provided insurance plan (14)
* VA health care (15)
* TRICARE or other military health plan (16)
* Indian Health Service (17)
* Any other type of health insurance (Please specify) (95) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (98)
* ⊗None, I do not have health insurance (99)

Q24 In general, how would you rate your physical health? Would you rate yourself as...

* Excellent (1)
* Very good (2)
* Good (3)
* Fair (4)
* Poor (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q25 In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and your ability to think?  Would you rate yourself as...

* Excellent (1)
* Very good (2)
* Good (3)
* Fair (4)
* Poor (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q23 In general, would you say your quality of life is…

* Excellent (1)
* Very good (2)
* Good (3)
* Fair (4)
* Poor (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

End of Block: Health and Wellness

Start of Block: Visual Function

Q27 The next few questions are about your visual functioning.   How would you describe your ability to see in adequate light with glasses or other visual aids?   
I'm going to read a list of options, please tell me the one that best fits you.  
READ ALL OPTIONS

* Can see regular print in newspaper and books (10)
* Can see large print but not regular print (11)
* Not able to see any print but can identify objects (12)
* May not identify objects accurately but can detect motion, color, and/or shape (13)
* Light perception only (14)
* No vision (15)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (98)

Q28 At what age did you first notice having vision difficulties?  
  
  
IF SINCE BIRTH, PUT 0  
IS UNSURE/REFUSE PUT 99

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q29 Do you use any of the following to help with your visual impairment?  
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Telescopic or prescriptive lenses (10)
* Magnifiers (11)
* Large print, Braille, or talking materials (12)
* CCTV (13)
* White cane (14)
* Guide dog (15)
* Sunglasses (16)
* Other (Please specify) (95) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗None of these (99)

Display This Question:

If Q29 = White cane

Or Q29 = Guide dog

Q43 Which is the primary orientation and mobility device that you use?  
  
  
SELECT ONLY ONE. FOLLOW UP: Which of those would you say you mostly use?

* White cane (1)
* Dog guide (2)
* White cane in combination with dog guide (3)
* Another type of orientation and mobility device (Please specify) (4)
* No orientation and mobility aid used (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Display This Question:

If Q29 = White cane

Q44 What type of white cane do you use?

* Long cane (1)
* Short cane for ID (goes up to hip) (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (3)

End of Block: Visual Function

Start of Block: Technology Use

Q30 Next, we’d like to learn about what technologies you use and how you use them.   Which of the following do you use regularly?  
  
  
READ ALL CHOICES AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Desktop computer (10)
* Laptop computer (11)
* Tablet (like iPad) (12)
* Cell phone (not Smartphone) (13)
* Smartphone (14)
* Smart watch (15)
* Smart speaker (like Alexa or Google Home) (16)
* Bank ATM machines (17)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q31a Which of the following reading and writing technologies do you currently use?  
  
  
READ ALL CHOICES AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Large print material (10)
* Braille tools or materials (like Brailler, Slate and Stylus, Braille notetaker, Braille display, hard copy Braille book) (11)
* Speech recognition software (like Dragon) (12)
* Screen magnification software (14)
* PenFriend (14)
* Alternative keyboard and mouse (15)
* Head pointing device (16)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q31b Which of the following talking, listening, and hearing devices do you currently use?  
  
READ ALL CHOICES AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Communication devices (17)
* Hearing aid (18)
* Assistive listening devices (19)
* Talking watches (20)
* Talking thermometer (21)
* Text-to-speech screen reader (like JAWS) (22)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q31c Which of the following learning devices do you currently use?   
  
  
READ ALL CHOICES AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Accessible calculator (23)
* CCTV magnification system (24)
* Audio textbooks (25)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q31d What other assistive technology devices do you use?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Q32a How often do you use the Internet? Would you say...

* Every day (1)
* Several times a week (2)
* Several times a month (3)
* Several times a year (4)
* I don’t use it at all (9)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (99)

Skip To: Q33 If Q32a = I don’t use it at all

Q32b How often do you check your email account? Would you say...

* Every day (1)
* Several times a week (2)
* Several times a month (3)
* Several times a year (4)
* I don’t use it at all (9)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (99)

Q32c Which of the following devices do you ordinarily use for navigating the web?   
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Desktop computer (1)
* Laptop computer (2)
* Chromebook (3)
* Tablet (4)
* Smartphone (5)
* Braille notetaker (6)
* Other (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q32d How do you usually access the internet?  
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* At home, on a desktop or laptop computer (1)
* At home, on a smartphone or tablet (2)
* In public places that have a desktop or laptop computer for me to use (3)
* In public places using my own desktop or laptop computer (4)
* In public places using my own smartphone or tablet (5)
* Some other way (Please specify) (6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Display This Question:

If Q30 = Smartphone

And Q30 = Tablet (like iPad)

Q33 Do you use the accessibility settings (including large text) or accessibility software on a mobile phone or tablet?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Display This Question:

If Q30 = Tablet (like iPad)

Q34 Which of the following is your primary mobile/tablet screen reader?

* VoiceOver (1)
* TalkBack for Android (2)
* Mobile Accessibility for Android (3)
* Other (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q35 What is your preferred reading medium?

* Audio (like recorded books, magazines) (1)
* Braille (2)
* Large print (3)
* Regular print (4)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q36 Which one of the following statements best describes your use of Braille?   
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS, SELECT ONE

* I use Braille at least once a week (1)
* I read Braille but use it less than once a week (2)
* I don't read Braille (3)
* Other (Please specify) (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q37 In addition to the devices that you are using now, are there any additional assistive technology devices or services that you are interested in learning about?

* Yes (What devices?) (1) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

End of Block: Technology Use

Start of Block: Activities of Daily Living

Q38 The next several questions are about your daily activities.   Which of the following activities do you need help with?   
READ ALL OPTIONS, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* Move around the house (10)
* Take a walk outdoors (11)
* Prepare meals (12)
* Do house cleaning (13)
* Wash and iron clothes (14)
* Do grocery shopping (15)
* ⊗None of these (99)
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (98)

Q39 How much assistance do you need in managing your finances, such as everyday purchases, major purchases, bank transactions, etc.?

* None (1)
* Some (2)
* A lot (3)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q41 Have you ever had a driver’s license?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q42 What is your primary means of transportation?  
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS, SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* A private vehicle I or someone I know owns (1)
* Public transportation (2)
* The RIDE (3)
* Ride sharing (e.g. Uber/Lyft) (4)
* Taxi (5)
* Other (Please specify) (6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q45 Do you feel safe traveling or crossing streets independently?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Skip To: End of Block If Q45 = Yes

Q45a Why do you feel unsafe traveling or crossing streets independently?  
  
  
READ ALL OPTIONS AND SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

* It is too complex for me to do independently (1)
* I never learned to travel or cross streets independently (2)
* There are no accessible routes available to me (3)
* Some other reason (Please specify) (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

End of Block: Activities of Daily Living

Start of Block: Social Relationships

Q46 We now turn to your social life. The next few questions are about your relationships with others.   Are you part of any formal or informal community groups such as church groups, book clubs, or hobby clubs?

* Yes (1)
* No (2)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (9)

Q47 In general, how difficult is it for you to participate in social activities such as visiting friends, attending clubs and meetings, going to parties?

* Not at all difficult (1)
* Only a little difficult (2)
* Somewhat difficult (3)
* Very difficult (4)
* Can’t do these things at all (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q48 How often do you feel like you don’t have anyone to talk to?

* Very often (1)
* Sometimes (2)
* Rarely (3)
* Never (4)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

Q54 In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships? Would you say...

* Excellent (1)
* Very good (2)
* Good (3)
* Fair (4)
* Poor (5)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (8)

End of Block: Social Relationships

Start of Block: Service Utilization

Q50 We are almost done. The last few questions are about the services you use.   Have you ever used Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) services?

* No, I’ve never used MCB services (1)
* Yes, I’ve used MCB services in the past but not currently (2)
* Yes, I’m currently using MCB services (3)
* UNSURE/REFUSE (4)

Display This Question:

If Q50 = Yes, I’m currently using MCB services

Q50a Which of the following MCB services do you currently use?

* Assistive technology (10)
* Orientation and mobility (11)
* Vision rehabilitation and therapy (12)
* Employment counseling (13)
* Pre-employment transition services (14)
* Peer support groups (15)
* Deaf and blind extended supports (16)
* Other MCB services (What were those services?) (95)
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (98)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q51 Do you currently receive services from any of the following state agencies? Please select all that apply.

* Department of Developmental Services (DDS) (10)
* Department of Children and Families (DCF) (11)
* Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) (12)
* Department of Mental Health (DMH) (13)
* Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) (14)
* Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) (15)
* Other state agency (What agencies?) (95) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* ⊗UNSURE/REFUSE (98)
* ⊗None of these (99)

Q52 What else would you like to let us know about your experience working with MCB or any of the services you have received?

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Conclusion That was the last question. Thank you for answering these questions. If you have any further thoughts, comments, or feedback on this survey or how these questions were asked, we’d love to hear them. Do you have any comments?

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End of Block: Service Utilization

### Electronic Survey

**MCB Voluntary Survey**

**Introduction**

Thank you for participating in this survey from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. The survey will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. Feel free to skip a question and move to the next for any reason. At the end of the survey, you will have an opportunity to add additional comments. Your input is valuable to us and we greatly appreciate your participation in this survey to learn more about individuals who are blind and visually impaired in Massachusetts.

This survey is being conducted by the Public Consulting Group in partnership with MCB. If you have any questions about this survey, please reach out to mnoyes@pcgus.com.

**Demographics**

2a. What is your sex assigned at birth as stated on your original birth certificate?

1 Male

2 Female

3 Intersex

8 I’d prefer not to say, or am unsure

2b. What is your current gender identity? Please select the one answer that best fits how you describe yourself.

1 Male/Man

2 Female/Woman

3 Transgender Male/Transman

4 Transgender Female/Transwoman

5 Nonbinary

7 Another gender: [OPEN TEXT]

8 I’d prefer not to say, or am unsure

3. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

1 Heterosexual or straight

2 Gay or lesbian

3 Bisexual

4 Not sure

7 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

4. What is your race (select all that apply):

1 White

2 Black or African American

3 American Indian or Alaska Native

4 Asian

5 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

7 Some other race [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

5. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

1 Yes

2 No

8 Not sure

6. What language do you mostly speak at home?

1 English

2 Spanish

3 Another language [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

7. Which of the following best describes your current status in the United States?

1 Citizen of the United States

2 Lawful permanent resident (LPR/Green Card holder)

3 Lawful temporary resident

4 Has approved employment authorization

5 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

8. What is your marital status?

1 Married or in a domestic partnership, currently living with spouse/partner

2 Married or in a domestic partnership, currently NOT living with spouse/partner

3 Single, never married

4 Single, divorced

5 Single, widow/widower

9. (ONLY ASK IF AGE 17 OR OLDER. IF YOUNGER THAN AGE 17, CONTINUE WITH Q#10) Did you ever serve on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces?

1 Yes, currently on active duty

2 Yes, on active duty in the past but not now

3 Never served

10. What is your current living situation?

1 Living alone

2 Living with family members or domestic partner

3 Living with roommates

4 Living in a group home

5 Living in a nursing facility

6 Living in an institution

7 Homeless, living in a shelter or in temporary housing

**Education**

11. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

1 Less than high school

2 High school or equivalent

3 Some college or Associate degree

4 Bachelor’s degree

5 Graduate or professional degree

12. [DO NOT ASK IF THE RESPONSE TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION IS “LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL] In what year did you receive your diploma or highest degree? (Please enter the four-digit year)

|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|\_\_|

13. Are you currently enrolled in a vocational or on-the-job training program?

1 Yes, full time

2 Yes, part time

3 No

**Labor Force and Income**

14. Do you have a paid job?

1 Yes, currently working full-time, meaning 35 hours or more each week

2 Yes, currently working part-time

3 No, worked for pay in the past but not currently

4 No, never had a paid job

15. [SKIP IF YES TO Q14]

What is your employment situation now?

1 On layoff from a job

2 Waiting for a new job to begin

3 Retired

4 Taking care of home and family full-time

5 In school full-time

6 Not able to work because of illness or disability

7 Something else [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

16. [SKIP IF YES TO Q14]

Do you want to work?

1 Yes

2 No

17. What was your total household income from all sources last year -- **before taxes**? Your best estimate is fine.

**Health and Wellness**

18. The next several questions are about your health and wellness.

Are you deaf or do you have serious difficulty hearing?

1 Yes

2 No

19. Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions?

1 Yes

2 No

20. Do you have serious difficulty walking or climbing the stairs?

1 Yes

2 No

21. Do you have difficulty dressing or bathing?

1 Yes

2 No

22. (ONLY ASK IF AGE 15 OR OLDER. IF YOUNGER THAN 15, CONTINUE WITH Q#23)

Because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, do you have difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping?

1 Yes

2 No

23a. Are you currently covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans? (select all that apply)

10 State (MassHealth) or Federal Affordable Care Act Exchange

11 Medicare

12 Medicaid or CHIP

13 Self-paid private insurance plan

14 Employer-provided insurance plan

15 VA health care

16 TRICARE or other military health plan

17 Indian Health Service

95 Any other type of health insurance [Specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

98 Not sure

99 None, I do not have health insurance *[EXCLUSVE]*

24. In general, how would you rate your physical health?

1 Excellent

2 Very good

3 Good

4 Fair

5 Poor

8 Not sure

25. In general, how would you rate your mental health, including your mood and your ability to think?

1 Excellent

2 Very good

3 Good

4 Fair

5 Poor

8 Not sure

26. In general, would you say your quality of life is…

1 Excellent

2 Very good

3 Good

4 Fair

5 Poor

8 Not sure

**Visual Function**

The next three questions are about your visual functioning.

27. How would you describe your ability to see in adequate light (with glasses or other visual aids)? Please consider all the options and select the one that best applies to you.

10 Can see regular print in newspaper and books

11 Can see large print but not regular print

12 Not able to see any print but can identify objects

13 May not identify objects accurately but can detect motion, color, and/or shape

14 Light perception only

15 No vision

28. At what age did you first notice having vision difficulties? If you have had vision difficulties since birth, put 0.

*[NUMERIC ENTRY]*

29. Do you use any of the following to help with your visual impairment? (select all that apply)

10 Telescopic or prescriptive lenses

11 Magnifiers

12 Large print, Braille, or talking materials

13 CCTV

14 White cane

15 Guide dog

16 Sunglasses

95 Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

43.*[SKIP IF Q29<>14 AND Q29<>15]* Which is the **primary** orientation and mobility device that you use? (select only one)

1 White cane

2 Dog guide

3 White cane in combination with dog guide

4 Another type of orientation and mobility device [Specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

5 No orientation and mobility aid used

44. *[SKIP IF Q29<>14]* What type of white cane do you use?

1 Long cane

2 Short cane for ID (goes up to hip)

**Technology Use**

Next, we’d like to learn about what technologies you use and how you use them.

30. Which of the following do you use **regularly**? (select all that apply)

10 Desktop computer

11 Laptop computer

12 Tablet (like iPad)

13 Cell phone (not Smartphone)

14 Smartphone

15 Smart watch

16 Smart speaker (like Alexa or Google Home)

17 Bank ATM machines

99 None of these *[EXCLUSIVE]*

31. Which of the following assistive technologies do you currently use? (select all that apply)

**a. Reading and Writing**

10 Large print material

11 Braille tools or materials (like Brailler, Slate and Stylus, Braille notetaker, Braille display, hard copy Braille book)

12 Speech recognition software (like Dragon)

13 Screen magnification software

14 PenFriend

15 Alternative keyboard and mouse

16 Head pointing device

99 None of these *[EXCLUSIVE]*

**b. Talking, Listening, Hearing**

10 Communication devices

11 Hearing aid

12 Assistive listening devices

13 Talking watches

14 Talking thermometer

15 Text-to-speech screen reader (like JAWS)

99 None of these *[EXCLUSIVE]*

**c. Learning**

o Accessible calculator

o CCTV magnification system

o Audio textbooks

99 None of these *[EXCLUSIVE]*

**d. List any other assistive technologies you currently use** [\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

32a. How often do you use the Internet?

1 Every day

2 Several times a week

3 Several times a month

4 Several times a year

9 I don’t use it at all *[SKIP TO Q33]*

32b. How often do you check your email account?

1 Every day

2 Several times a week

3 Several times a month

4 Several times a year

9 I don't have an email account

32c. Which of the following devices do you ordinarily use for navigating the web? (select all that apply)

1 Desktop computer

2 Laptop computer

3 Chromebook

4 Tablet

5 Smartphone

6 Braille notetaker

7 Other (specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

32d. How do you usually access the internet? Please select all the ways you often access the internet.

1 At home, on a desktop or laptop computer

2 At home, on a smartphone or tablet

3 In public places that have a desktop or laptop computer for me to use

4 In public places using my own desktop or laptop computer

5 In public places using my own smartphone or tablet

7 Some other way (Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_\_)

33. Do you use the accessibility settings (including large text) or accessibility software on a mobile phone or tablet (if you use one)?

1 Yes

2 No

34. Which of the following is your primary mobile/tablet screen reader?

1 VoiceOver

2 TalkBack for Android

3 Mobile Accessibility for Android

7 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ]

35. What is your preferred reading medium?

1 Audio (like recorded books, magazines)

2 Braille

3 Large print

4 Regular print

8 Not sure

36. Which one of the following statements **best** describes your use of Braille? (select only one)

1 I use Braille at least once a week

2 I read Braille but use it less than once a week

3 I don't read Braille

7 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

37. In addition to the devices that you are using now, are there any additional assistive technology devices or services that you are interested in learning about?

2 No

1 Yes [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

**Activities of Daily Living**

The next several questions are about your daily activities.

38. Which of the following activities do you need help with? Please select all activities you need help with at least some of the time.

10 Move around the house

11 Take a walk outdoors

12 Prepare meals

13 Do house cleaning

14 Wash and iron clothes

15Do grocery shopping

99 None of these *[EXCLUSIVE]*

39. How much assistance do you need in managing your finances, such as everyday purchases, major purchases, bank transactions, etc.?

1 None

2 Some

3 A lot

40. Where do you get most of your information about current news events? (select all that apply)

10 Newspapers

11 Magazines

12 The Internet

13 Books/other printed material

14 TV

15 Radio

16 Government agencies

17 Family

18 Friends/colleagues

19 Social media

20Perkins Braille & Talking Book Library

95 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

98 Not sure

41. Have you ever had a driver’s license?

1 Yes

2 No

42. What is your primary means of transportation? (select all that apply)

1 A private vehicle I or someone I know owns

2 Public transportation

3 The RIDE

4 Ride sharing (e.g. Uber/Lyft)

5

6 Taxi

7 Other [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

45. Do you feel safe travelling or crossing streets independently?

1 Yes [SKIP TO Q#46]

2 No

45a. Why do you feel unsafe traveling or crossing streets independently? Please select all that apply.

1 It is too complex for me to do independently

2 I never learned to travel or cross streets independently

3 There are no accessible routes available to me

7 Some other reason [specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

**FOR HELP WITH SAFETY, PLEASE CALL MCB AT (617) 727-5550**

**Social Relationships**

We now turn to your social life. The next few questions are about your relationships with others.

46. Are you part of any formal or informal community groups such as church groups, book clubs, or hobby clubs?

1 Yes

2 No

47. In general, how difficult is it for you to participate in social activities such as visiting friends, attending clubs and meetings, going to parties?

1 Not at all difficult

2 Only a little difficult

3 Somewhat difficult

4 Very difficult

5 Can’t do these things at all

8 Not sure

48. How often do you feel like you don’t have anyone to talk to?

1 Very often

2 Sometimes

3 Rarely

4 Never

8 Not sure

49. In general, how would you rate your satisfaction with your social activities and relationships? o Excellent

1 Very good

2 Good

3 Fair

4 Poor

8 Not Sure

**Service Utilization**

We are almost done. The last few questions are about the services you use.

50. Have you ever used Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) services?

1 No, I’ve never used MCB services (SKIP TO Q#51)

2 Yes, I’ve used MCB services in the past but not currently (SKIP TO Q#51)

3 Yes, I’m currently using MCB services

50a. Which of the following MCB services do you currently use?

10 Assistive technology

11 Orientation and mobility

12 Vision rehabilitation and therapy

13 Employment counseling

14 Pre-employment transition services

15 Peer support groups

16 Deaf and blind extended supports

95 Other MCB services [specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

98 Not sure

51. Do you currently receive services from any of the following state agencies? (select all that apply)

10 Department of Developmental Services (DDS)

11 Department of Children and Families (DCF)

12 Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA)

13 Department of Mental Health (DMH)

14 Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)

15 Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH)

95 Other state agency [specify \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]

98 Not sure

Q52. What else would you like to let us know about your experience working with MCB or any of the services you have received?

**CONCLUDING SCRIPT AND FEEDBACK QUESTION**

“That was the last question. Thanks a lot for answering these questions. If you have any further thoughts, comments, or feedback on this survey or how these questions were asked, we’d love to hear them. Do you have any comments?”

1. https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/geniuss-trans-pop-based-survey/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)