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COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

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**IDAPA 15
TITLE 02
CHAPTER 02**

IDAPA 15 - OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

15.02.02 - VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

000. LEGAL AUTHORITY.

This chapter is adopted in accordance with Sections 67-5407(e) and 67-5408, Idaho Code. (4-2-08)

001. TITLE AND SCOPE.

These rules will be known as Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Rules, IDAPA 15.02.02, "Vocational Rehabilitation Services." The provisions of these rules establish procedures and requirements which address the provisions of vocational rehabilitation services to the blind population of Idaho. (1-5-87)

002. WRITTEN INTERPRETATIONS.

Field manuals and other agency guidance documents, as well as agency policy statements or interpretations not rising to the legal effect of a rule, if any, are available for inspection and copying at the Commission offices during regular business hours. (4-2-08)

003. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS.

Administrative appeals shall be governed by Section 355 of these rules in accordance with 34 CFR 361.57. (4-2-08)

004. INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE.

The following federal laws and regulations are incorporated by reference into the rules of this chapter and copies are available at the Commission's office: (4-2-08)

01. 29 U.S.C. Section 701, et seq., Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as Amended in 1998. (4-2-08)

02. 34 CFR 361 and 363. (4-2-08)

005. OFFICE - OFFICE HOURS - MAILING ADDRESS AND STREET ADDRESS.

The principal place of business of the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is in Boise, Idaho. The office is located at 341 West Washington Street, Boise, Idaho and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., except Saturday, Sunday, and legal holidays. The mailing address is: P. O. Box 83720, Boise, Idaho 83720-0012. The telephone number of the office is (208)334-3220. The facsimile number of the office is (208)334-2963. (4-2-08)

006. PUBLIC RECORDS ACT COMPLIANCE.

Commission records are subject to the provisions of the Idaho Public Records Act, Title 9, Chapter 3, Idaho Code. (4-2-08)

007. CONFIDENTIALITY.

All personal information concerning clients is confidential. The information is used only for purposes directly connected to the Commission's administration of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and may not be released without the informed, written consent of the client except as otherwise provided by law. (4-2-08)

008. -- 009. (RESERVED).

010. DEFINITIONS.

01. Blind or Visually Impaired. A person whose visual acuity with correcting lenses is not better than twenty/two hundred (20/200) in the better eye; or a person whose vision in the better eye is restricted to a field which

subtends an angle of not greater than twenty (20) degrees; or a person who is functionally blind; or a person who is without any sight. (4-2-08)

02. Client. An individual who has applied for, or is determined to be eligible for, vocational rehabilitation services. (4-2-08)

03. Commission. The Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. (4-2-08)

04. Comprehensive Assessment. An assessment of the personality, interests, interpersonal skills, intelligence and related functional capacities, educational achievements, work experience, vocational aptitudes, personal and social adjustments, and employment opportunities of the individual and the medical, psychiatric, psychological, and other pertinent vocational, educational, cultural, social, recreational, and environmental factors that affect the employment and rehabilitation needs of the individual. An assessment also includes, to the degree needed, an appraisal of the patterns of work behavior of the individual and services needed for the individual to acquire occupational skills and to develop work attitudes, work habits, work tolerance, and social and behavior patterns necessary for successful job performance, including the use of work in real job situations to assess and develop the capabilities of the individual to perform adequately in a work environment. (4-2-08)

05. Comparable Benefits or Services. Any benefit or service that exists under any other programs that is available to the client. Examples are, but not limited to, Pell Grants, Medicaid, Medicare, private health insurance, and medical indigence programs for medication. (4-2-08)

06. Designated State Unit. Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. (4-2-08)

07. Functionally Blind. A person with a visual impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment or substantially limits one (1) or more major life activities. This is determined by the vocational rehabilitation counselor, not a physician. (4-2-08)

08. Maintenance. Monetary support provided to an individual for expenses, such as food, shelter, and clothing, that are in excess of the normal expenses of the individual and that are necessitated by the client's participation in an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs or the client's receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under an individualized plan for employment (34 CFR 361.5(35)). (4-2-08)

09. Vocational Rehabilitation Service or Services. Services that reduce the impact of functional limitations on the ability of a client to achieve an employment outcome. (4-2-08)

011. ABBREVIATIONS.

01. ATC. Assessment and Training Center. (4-2-08)

02. CFR. Code of Federal Regulations. (4-2-08)

03. IPE. Individual Plan for Employment. (4-2-08)

04. SSDI. Social Security Disability Insurance. (4-2-08)

05. SSI. Supplemental Security Income. (4-2-08)

012. -- 099. (RESERVED).

100. PROVISION OF SERVICES ON A STATEWIDE BASIS.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services are offered on a statewide basis to individuals who are blind or visually impaired or functionally blind, subject to eligibility. (4-2-08)

101. APPLICATION.

Any blind or visually impaired or functionally blind individual may apply for vocational rehabilitation services. To apply for vocational rehabilitation services, such an individual must: (4-2-08)

01. Application. Meet with a vocational rehabilitation counselor and sign the application. An individual is considered to have applied for vocational rehabilitation services with the Commission when that individual has completed the application and acknowledged client rights and responsibilities. (4-2-08)

02. Evidence. Assist in providing medical and psychological reports to substantiate disability and functional limitations. If the client is an SSA beneficiary, assist in providing evidence of receipt of SSA benefits. (4-2-08)

03. Availability. Be available to complete assessment process. (4-2-08)

04. Partner. Be an active and full partner in the vocational rehabilitation process. (4-2-08)

05. Intention. Intend to achieve an employment outcome. (4-2-08)

102. -- 109. (RESERVED).

110. ELIGIBILITY.

01. Eligibility Requirements. Eligibility of a client for vocational rehabilitation services shall be based upon a determination by the Commission that: (4-2-08)

a. The client is blind or visually impaired; (4-2-08)

b. The client's blindness or visual impairment constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment; and (4-2-08)

c. There is a reasonable expectation that vocational rehabilitation services will benefit the client in terms of securing, retaining, or regaining employment. (4-2-08)

02. Residency Requirements. A client must have legal residence status, be able to complete an employment eligibility verification, and be present in the state. (4-2-08)

03. Presumptive Eligibility. Individuals who are current SSI or SSDI beneficiaries are presumed to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services unless the Commission can demonstrate by clear and convincing evidence that such individuals are incapable of benefiting in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services due to the severity of their disability. (4-2-08)

04. Certificate of Ineligibility. If an individual is determined ineligible for services, a certificate of ineligibility will be prepared and a copy provided the individual or the individual's representative. (4-2-08)

111. RESERVING ALL ELIGIBILITY DECISIONS AND NATURE AND SCOPE OF SERVICES.

The Commission has the sole responsibility for determining eligibility of clients. Eligibility will be determined within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed sixty (60) days, after a client has submitted an application for services unless exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond the control of the Commission preclude making an eligibility determination within sixty (60) days and the Commission and the client agree to a specific extension of time or the Commission is exploring an individual's abilities, capabilities, and capacity to perform in work situations. Eligibility requirements will be applied by the Commission without regard to sex, race, age, creed, color, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or national origin of the individual applying for services. (4-2-08)

112. -- 209. (RESERVED).

210. INDIVIDUAL PLAN FOR EMPLOYMENT.

For those clients determined eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, an IPE shall be developed between the client and their vocational rehabilitation counselor. An approved IPE or IPE amendment must be signed by the client or the client's representative and appropriate Commission staff in order to be implemented. Services may be discontinued if the client fails to participate actively or does not make adequate progress toward plan completion.

Prior to the IPE being written, a comprehensive assessment is required to evaluate the following components: (4-2-08)

01. Employment Outcome. To determine the employment outcome that is selected by the client, with input from the vocational rehabilitation counselor, that is consistent with the client's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. (4-2-08)

a. Provisions of Community Rehabilitation Program Services. The Commission will purchase vocational rehabilitation services from community rehabilitation programs that are accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF), the Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission, or Rehabilitation Services Accreditation System. In conjunction with the client, the vocational rehabilitation counselor will determine which, if any, community rehabilitation program services are required for the client to achieve an employment outcome. (4-2-08)

02. Nature and Scope. To identify the nature and scope of the vocational rehabilitation services that the client needs to become employed. (4-2-08)

03. Planned Services. To determine how the planned services will assist the client in overcoming the barriers to employment that were identified in the eligibility determination. (4-2-08)

04. Costs. The client must apply for and secure any Comparable Benefits or Services, participate in paying for any or all costs of the IPE services, and make a commitment to cooperate and follow through with the IPE and achieve an employment outcome. Clients receiving services wherein costs are incurred and who possess the financial resources to do so will be required to participate in the payment for assistance provided them. (4-2-08)

211. -- 299. (RESERVED).

300. PAYMENT POLICY.

01. Upper Limits. In order to ensure a reasonable cost to the Commission's vocational rehabilitation program for provision of certain enumerated services, and in accordance with 34 CFR 361.50, the Commission hereby establishes upper limits on dollar amounts it will contribute to clients for certain categories of services provided as part of an implemented IPE pursuant to Section 210 of these rules: (4-2-08)

a. Education expenses, including fees, tuition, and health insurance costs, for enrollment at Idaho public and private in-state colleges, vocational technical schools, universities, and other education and training institutions and including enrollment in summer school; Three thousand three hundred dollars (\$3,300) per federal fiscal year. If the client receives a Pell Grant, it shall be applied first for tuition or fees before any expenditure of funds by the Commission. (4-2-08)

b. Education expenses, including fees and tuition, for enrollment at out-of-state colleges, universities, vocational technical schools, and other education and training institutions, and including enrollment in summer school; three thousand three hundred dollars (\$3,300) per federal fiscal year. If the client receives a Pell Grant, it shall be applied first for tuition or fees before any expenditure of funds by the Commission. (4-2-08)

i. If the client must attend an out-of-state institution because the course of study is not offered within the state of Idaho, the Commission, at its discretion may pay the "usual and customary" charges for fees and tuition up to the established limits. (4-2-08)

ii. If the course of study is offered in-state, but because of the additional costs caused by the accommodation for disability, it would be more cost effective for the Commission to have the client attend the out-of-state educational institution, the Commission, at its discretion, may pay the usual and customary fees and tuition charges for the out-of-state educational institution up to the established limit. (4-2-08)

iii. If the client chooses to attend an out-of-state institution even though the course of study is offered within the state of Idaho, the Commission will only pay an amount equal to the maximum cost for fees and tuition, up to the established limit, at the in-state-institution offering the course of study that is closest geographically to the

- Commission regional office assisting the client. (4-2-08)
- c.** Books and supplies. Six hundred dollars (\$600) per federal fiscal year. This limit includes expenditures for books and supplies required for attendance of summer school. (4-2-08)
 - d.** Medical exams including written report. (4-2-08)
 - i.** Specialist exam by M.D.: Two hundred dollars (\$200) plus actual cost of related procedures such as x-rays. (4-2-08)
 - ii.** Psychological exam by licensed psychologist: Two hundred dollars (\$200) plus actual cost of psychometric tests. (4-2-08)
 - iii.** Ophthalmologist/Optomtrist exam: Two hundred dollars (\$200) plus actual cost of visual field exam or other necessary tests. (4-2-08)

 - (1) Low vision exam: One hundred twenty-five dollars (\$125). (4-2-08)
 - (2) Follow-up low vision consultation: Fifty-five dollars (\$55). (4-2-08)
 - (3) Eye report: Twenty-five dollars (\$25). (4-2-08)
 - iv.** Eye glasses or contact lenses: Eighty dollars (\$80) for frames and the usual and customary cost for lenses and contact lenses. Seven hundred dollars (\$700) for bioptics. (4-2-08)
 - v.** Audiologist exam: Eighty-five dollars (\$85). (4-2-08)
 - vi.** Physical exam (general basic medical): Sixty-five dollars (\$65). (4-2-08)
 - e.** Psychotherapy/Counseling sessions: Up to ten (10) hourly sessions at eighty dollars (\$80) per hour. (4-2-08)
 - f.** Medication and medical supplies (including diabetic supplies): Three hundred dollars (\$300) per month for up to three (3) months, during which client must apply for reduced cost or free medication programs provided by drug companies or other sources of comparable benefits, including Medicaid, Medicare Part D, or other insurance. (4-2-08)
 - g.** Dental work, including but not limited to cleaning, fillings, extractions, crowns, and dentures: Five hundred dollars (\$500) per case. (4-2-08)
 - h.** Transportation. (4-2-08)

 - i.** Public conveyance (bus, van, airfare): Actual cost. (4-2-08)
 - ii.** Transportation costs associated with personal vehicle usage with or without personal driver: One hundred dollars (\$100) per month within a twenty (20) mile radius in-town commuting and two hundred dollars (\$200) per month for out-of-town commuting. The Commission does not provide funds for a client's purchase of a motor vehicle. (4-2-08)
 - iii.** Cab subsidy programs (Scrip) must be used by clients where available. (4-2-08)
 - i.** Maintenance: One thousand five hundred dollars (\$1,500) per federal fiscal year and no more than three hundred dollars (\$300) per month. There is no limit on the number of months a client can receive maintenance up to the one thousand five hundred dollar (\$1,500) limit per federal fiscal year. (4-2-08)

 - i.** The Commission will not pay maintenance for basic living expenses incurred by a client that are not directly related to the client's participation in an IPE for vocational rehabilitation services. (4-2-08)

ii. Maintenance for client attendance at Assessment and Training Center (ATC): Three hundred dollars (\$300) per ATC term for basic living expenses incurred during the ATC term which are directly related to client's ATC attendance and participation. (4-2-08)

j. Copy fees: Fifteen dollars (\$15) for obtaining a copy of any report or other record from an outside agency or entity required by the Commission in order to determine a client's eligibility or otherwise provide vocational rehabilitation services. (4-2-08)

k. Tools and equipment: One thousand dollars (\$1,000) per case. Value of tools and equipment provided to client from existing Commission inventory will count towards the one thousand dollar (\$1,000) limit. If there is a change in client's employment outcome, the client shall return the original tools and equipment to the Commission. The Commission will not provide or purchase additional tools or equipment for the client for any new employment outcome until the original tools and equipment have been returned to the Commission. (4-2-08)

l. On-the-Job training fees: Three thousand dollars (\$3,000). (4-2-08)

m. Computers including hardware and software: One thousand dollars (\$1,000) per case. If the Commission determines that a change in computers is necessary, the client shall return the original computer to the Commission. The Commission will not provide or purchase a new or different computer for the client until the original computer has been returned. (4-2-08)

n. Self-employment plans: Three thousand dollars (\$3,000). (4-2-08)

o. Child care: Three hundred dollars (\$300) per child per month. The client shall apply and use Department of Health and Welfare child care funding as a comparable benefit before any expenditure of Commission funds towards IPE related child care. (4-2-08)

02. Exclusion of Surgery and Organ Transplantation. (4-2-08)

a. The Commission does not provide funds for a client's surgery when the surgery is the only service required for the client to achieve an employment outcome or otherwise return to work. (4-2-08)

b. The Commission does not provide funds for a client's organ transplantation. (4-2-08)

03. Authorization to Purchase. When purchasing services from a vendor, the Commission requires a written authorization be issued prior to, or on the beginning date of, service. If services are provided without an approved written authorization to purchase, the Commission reserves the right to refuse payment on the vendor's invoice. Verbal authorization for a service may only be given by the rehabilitation services chief or the Commission administrator. If a client fails to show up for an appointment, the client shall be responsible for payment of any charges resulting from the client's failure to show up for the appointment. (4-2-08)

04. Exception Policy. Any and all exceptions to the upper limits established by Subsection 300.01 of these rules will be reviewed on an individual case basis, and require approval by the rehabilitation services chief of the Commission. (4-2-08)

301. -- 354. (RESERVED).

355. CLIENT APPEALS.

01. Informal Dispute Resolution. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of notification of the contested action, lack of action or decision, the client may request that an informal dispute resolution be held. The request shall be made in writing to the rehabilitation services chief. The written request should state the reason for the review. (4-2-08)

a. The rehabilitation services chief shall inform the client in writing as to the time, place, and date of the informal dispute resolution. The client may choose to represent himself or may have a representative speak on his

behalf. (4-2-08)

b. The rehabilitation services chief will make a decision regarding the specifics of the informal dispute resolution. This decision will be in written form and it will be sent to the client, with a copy in the case file. (4-2-08)

02. Mediation. The request shall be made in writing to the rehabilitation services chief. A written request shall state the reason for the review. The mediation must take place within sixty (60) days of client's request. (4-2-08)

03. Impartial Due Process Hearing. An impartial due process hearing can be held without an informal dispute resolution or mediation or if the client is dissatisfied with the result of the informal dispute resolution or mediation. The impartial due process hearing will deal with the issues involved in the original Informal dispute resolution or mediation, if one took place. The request for an impartial due process hearing shall be made in writing to the administrator of the Commission within fifteen (15) calendar days of the rehabilitation services chief's decision from the informal dispute resolution or the mediation proceedings. The hearing by an impartial hearing officer must be held within sixty (60) days of a request by the client unless both parties agree to a specified delay. (4-2-08)

356. -- 999. (RESERVED).

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