

**Minnesota State Services for the Blind (SSB)
Vocational and Independent Living Rehabilitation Services
Definitions, Rates and Methodology**

Adjustment to blindness services that consist of vocational rehabilitation counseling, rehabilitation teaching services, and orientation and mobility services;

1. "**Vocational rehabilitation counseling**" means the process by which a vocational rehabilitation counselor helps an eligible individual:
 - A. understand the individual's abilities and potential;
 - B. realize that blindness, visual impairment, and other impairments including combined vision and hearing loss are natural parts of the human experience, and that most of the physical limitations associated with blindness, visual impairment, and other impairments including combined vision and hearing loss can be overcome by learning and using alternative techniques;
 - C. identify and establish an employment outcome, and the nature and scope of services to reach the employment outcome, consistent with the requirements in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, under United States Code, title 29, section 701, et seq.;
 - D. complete a program of services leading to the achievement of the employment outcome established in the eligible individual's individualized plan for employment; and
 - E. obtain competitive employment consistent with the employment outcome established in the eligible individual's individualized plan for employment.

Rate: Not established-this is a public service of SSB.

2. "**Rehabilitation teaching services**" means instruction in the use of alternative techniques other than outdoor cane travel, and aids and devices. Rehabilitation teaching services is further differentiated by whether Braille is taught.

Itinerant Rate (Braille not taught): \$75/hour base rate. Rate may be adjusted where the instructor has the personal capacity to interpret the spoken or written instructions to a student, customer satisfaction, and any other factors necessary to assure that quality services are available to customers statewide.

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Methodology: Rate determined by analysis of Minnesota market rates and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies. Rates are reviewed periodically.

Itinerant Rate (Braille taught): \$75/hour base rate. Rate may be adjusted where the instructor has the personal capacity to interpret the spoken or written instructions to a student, customer satisfaction, and any other factors necessary to assure that quality services are available to customers statewide.

Methodology: Rate determined by analysis of Minnesota market rates and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies. Rates are reviewed periodically.

3. **"Orientation and mobility services"** means the provision of aids and devices and instruction in their use, which enable an eligible individual to travel safely and independently without sight or with impaired sight. These services include the provision of white canes and instruction in cane travel.

Itinerant Rate: \$75/hour base rate. Rate may be adjusted where the instructor has the personal capacity to interpret the spoken or written instructions to a student, customer satisfaction, and any other factors necessary to assure that quality services are available to customers statewide.

Methodology: Rate determined by analysis of Minnesota market rates and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies. Rates are reviewed periodically.

4. **Comprehensive (not vocational rehabilitation counseling) adjustment to blindness services** including rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, rehabilitation technology, and related services from a community rehabilitation program (CRP).

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Rates: Full-time, part-time, component, special programs, and housing rates are by fee schedule for each CRP. CRP itinerant rates for rehabilitation teaching (Braille taught and Braille not taught), orientation and mobility, and rehabilitation technology are subject to the itinerant rates listed elsewhere.

Methodology: CRP rates are determined by an analysis of Minnesota market rates and review of CRP costs, and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies. CRP rates are negotiated directly and separately with each CRP. Rates are reviewed periodically.

Contractor travel expenses

Rates: Travel time will be authorized (in quarter-hour increments) from Contractor's home base and compensated at \$25 per hour. All travel expenses are subject to the Commissioner's Plan. For travel that exceeds 3 hours travel time (one way), an overnight stay is allowed. Mileage for any travel will be charged consistent with the Commissioner's Plan.

Travel time and mileage billed should be for the most direct and efficient route as provided by MapQuest. SSB will only pay for actual mileage driven and actual time in travel.

Irrespective of funding source, the Contractor cannot bill travel time or mileage from their home base to the training site for more than one consumer when training two or more consumers who live in the same location or in close proximity. In the case of training two or more consumers who live in the same location or close proximity, mileage and travel time must be billed equitably among the WORK authorizations. The total billing for travel time or mileage of multiple consumers served in the same trip irrespective of proximity or funding source may not exceed the total actual travel time and mileage for the whole trip.

Travel reimbursement is included when billing for services under a WORK Authorization. Contractors billing for travel time and mileage must also submit a monthly travel log that includes by date: consumer's name; WORK Authorization number, hours served; travel time; and mileage billed.

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Methodology: Rate determined by analysis of Minnesota market rates and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies, and state travel expense limits. Travel time rates are reviewed periodically. Travel expense limits are modified when the Commissioner's Plan is adjusted.

Communication Center services

"Communication center services" means services provided through SSB's communication center. Through its communication center, SSB:

- A. custom transcribes books and other materials onto cassette tape, digital media, or into braille;
- B. researches the availability of textbooks on cassette tape, digital media, or in braille at sources other than SSB;
- C. provides books that have been custom transcribed onto cassette tape, digital media, or into braille;
- D. broadcasts closed circuit radio readings of recent newspapers, books, and magazines and lends the closed circuit radio receivers needed to receive the broadcasts;
- E. lends playback machines needed to use cassette tapes or digital recordings obtained from SSB's communication center or the Library of Congress; and
- F. repairs the playback machines and radio receivers it lends.

Rate: Not established-this is a public service of SSB.

Diagnostic assessment services

"Diagnostic assessment services" means medical examinations, optometric examinations, audiological evaluations, and other rehabilitation services provided to help an applicant or eligible individual and a vocational rehabilitation counselor assess the applicant's or eligible individual's skills, abilities, and aptitudes in order to determine eligibility, establish an employment outcome, and identify the specific rehabilitation services the

eligible individual will need to achieve the eligible individual's employment outcome.

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Rates: Various

Methodology: SSB adopts the fee schedules established by DEED's [Disability Determination Services](#); Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division contracts; and SSB master contracts.

Interpreter services

"Interpreter services" means:

- A. manual or tactile interpreting of oral or written communication to deafblind applicants and eligible individuals by an interpreter; or
- B. foreign language interpreter.

Rates: [Sign language-various see CR S-884\(5\); written language-various see CR S-888\(5\); spoken language-various see CR S-885\(5\)](#)

Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

Job-related services

"Job-related services" includes job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services.

Rates: Various

Methodology: SSB adopts the fee schedules of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Division master contracts, and SSB master contracts.

Low vision services

"Low vision services" means services that help an eligible individual use or improve the use of residual vision in performing specific tasks involved in achieving and maintaining rehabilitation goals. These services consist of low vision aids and the functional assessments, ophthalmologic or optometric

examinations and training necessary for the provision and effective use of low vision aids.

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Rates: Various. Examinations and assessments are considered diagnostic in nature.

Methodology: Goods are purchased by public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

Maintenance

"Maintenance" means the minimum 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 individual's assessment for or participation in a rehabilitation program.

Rates: Various.

Methodology: The minimum market rate taking into account geography and availability. For students pursuing higher education, SSB adopts the maintenance rates of public institutions of higher learning. The minimum market rate and adoption of public institutions of higher learning rates must consider the specific needs of an eligible individual.

Note-taking services

"Note taking services" means the recording of oral or written communication for later use by applicants or eligible individuals.

Rates: State minimum wage, or market if necessary.

Methodology: SSB adopts the state minimum wage. SSB may increase rate to a market rate if necessary to attract note-takers of a suitable quality.

Occupational licenses, tools, equipment, and initial stocks and supplies

"**Occupational licenses**" means any license, permit, or other written authority required by a state, city, or other governmental unit as a precondition to entering an occupation or starting a small business.

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Rates: Various.

Methodology: SSB adopts state and political subdivision fee schedules.

"Occupational tools" means instruments normally required for entry into employment or for efficient job performance.

Rates: Various.

Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

"Occupational equipment" means occupational fixtures, vehicles, and machinery normally required for entry into employment or for efficient job performance.

Rates: Various.

Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

"Initial stocks and supplies" are defined as follows:

A. "Initial stocks" means the inventory of goods for direct resale to consumers by an eligible individual entering into a self-employment enterprise.

B. "Supplies" means the expendable items that are necessary for the day to day operations of a business and that are consumed on the premises of the business.

Rates: Various.

Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

Personal assistance services

"Personal assistance services" means a range of services provided by one or more persons designed to assist an individual with a disability to perform daily living activities on or off the job that the individual would typically

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perform without assistance if the individual did not have a disability. The services must be designed to increase the individual's control in life and ability to perform everyday activities on or off the job. The services must be necessary to the achievement of an employment outcome and may be provided only while the individual is receiving other vocational rehabilitation services. The services may include training in managing, supervising, and directing personal assistance services.

Rates: [Minnesota Department of Human Services rates for approved Minnesota Health Care Programs \(MHCP\) personal assistance vendors.](#)

Methodology: SSB adopts the Minnesota Department of Human Services fee schedules for approved MHCP personal assistance vendors.

Physical and mental restoration services

"Physical and mental restoration services" means the medical or medically related services provided to correct or substantially modify, within a reasonable time, a physical or mental condition which is stable or slowly progressive. These services consist of the services listed under the definition of physical and mental restoration services in Code of Federal Regulations, title 34, section 361.5(b)(40).

Rates: Various.

Methodology: SSB adopts the fee schedule established by the United States Department of Health and Human Services for Medicare. Hearing aids are purchased through public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

Postemployment services

"Post employment services" means one or more vocational rehabilitation services that are provided subsequent to the achievement of an employment outcome and that are necessary for an individual to maintain, regain, or advance in employment, consistent with the individual's strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice. These services are available to meet rehabilitation needs that do not require a complex and comprehensive provision of services and, thus, are limited in

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scope and duration. If more comprehensive services are required, then a new rehabilitation effort must be considered.

Rates and methodology: Established under other rehabilitation service titles.

Reader services

"Reader services" means the oral reading of written material for an applicant or eligible individual.

Rates: State minimum wage, or market if necessary.

Methodology: SSB adopts the state minimum wage. SSB may increase rate to a market rate if necessary to attract readers of suitable quality.

Referral services

"Referral services" means counseling or research on behalf of a referral, applicant, or eligible individual for the purpose of directing the individual to other agencies and organizations that provide financial assistance, rehabilitation services, or other services needed.

Rate: Not established as this is a public service of SSB.

Rehabilitation technology

"Rehabilitation technology" means the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies, or scientific principles to meet the needs of, and address the barriers confronted by, individuals with disabilities in areas that include education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, independent living, and recreation. Rehabilitation technology includes rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology and sensory aids and devices, telecommunications, and assistive technology services.

Rate: Computers, assistive technology, sensory aids and devices, and related equipment per contract amount.

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Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.

Itinerant Rate 1: \$75/hour base rate for trainers who are teaching any of the assistive technology devices in service groups 1-6 identified below and are competent in and training core application software (Windows, WORD processing, Email, Internet).

- 1) Screenreaders (JAWS, Window-Eyes, Supernova, System Access, NVDA, Apple VoiceOver/Zoom).
- 2) Screen magnification software (Zoomtext, MAGic).
- 3) Scanning software and devices (Kurzweil K1000, Open Book, DocuScan Plus, KNFB Reader).
- 4) Digital talking book players and digital recorders (Victor Reader Stream, Book Sense, Book Port Plus, Plextor Pocket, Olympus).
- 5) Note-takers (Brailnote, PacMate, Braille Sense).
- 6) iOS devices (iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch).

Itinerant Rate 2: \$65/hour base rate for trainers who are teaching any of the assistive technology devices identified in service groups 3-6 above and are competent in and training these devices as stand-alone products not interacting with a computer and where competency in core application software is not required.

Itinerant Rate 3: \$75/hour base rate for trainers who are teaching any of the assistive technology devices in service groups 1-6 identified below and are competent in and training core application software (WORD processing, Email, Internet) for the Apple Macintosh.

- 1) Screenreaders (JAWS, Window-Eyes, Supernova, System Access, NVDA, Apple VoiceOver/Zoom).
- 2) Screen magnification software (Zoomtext, MAGic).
- 3) Scanning software and devices (Kurzweil K1000, Open Book, DocuScan Plus, KNFB Reader).
- 4) Digital talking book players and digital recorders (Victor Reader Stream, Book Sense, Book Port Plus, Plextor Pocket, Olympus).
- 5) Note-takers (Brailnote, PacMate, Braille Sense).
- 6) iOS devices (iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch).

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Itinerant Rate 4: Rate will be adjusted to \$85 where: the instructor is competent in both Windows core software and Apple Macintosh core software; and where the instructor is competent in either Windows core software or Apple Macintosh core software and any two or more of groups 1-6.

Rates will be negotiated for other software or devices, taking into account need, complexity, whether the instructor has the personal capacity to interpret the spoken or written instructions to a student, and customer satisfaction. In all cases of rehabilitation technology rate-setting, rates may be adjusted as necessary to assure that quality services are available to customers statewide.

Methodology: Rate determined by analysis of Minnesota market rates and benchmarking with other state rehabilitation agencies. Rates are reviewed periodically.

Services to family members

"Services to family members means one or more of the rehabilitation services provided by SSB programs to members of an eligible individual's family in order to help the individual achieve an employment outcome or independent living goal.

Rates and methodology: Established under other rehabilitation service titles.

Supported employment services

"Supported employment services" means ongoing supportive services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with the most significant disability in supported employment that are provided by SSB:

A. for a period of time not to exceed 18 months, unless under special circumstance the eligible individual and the vocational rehabilitation counselor jointly agree to extend the time to achieve the employment outcome identified in the employment plan; and

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B. following transition, as postemployment services that are unavailable from an extended services provider and that are necessary to maintain or regain the job placement or advance in employment.

Rates and methodology: Established under other rehabilitation service titles.

Technical assistance and other consultation services

"Technical assistance and other consultation services" means conducting market analyses, developing business plans, and otherwise providing resources, to the extent those resources are authorized to be provided through the statewide workforce investment system, to eligible individuals who are pursuing self-employment or telecommuting or establishing a small business operation as an employment outcome.

Rate: No cost.

Methodology: Provided through the statewide workforce investment system.

Transition services

"Transition services" means a coordinated set of activities for a student designed within an outcome-oriented process that promotes movement from school to postschool activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities must be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and must include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other postschool adult living objectives, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. Transition services must promote or facilitate the achievement of the employment outcome identified in the student's employment plan.

Rates and methodology: Established under other rehabilitation service titles.

Transportation services

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"Transportation services" means services including travel and related expenses that are necessary to determine eligibility for or to enable an individual to participate in a vocational rehabilitation or an independent living program, including expenses for training in the use of public transportation vehicles and systems.

SSB must provide the least expensive mode of transportation that serves the eligible individual's rehabilitation needs and accommodates any nonvisual disability related limitations the eligible individual may have. When a private vehicle is the mode of transportation identified in the eligible individual's plan, SSB must pay parking fees and mileage at the rate established for state of Minnesota employees in the current managerial plan published by the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget.

Rates: Various

Methodology: SSB adopts state and political subdivision transportation fee schedules. The least expensive mode of transportation that meets eligible individual's needs must be provided.

Vocational training services

"Vocational training services" means instruction and supplies provided to a vocational rehabilitation eligible individual to help the eligible individual acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and educational qualifications necessary to achieve an employment outcome. Vocational training services consist of:

- A. tuition and fees, and materials required for training at an institution of higher learning; and
- B. fees and materials required for vocational skills training in settings other than institutions of higher learning.

SSB may provide tuition and fees, supplies, maintenance, and transportation to an eligible individual for training at an institution of higher learning only if there is evidence that the eligible individual is capable of completing the required coursework or degree program. Tuition, supplies, maintenance, and

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transportation paid by SSB for training at a private or non-Minnesota institution of higher learning must not exceed those amounts charged by Minnesota public colleges, universities, or technical and community colleges offering the same program nearest the eligible individual's residence unless the necessary training is not available to the eligible individual at a public Minnesota institution.

Rates: Various

Methodology: SSB has a preference for and adopts public college, university, technical and community college fees schedules.

Other goods and services related to employment or vocational training.

Rates: Various

Methodology: Public solicitation using Authority for Local Purchase and centralized state procurement processes and procedures.