

*Final Revised Policy, March 2010*

**2200 ORDER OF SELECTION.**

**2203 Priority Categories.** Following are the order of selection categories currently applicable to the Division's vocational rehabilitation program:

Category 1: Eligible applicants with the most significant disabilities.

Category 2: Eligible applicants with significant disabilities.

Category 3: Eligible applicants with non-significant disabilities which result in permanent functional limitations.

Category 4: Eligible applicants with disabilities which do not result in permanent functional limitations.

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**2500 ELIGIBILITY.**

**2504.5 Visual Impairments.** In order for an applicant to meet the eligibility criteria for substantial impediment to employment, the applicant must experience at least one of the following conditions as verified by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist and demonstrate functional limitation(s) that result in a substantial impediment to employment:

A. *Visual Acuity.* A measure of visual acuity of 20/50 or less in the better eye with best correction recorded for either near or distance vision;

B. *Visual Field Limitation.* The angle of vision is 60 degrees or less in the better eye;

C. *Progressive Eye Disease.* A deteriorating eye condition which will result in the loss of visual efficiency (e.g. glaucoma, retinitis pigmentosa, or macular degeneration) as verified by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist; or,

D. *Cortical Visual Impairment.* A visual loss caused by a disturbance of the posterior visual pathway and/or cortex. This does not include refractive amblyopia.

E. *Exceptions.* Instances may occur wherein the applicant does not meet any of the above conditions but for whom, in the Counselor's judgment, the visual impairment does create a substantial impediment to employment. In such cases, requests for exceptions must have approval of the District Manager and they must be submitted with justification in writing to the Program Supervisor of Blind and Visually Impaired Services. The Program Supervisor will recommend either granting or not granting the exception and forward the request to the Assistant Director of Field Services for final decision.

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## **3800 DIAGNOSTIC AND TREATMENT SERVICES.**

### **3803.2 Special Considerations for Treatment and Services.**

#### A. *Dental Treatment and Orthodontic Services.*

1. *Routine Dental Services.* Dental disorders involving cavities, gingivitis, or other mild gum disease that require routine dental treatment such as fillings, cleaning, or simple extractions usually are not considered a substantial vocational impediment and therefore do not constitute a disabling condition for eligibility purposes.

2. *Provided as Primary Service.* Dental treatment and orthodontic services may be provided as a primary service when medical records substantiate the severity of the dental condition and/or subsequent health problems and when the Counselor documents that any of the following conditions is fully met:

a. The dental condition is so severe that it constitutes a significant health problem which without treatment may prevent an individual from obtaining or retaining employment; or,

b. The dental condition, such as the absence or substantial decay of front teeth, results in a cosmetic impairment so severe that the individual's employment is improbable; or,

c. When necessary to support more critical surgical procedures such as cleft palate repair or facial reconstruction.

3. *Provided as Support Service.* Dental treatment and orthodontic services may be provided as a support service when the Counselor documents that they are necessary to enable the client to complete a rehabilitation program.

B. *Visual Physical Restoration Services.* In accordance with provisions of this section, visual physical restoration services may be provided as either a primary or support service when necessary to enable the client to complete a rehabilitation program.

1. *Eye Surgery.* When eye surgery is provided as a primary service, the individual will receive services from the Counselor for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Prior to developing an IPE for eye surgery, a medical report is required from the ophthalmologist who will provide the surgery. Contained within the report will be a diagnosis, reason for the surgery, expected outcome, and anticipated recovery time for the individual.

a. *Surgery for Progressive Eye Conditions.* Eye conditions such as cataracts, secondary cataracts, detached retina, and others may be considered degenerative because without surgical intervention vision will continue to decline in the affected eye(s). Examples of eye surgeries with routinely positive outcomes of restoring vision to within normal limits include, but are not limited to: cataract extraction with lens implant, YAG capsulotomy (removal of secondary cataract), cryosurgery for detached retina, and scleral buckle (reattachment of detached retina).

b. *Surgery to Stabilize Eye Condition.* Eye surgery may be necessary to stabilize an eye condition. Some examples include laser treatment or vitrectomy for diabetic retinopathy or glaucoma.

c. *Surgery to Correct Physical Appearance.* Eye surgery may be provided as a primary service when medical records substantiate evidence of the condition's severity and/or subsequent health problems and when the Counselor documents that any of the following criteria is fully met:

(1) The eye condition is so severe that it constitutes a significant health problem which without treatment may prevent an individual from obtaining or retaining employment; or,

(2) The eye condition results in a cosmetic impairment so severe that the individual's employment is improbable; or,

(3) When necessary to support more critical surgical procedures.

2. *Provision of Ocular Prosthesis.* An ocular prosthesis may be provided as a primary service when medical records substantiate evidence of the condition's severity and/or subsequent health problems and when the Counselor documents that any of the following criteria is fully met:

a. The eye condition is so severe that it constitutes a significant health problem which without provision of an ocular prosthesis may prevent an individual from obtaining or retaining employment; or,

b. The eye condition results in a cosmetic impairment so severe that the individual's employment is improbable; or,

c. When necessary to support more critical surgical procedures.

C. *Hospitalization.* Services provided in a hospital will be purchased with an approved IPE only in conjunction with surgery or treatment. Hospitalization will not be provided for diagnostic purposes or when in conjunction with a diagnostic surgical procedure. When hospitalization is recommended, the Counselor will obtain from the physician an estimate of the number of days that hospitalization will be required and the services to be provided. A copy of the official hospital report (discharge summary or similar report) will be placed in the case record.

J. *Psychotherapy.* Psychotherapy will be purchased for an individual by the Division up to 20 sessions per year and only when the following conditions are met and documented in the record. Over 20 sessions per year require District Manager approval.

1. A written recommendation from a psychiatrist or licensed psychologist is obtained; and,

2. Periodic progress notes recommending additional therapy sessions are required for continued sponsorship.

M. *Surgical and Medical Treatment.*

1. *General.* Surgical treatment may be purchased with an approved IPE when directly related to the client's primary or secondary disability (the disabling condition(s) upon which eligibility was established) and is necessary to lessen or alleviate a functional limitation so severe it results in a substantial impediment to the client's employment. Surgical and medical treatment shall require a written report, including recommended procedures, by a licensed physician. It will be the responsibility of the physician to discuss with the individual the recommended procedures, implications, risk, and expected results.

2. *Cosmetic.* Cosmetic surgery or cosmetic procedures may be provided with an approved IPE only when the client's vocational goal requires interaction with the public and there is a significant cosmetic defect resulting from injury, disease, or congenital malformation that constitutes a disabling condition for eligibility purposes and is so severe it results in a substantial impediment to the client's employment.

3. *Body Invasive Procedures.* Body invasive surgical procedures such as cardiac catheterization or exploratory laparotomy performed to diagnose or to prepare for other potential surgical procedures may be considered with an approved IPE.

4. *Exclusions to Surgery.* Certain surgical procedures normally will not be authorized by the Division. These exclusions include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Sterilization;
- b. Abortions;
- c. Organ transplants;

- procedures for sex changes;
- d. Operative or other medically prescribed
  - e. Prosthetic breast implant;
  - f. Hair electrolysis except for eyelashes
- abrading the cornea; and,
- g. Hair transplant.

**3804.4 Physician's Assistants.** Licensed physician's assistants may be used for diagnostic and treatment purposes, to verify the existence of a disabling condition for eligibility purposes, and/or to prescribe medical interventions and treatment regimens. The physician's assistant must be supervised by a designated licensed and qualified physician and the physician must be present on the premises where the service is provided. Billing for services rendered will not be accepted directly from the physician's assistant, but must be submitted by the supervising physician. Payment for services then will be authorized to the supervising physician.

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## **4300 SUPPORT SERVICES.**

### **4304 Transportation.**

C. *Mileage Limitation.* Payment to either the client or a third party for mileage will be calculated using the current state reimbursement rate per mile. Reimbursement will be limited to only one round trip per day on the day(s) of service. Travel costs for students living in either on-campus dormitory or off-campus housing will be reimbursed only for travel to the school at the beginning of the semester/term, travel home and return to school during required breaks when dormitories are closed, and travel home at the end of each semester/term.

#### **4304.3 Types of Transportation.**

A. *Short Term Travel.* Short term travel is usually less than 60 days. This will include the actual cost of lodging, meals, any other related expenses that are deemed necessary, and reimbursement for mileage as stated above. The client will submit receipts for lodging, meals, and other related expenses.

B. *Travel Expenses for Personal Care Attendant.* If services of a personal care attendant are necessary to enable the client to travel to participate in a rehabilitation service, travel expenses for the personal care attendant may be reimbursed. The personal care attendant will submit receipts for lodging, meals, and other related expenses.

C. *Relocation Expenses.* The Counselor may authorize relocation expenses when the client has a confirmed job offer. These expenses may include moving expenses, rent and utilities for the first month, one time costs such as security deposit, and charges for the initiation of utilities. The Counselor may provide rent and utility costs for one additional month following relocation. The client must provide receipts for all costs. Additional expenses may be approved by the District Manager.

### **4305 Training/Placement Equipment and Clothing.**

**4305.2 Computer Purchase for Post Secondary Training.** If it is determined that a client who is attending post secondary training does not have a computer that will support the individual's training program, the Counselor may

consider purchasing computer equipment and software. As a standard, the client will receive a desktop *or* laptop computer, basic word processing software, printer, wireless card, and thumb drive. The client is responsible for informing the Counselor if the individual's course work or particular degree program requires additional computer equipment, a change in specifications for the computer equipment, or specialty software.

A. *Economic Need.* The purchase of computer equipment and software is a support service and, although not included in the calculation of maximum fee for training costs, is subject to the consideration of economic need. If the cost of the computer equipment and software is included on the *Student Financial Plan*, the Counselor must consider if purchase of the computer equipment and software will constitute an over award in the client's financial aid package.

B. *Considerations.* As the computer equipment and software is not provided as an accommodation, the Rehabilitation Technology Unit will not be responsible for providing assistance in setting up the computer equipment or installing the software. Therefore, the Counselor will need to determine that the client has the ability to set up the computer equipment and install the software. The client must understand that the computer equipment and software become the individual's property upon delivery and the client will be responsible for arranging any maintenance, troubleshooting, repairs, or training.

C. *Purchase Procedure.* The Counselor will request specifications for the computer equipment and software by completing the *Request for Computer and Software* form and forwarding it to the Division's Information Technology Unit. The request must include any additional computer equipment or specialty software needed because of the client's training program. For example, a client may need computer assisted design software in order to complete a graphics art program. All computer equipment and software must be delivered to the Counselor's office to ensure that the equipment received is as ordered.

**4305.3 Placement Equipment and Clothing.** As a condition of placement with an employer, the client may be required to have certain items of placement equipment and/or clothing, such as a personal set of hand tools and/or uniforms. If the client completed a vocational training course during which the Division provided training equipment and/or clothing or uniforms, the client will be expected to use those items in placement if the job is the same as that for which the individual was trained.