

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Table of Contents

Education Program Policy #1: General Policies and Procedures.....	2
Education Program Policy #2: Parental Consent	4
Education Program Policy #3: Quarterly Progress Reports	5
Education Program Policy #4: Staff Schedules	7
Education Program Policy #5: Student Progress Reports.....	8
Education Program Policy #6: Assessments	9
Education Program Policy #7: Individualized Education Program (IEP)	10
Education Policy #8: Materials Center.....	16
Education Program Policy #9: Orientation & Mobility	19
Education Policy #10: Low Vision.....	28
Education Policy #11: Vocational Rehabilitation	31
Education Policy #12: DVI-IRM (Information Resources Management)	33
Education Policy #13: Training Center	34
Education Program Policy #14: Inclement Weather.....	35
Education Policy #15: General Procedures.....	36
Education Program Policy #16: Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Program	39

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #1: General Policies and Procedures

SECTION 1: Purpose and Scope

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) Education Program is to provide the education services to children and infants with visual impairment and to their families. The goal of the program is to provide educational services and supports at home, and in educational settings, so that a child with a visual impairment can achieve at the most independent level possible. Every child who is visually impaired has the right to receive a "free and appropriate education" in the "least restrictive environment."

Upon successful completion of the referral process, the IEP team shall consider the documentation of visual impairment in addition to other information relevant to the child's condition in determining eligibility for special education under the above definition.

The age of eligibility for children identified under this definition shall be from birth until the receipt of a regular high school diploma or the end of the school year in which the student attains the age of 21, whichever occurs first.

These policies shall encompass all services provided by the education department including referrals, eligibility, assessments, Individual Education Plan (IEP)/Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) requirements, transition services, exit criteria as well as intra-agency cooperation. This includes referrals and other contacts with DVI programs including Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Orientation & Mobility (O&M), Independent Living Services (ILS), Information Resources Management (IRM), Training Center and Materials Center.

II. SCOPE

Children who are identified as visually impaired receive services from the Education

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Program. “Visual Impairment Including Blindness” means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(3); 1401(30); 14 Del.C. 3110)

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #2: Parental Consent

Once a student has been referred and has been entered into consumer database by the Administrative Assistant as interim eligible, the following parental/guardian consent procedures commence:

- A phone call and a letter shall be sent to the parent/guardian of the child with copy to the school district's Special Education Director.
- If a response is not received within ten working days, a follow-up letter shall be sent again copying the school district's Special Education Director.
- If a response is not received within ten working days to the second letter, a final letter shall be sent via certified mail again with copy to the school district's Special Education Director.
- If this final letter results in no response from the child's parent/guardian, the referral is closed out.

For out-of-state students, an out-of-state IEP shall be accepted and valid for 60 working days pending parental/guardian consent to begin the child's assessment. An assessment meeting shall commence to review the child's out-of-state records within 15 working days of receiving parental/guardian consent.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #3: Quarterly Progress Reports

Quarterly Progress Reports shall be generated at the referral level for each contact with the student to include at a minimum:

- Correct date of the contact
- Type of contact
- Activity/goal worked on during that contact
- Time associated with each category for that contact (non-direct, travel, prep, direct)
- Future plans / next steps
- Date and time of next meeting

In addition, the following shall be administered by the TVIs:

- Quarterly Progress Reports shall be kept on all students. A hard copy of the logs does not need to be placed in the students' folder.
- TVIs will attend IEPs unless there is a significant conflict or lack of advanced notice.
- TVIs will obtain a copy of the most current IEP for the audit folders of their students. All IEPs must be current by September 30th of each school year.
- TVIs will do a functional vision assessment, a learning media assessment, and an ECC assessment on all students for three-year evaluations. Three-year evaluations will follow the dates as listed by the school district. All three-year-old transitioning to an educational environment shall have a functional vision assessment, an initial learning media assessment, and an ECC. Parents and the LEA will be provided with the results. A copy must be placed in the audit folder.
- Progress reports as well as ESY/Entitlement Summer Services shall be done on all students on a quarterly basis (for the four marking periods) of the school year. Students with IEPs must have data updated on the appropriate IEP page. All students must have a written progress report, using the form previously developed, or by an alternative form approved by the Statewide Coordinator. Parents and schools must receive a copy for all 4 marking periods.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

- TVIs are responsible for coordinating with the administrative assistants to obtain updated eye examination results. When having a parent sign a release, the signed release must go to the administrative assistant in the respective offices. You will receive a copy when it comes in or will be notified if the administrative assistant is unable to get a copy.
- Contact logs should be current within 14 days.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #4: Staff Schedules

Each staff person in the Education Program will allow the Statewide Coordinator full access to their Outlook Calendar. If changes to a schedule occur during the week, it is the responsibility of the staff member to advise the Statewide Coordinator of the changes immediately.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #5: Student Progress Reports

Education staff will prepare a case note in consumer database for each active student based upon any contact with the student, family, and school staff. These reports and narratives must contain detailed information on the student's progress, specific issues, and the solutions being considered or used to resolve the issue.

Each teacher is responsible for giving the support staff the proper paperwork within a designated timeframe as agreed upon between the teacher and said support staff. Teachers and support staff will always keep their student files up to date and in audit-ready condition. DVI Administration reserves the right to check any file at any time to ensure compliance. Compliance monitoring will be an on-going process. Support staff may assist in this effort, but the ultimate responsibility will be with the Statewide Coordinator of the DVI Education Program. Any difficulties that arise in getting copies of needed documents from school should be addressed with the Statewide Coordinator.

Teachers shall submit a quarterly report to the LEA case Manager assigned to each student. The quarterly report shall also be documented in consumer database and shall include updated goals and objectives based upon measurable data driven observations.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #6: Assessments

The TVI assigned to the student will do a functional vision assessment, learning media assessment and expanded core curriculum (ECC) assessment to help determine the student's visual needs in his/her setting. The school will provide any other assessments that may be needed as agreed upon in the IEP/IFSP.

Functional Visual Assessments – A functional visual assessment for all low vision students will be performed on a three-year basis and/or as needed. Approved kits will be used to perform these assessments. All TVIs will be properly trained in how to perform these assessments.

Learning Media Assessment – This assessment needs to be performed on all students on a three-year basis or at the discretion of the IEP Team. Results should be included in the Functional Vision Assessment report as a separate section.

DVI will conduct assessments such as functional vision, learning media, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology as well as coordination of low vision assessments through coordination with LEA staff to meet the student's current curricular needs. The TVI will be responsible for conducting a functional vision and learning media assessment as part of the triennial assessment requirements for IEP eligibility determination and may be conducted more often based on student need under IDEA. For children age birth through three the TVI shall conduct an updated functional vision assessment, and a learning media assessment (if applicable) on an annual basis. Initial assessments shall be conducted within 15 business days from the time DVI is notified of a new student requiring evaluation services. The TVI will use assessments results to determine the number of services hours recommended to the IEP team. If DVI is not able to provide the total number of hours recommended, the TVI in coordination with a DVI administrator will inform the LEA Special Education Director within ten business days. The LEA shall obtain signed permission to evaluate from the parent or, if unavailable, from the legal guardian, of any student under the age of 18 or those students with a legal guardian age 18 to 21.

DVI will provide data based on DVI vision assessments and related services upon completion or as needed for IEP and IFSP development.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

All reports shall be completed according to the essential assessments (EA) rubric.

Education Program Policy #7: Individualized Education Program (IEP)

The IEP team for each child includes the parents of the child, at least one traditional education teacher, and a special education teacher if the child is receiving special education services in the school, the ED, and the TVI. Other professionals may be in attendance if they have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child such as the school nurse, the school psychologist, or counselor.

An Individualized Service Plan (ISP) will serve as the guiding document for services with DVI where private school students are involved. All criteria for referrals to DVI for services remain the same as for public school students. Services provided will also mirror those students being served in the public sector. It should be noted however that there is no guarantee that there will be proper follow-up from the private school to DVI.

A. Development, Review and Revision of IEP

In developing each child's IEP, the IEP team shall consider the strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child. Also, the results of initial or most recent evaluations and where appropriate, the child's performance on any general state or district- wide assessment programs are reviewed. This meeting takes place a minimum of once per year unless the IEP team members have concerns.

B. Consideration of Special Factors

Students who are blind or visually impaired are provided instruction in Braille and the use of Braille unless the IEP team determines that instruction in Braille is not appropriate. The TVI will perform a Learning Media Assessment (LMA) of the child's reading and writing skills and appropriate reading and writing media to assist the IEP team in making its decision. In addition, the assessment will include, if necessary, the child's future needs for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille. The results of this assessment will be included in the functional visual assessment report.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Also, the team will need to consider whether the child requires assistive technology, special devices or other support services such as orientation and mobility.

C. Transition Services

The IEP must include a statement of the transition service needs of the student beginning at age 14 (or younger, if determined appropriate by the IEP team). The TVI generates a referral in consumer database to the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program of the Division for the Visually Impaired when the child is 13 years old, at the time of the student's IEP. Once assigned, the VR staff member is included in all future IEP meetings.

D. Transition Meeting

An internal transition meeting will be held once per year in the appropriate field office to coordinate services from DVI staff to be provided to transition of students 14 to 21 from school to work. (see ED form #7).

An internal transition meeting will be held at least once each calendar year in the appropriate field office to coordinate transition services from DVI staff to students, ages 14 to 21, from school to work.

The team will consist of the TVI, the VR Counselor and/or the VR Counselor Assistant, and other relevant team members. Additional staff from other Programs are optional to attend where applicable.

The TVI will function as the Case Manager as she/he is often the person who knows the student best.

To ensure attendance of all necessary team members or designees, each meeting will be scheduled at least one month in advance. Each program manager must assure the attendance of a designee.

The case manager (TVI) will complete an outline of the agreed-upon services in summary form. The transition team will jointly develop the summary. A copy of the

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

summary will be submitted to each transition team member in attendance, the IEP team, and other members of the team, for review and verification of information. A copy of all transition summaries will be placed in the student's files maintained by each program.

Out of State Placements:

IEPs for children who transfer from out of state public agencies: If a child with a disability (who had an IEP that was in effect in a previous public agency in another state) transfers to a public agency in Delaware, and enrolls in a new school in Delaware within the same school year, the new public agency (in consultation with the parents) shall provide the child with Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) including services comparable to those described in the child's IEP from the previous public agency.

A child with a disability who transfers from an out of state public agency shall be temporarily placed in an educational setting which appears to be most suited to the child's needs based on a mutual agreement of the parents and the receiving public agency. This agreement shall be documented by the signatures of a parent and the receiving public agency on a temporary placement form or the cover page of the IEP. Within 60 days of the child's initial attendance in the receiving public agency, the receiving public agency must adopt the child's IEP from the previous public agency at an IEP meeting convened for that purpose, or develop, adopt, and implement a new IEP that meets the applicable requirements.

Alternate Placements:

Following the development of a child's IEP, the team shall determine the child's educational placement in the least restrictive environment based on the child's individual needs and the services identified in the IEP. Educational placement options shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Inside traditional education class greater than/equal to 80% of the day: Children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the traditional classroom less than 21% of the day. This may include children with disabilities placed in traditional class with special education-related service provided within traditional classes traditional class with special education-related services

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

provided outside traditional classes or traditional class with special education services provided in resource rooms.

- Inside traditional education class less than/equal to 79% of the day and greater than/equal to 40% of the day: Children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the traditional classroom for at least 21% of the day and no more than 60% of the day. This may include children placed in resource rooms with special education-related service provided within the resource room or resource rooms with part-time instruction in a regular class.
- Inside traditional class less than 40% of the day: Children with disabilities receiving special education and related services outside the regular classroom for more than 60% of the day. This may include children placed in self-contained special classrooms with part time instruction in a traditional class or self-contained special classrooms with full time education instruction on a traditional school campus.
- Separate school: Children with disabilities receiving education programs in public or private separate day-school facilities. This includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50% of the school day in public or private separate schools. This may include children placed in public and private day schools for children with disabilities, public and private day schools for children with disabilities for a portion of the day (greater than 50%) and in traditional school buildings for the remainder of the day, or public and private residential facilities if the student does not live at the facility.
- Residential Facility: Receives education programs in public or private residential facilities during the school week. Includes children with disabilities receiving special education and related services, at public expense, for greater than 50% of school day in public or private residential facilities. May include children placed in public and private residential schools for children with disabilities, or public and private residential schools for children with disabilities for a portion of the day (greater than 50%) and in separate day schools or regular schools buildings for the remainder of the day if the students.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

- Homebound and Hospital: Receives education programs in homebound hospital placement. Includes children with disabilities placed in and receiving special education and related services in hospital programs or homebound programs.
- Correctional Facilities: Children receiving special education in short-term detention facilities (community-based or residential) or correctional facilities.
- Parentally Placed Private Schools: Children enrolled by their parents or guardians in parochial or other private schools and whose basic education is paid through private resources and who receive special education and related services at public expense from the local education agency or intermediate program under a service plan.

Each public agency shall ensure a child with a disability is placed in a chronologically age-appropriate placement.

If a child with a disability is a danger to himself or to herself, or is so disruptive that his or her behavior substantially interferes with the learning of other students in the class, the IEP team may provide the child with supportive instruction and related services at home in lieu of the child's present educational placement.

Services provided under these conditions shall be considered a change in placement on an emergency basis and shall require IEP team documentation that such placement is both necessary and temporary and is consistent with the requirements for the provision of a free, appropriate public education.

In instances of parental objection to such home instruction, parents may exercise any of the applicable procedural safeguards in these regulations.

To be eligible for supportive instruction and related services, the following criteria shall be met:

- The child shall be identified as disabled and in need of special education and related services and enrolled in the LEA or other public educational program; and

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

- If the absence is due to a medical condition, it should be documented by a physician's statement where the absence will be for two weeks or longer; or
- If the absence is due to severe adjustment problem, be documented by an IEP team that includes a licensed or certified school psychologist or psychiatrist, and the such placement is both necessary and temporary; or if for transitional in school program, be documented by the IEP team that it is necessary for an orderly return to the educational program.
- IEPs specifying supportive instruction services shall be reviewed at intervals determined by the IEP team, enough to ensure appropriateness of instruction and continued placement.
- Supportive instruction, related services and necessary materials shall be made available as soon as possible, but in no case longer than 30 days following the IEP meeting. Such instruction and related services may continue upon return to school when it is determined by the IEP team the child needs a transitional program to facilitate his or her return to the school program.

E. Exit Criteria

Students served by DVI are no longer eligible for services for any of the following reasons:

- If an eye doctor's report indicates that the student's vision has improved and no longer meets the definition of visual impairment.
- The student's parents decline services.
- An eligibility meeting has been held to determine that services are no longer needed and the IEP team is in agreement.
- The student has graduated from high school.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

The evaluation is not required before the termination of a child's eligibility under these regulations due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to the child reaching his or her 21st birthday. Students with disabilities who are unable to meet the requirements for a diploma shall be given the option to complete those requirements by continuing their education, at public agency expense, until their 21st birthday.

A letter of ineligibility is sent to the parent and the referral source by DVI.

Private Schools

Referrals: Referrals for private school students are done in the same manner as any other students.

Eligibility: The eligibility process for private school students is the same as for students in public schools. The only difference is that the eligibility meeting can be held at DVI or at the private school depending on the preference of the parents and school administration. A representative from the student's local school district needs to be invited. The Individual Service Plan (ISP) can be done at the eligibility meeting.

Individual Service Plan: Students attending private schools do not need an IEP. An ISP is agreed to, written and implemented (see ED form #8). The TVI is responsible for arranging the meeting between the school and parents. The Administrative Assistant sends out a Notice of Meeting to the parents, the private school, and the district where student resides at least 10 business days prior to the meeting (see ED form #9).

The classroom teacher and/or other school personnel must attend the meeting. A copy of the ISP must be given to the parent and the school when finalized. This meeting takes place a minimum of once per year, unless team members have concerns. If the state places a student in a private school, the parents need to be given a copy of the Parent's Rights.

Private schools have the right to refuse DVI services.

Education Policy #8: Materials Center

PURPOSE

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

The purpose of this section is to clarify the process and procedures for obtaining books, materials, and equipment for visually impaired students. The TVI works closely with the schools and the Instructional Materials and Resource Center for the Division for the Visually Impaired to make sure the student's needs are met.

Per Memorandums of Understanding with Delaware Department of Education and the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies, DVI shall:

- Provide assessable educational materials for children and youth with visual impairments and to maintain the Instructional Materials and Resource Center (IMRC), coordinate volunteer Braille, and research the availability of all Braille and alternate media educational materials. Coordinate provision of Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) with the University of Delaware's AIM Center in conjunction with the established partners under a memorandum of understanding. Upon receiving the ISBN information on required text(s) for students related to the core curriculum, and reaching an agreement on required accessible format(s) for those materials upon determination by the IEP/IFSP team, the Digital Rights Manager (DRM) shall submit the materials for conversion within five business days to the Instructional Materials and Resource Center for production.
- Provide visual assistive technology products to students and training and training/technical assistance to classroom staff to utilize the technology tools. If funding for assistive technology is not available, DVI will coordinate with the LEA to provide the recommended technology.
- Continue to support the delivery of AIM to students who qualify for DVI services;
- Utilize the AIM Center website as the means by which teachers of the visually impaired (TVIs) order AIM;
- Assist the AIM Center in the location of digital or otherwise accessible materials that already exist (from vendors or in other repositories);

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

- Comply with all requirements regarding students' eligibility for materials from proprietary sources (e.g., only students who qualify for AIM under the terms of the Chafee amendment can access materials from the NIMAC repository);
- Maintain a current inventory of the resources and equipment available to support the delivery of AIM;
- Clarify any restrictions on access to AIM that it has sourced from third parties.

A. Obtaining Booklists

1. The TVI, as the Digital Rights Manager (DRM), is responsible for obtaining the student's booklist and assistive technology (AT) devices in a timely manner as possible. The sooner the TVI can get the booklist and requests for AT devices the chances are better that the student will have his/her books by September. The TVI needs to get regular ink print copies of all the books requested.
2. The TVI is also responsible for obtaining any materials, i.e., worksheets, workbooks, outlines, etc., to be used by the student.

B. Completing Appropriate Forms

Materials Request Form: The TVI Education staff will complete the form for each material request on behalf of a student, when submitting the information to the Administrative Assistant to enter the AIM portal. However, if the TVI enters the material request directly into the AIM portal then this form does not need to be completed by the TVI.

C. Delivering Books, Materials, and Equipment

The TVI has three options for delivering books to students. These options are listed on the Client Information Form.

- The TVI can chose to have the student's books mailed one time in August. For the remainder of the school year, the books, materials, and equipment will be put in a

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

box with the teacher's name on it at the Instructional Resource Materials Center for pick-up. State mail shall be used when able.

- The TVI can choose to have the books, materials, and equipment mailed throughout the school year to a designated person.
- The TVI can choose not to have the books, materials, and equipment mailed at all. The TVI can pick them up at the Materials Center in August and throughout the school year.

D. Returns

It is the responsibility of the TVI to return all books, materials, and equipment at the end of the school year.

The IMRC will send each teacher a list of books, materials, and equipment that has been assigned to the student during the school year. In addition, AIM will also send the TVI forms to confirm that electronic books and material have been properly disposed of or collected and returned to the respective Material Center.

It is important to return all volumes of textbooks and all the pieces that go with equipment so they can be used again for another student.

If a student or school needs to keep books or materials over the summer, the TVI will complete the first section of the Media Request Form and include the DVI assigned number.

If a student or school needs to keep equipment over the summer, the TVI will complete the Equipment Request Form and check off appropriate space.

Education Program Policy #9: Orientation & Mobility

I. PURPOSE

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

The purpose of this section is to clarify the process and procedure for providing orientation and mobility services to visually impaired students. The TVI works closely with the Mobility Instructor; student and parent to make sure his/her O&M needs are met.

Safe and efficient travel throughout the environment is a critical component in the education of students with visual impairments. O&M evaluation and instruction should begin in infancy with basic spatial concepts and purposeful and exploratory movement. Instruction should then progress through more independent, age-appropriate motor and travel skills in increasingly complex environments. Vision provides the primary motivation for infants to begin to move their bodies, to raise their heads to see people, to reach toward objects, to move through the environment, and to begin to play. Significant delays and differences in meeting motor milestones can impact overall development. A child who is blind needs to know how classrooms or other environments are arranged in order to independently move with confidence. Systematic orientation to a space may be needed before placement and function of furniture and objects are familiar. More advanced age-appropriate travel skills, such as orientation to all school facilities, street crossings, bus travel, and community experiences, are needed as the student gets older.

The O&M team should be included in all referral communiques and all IFSP and IEP programming sessions and evaluations. The only instance where O&M services should not be provided is if the child's parent or guardian refuses them.

Most people who are visually impaired experience some form of orientation and/or mobility challenge(s). The development of skills to move safely, independently and purposefully through one's environment is a primary objective of all people.

The mission of the Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) is to provide people with visual impairments the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to achieve their objectives to function and travel independently in their environment. Certification can be accomplished with instruction provided by an Academy for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation Education Professionals.

PROCESS

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Orientation and Mobility is a support service program. Referrals to O&M are generated through the Independent Living Services Team, the Vocational Rehabilitation Team, the Education Team, or by direct public referral through Central Intake.

A referral will be generated through consumer database for each client referred to O&M for services. All referrals will be forwarded to the O&M Team Leader and the O&M Program Supervisor. Each Team Leader will serve a period of six months. Leadership will be rotated among the O&M staff and will be shared with all DVI programs.

When a referral is received it will be assigned to COMS by the O&M Team Leader as per O&M Policy and Procedures with priority given towards the geography of both the consumer and the COMS.

All referred consumers will be contacted by phone within five business days from the date that the COMS receives the referral in the consumer database.

A Functional O&M and Vision interview form shall be completed during the initial contact (Form #4). This interview may be partially performed via the telephone.

If the consumer is to be placed on an Order of Selection (OOS) list, the consumer, Team Leader and Program Specialist will be informed of his/her position on the O&M OOS.

ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SERVICES

O&M training services are based on the consumer's expressed skill development needs as mutually agreed upon between the consumer and the assigned COMS.

O&M Specialists will document all service provision in the consumer's electronic Case Service Record in the consumer database within ten business days.

When a consumer's primary goals change, the COMS will discuss these changes with the O&M Supervisor, the referral source, and other agency team members who are working with the consumer. This will be done to ensure proper coordination of services across teams and to determine if a new referral is necessary. For any changes in goals, the COMS will provide an estimation of how long the proposed changes in services will affect service delivery times.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

In accordance with the State Department of Education, when a minor is involved, parental consent must be obtained before the COMS can assess and/or work with a minor. To comply with this mandate, a DVI Permission to Assess (Form #5) must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian. The COMS will verify if this form has been signed. If it has not been signed, the COMS will send the form to the parents for signature and/or coordinate with the education team referral source for its signature.

The completed and signed DVI Permission to Assess Form shall be provided to the school to be kept in the student record. Copies will be kept in the Education Audit file.

Prior to removing a minor from the school classroom to an area either on or off the school grounds for O&M training, the COMS must have a completed Permission Form signed by the parent. The original shall be provided to the school and a copy will be kept in the Education Audit file.

For school and/or college/university orientations, the COMS shall work with the referring DVI team to obtain the consumer's class schedule.

Cane Procurement: For all initial referrals, a cane will be provided to the consumer free of charge, annually, if the consumer does not have one that meets his/her needs. A replacement cane may be available upon request, based on agency resources and with supervisory approval, if the cane is broken and is impeding training services or if the current length of the cane is no longer appropriate.

An additional cane may be available, based on agency resources and with supervisory approval.

A third or additional cane request within a year from the provision of the first cane may be considered in rare instances. In this case O&M will provide a loaner cane within 5 business days. If this is a self-referral, comparable benefits will be explored first, and if not available, O&M will do a financial needs assessment to determine if either the consumer or O&M is responsible for the cost. The loaner will be returned when payment of said cane is accomplished.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

If the consumer is referred from another DVI program, and if the cane is provided via a comparable benefit or purchased by another DVI program, then the consumer would return the loaner cane to O&M once they receive the purchased cane from the other program.

The COMS shall inactivate a consumer's Case Service Record under the following circumstances:

The consumer goal(s) have been achieved,
Three consecutive documented unauthorized cancelations have occurred,
Medical hold exceeds four months,
Hold for other reasons, exceeds two months.

Consumers designated as "In Progress" shall be consistently contacted at least monthly. The COMS shall manage his/her caseload in a manner that empowers consumers towards independence and the achievement of identified goals.

CASE STATUS

There are nine case statuses that shall be identified as follows:

Referred:

O&M Team Leader receives a referral for services on his/her consumer database work list for assignment to a COMS.

Referrals will be assigned to the COMS serving the geographic locations in which the consumer resides. By distributing cases geographically, the intent is to achieve balanced caseloads between the COMSs.

Interview/Intake:

The assigned COMS will contact the consumer via telephone, to complete the functional interview, (Form #4).

The COMS will determine if consumers between the ages of 18-65 are currently working and/or if they are interested in obtaining employment or career advancement. If either of these conditions are present, the O&M shall make a referral to the VR services Team.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

The COMS is compelled to inform the consumer of any unsafe acts or practices detected during the Intake/Interview. This must be documented in the consumer database client contact log.

Observation:

The COMS has detected an immediate need for an in-home, community, or worksite assessment during the Interview/Intake process to address, through basic instruction, one or more safety concerns. The observation shall occur within 5 business days from the date of the Interview/Intake. Under no circumstances shall a consumer remain in observation status for more than 10 days without immediate safety concerns being addressed.

The COMS will complete the Functional Observation Form, (Form #6).

In Progress:

The consumer is receiving ongoing services on at least a monthly basis.

Functional Assessments need to be done at least every 3 years and need to be documented in consumer database.

Medical Hold:

The consumer has provided either written or verbal documentation of an extended illness impacting their ability to engage in travel training. Medical Hold shall not exceed 4 months. If medical hold exceeds 4 months, the record of service shall be inactivated, and the consumer shall be advised of their right to reapply for O&M services through the referral process. In order to expedite service delivery, the COMS may be assigned to work with other consumers, including those on the waitlist, when a client goes into medical hold.

Hold (all other reasons):

A situation has arisen that necessitates an interruption in service provision that will not exceed a two-month period.

Close/Complete Successful:

The Consumer has achieved his/her planned O&M goals. Consumer will be notified by COMS and a closure log briefly summarizing services provided will be entered into consumer database within 7 business days of closure.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Close/Complete Unsuccessful:

The consumer's inability to engage in planned services has exceeded the established time frames as written above for Medical Hold or Hold for all other reasons.

The consumer has either voluntarily withdrawn from services or is deceased.

The consumer has not been reachable for a period of 30 days.

For all unsuccessful closures, the consumer will be notified by COMS and a closure log summarizing service provision and reason for case closure will be entered into consumer database within 7 business days of closure.

CASE DOCUMENTATION

A lesson plan will be completed in the consumer's consumer database electronic Case Service Record.

Lesson Plans will contain stated goals, objectives and skills for each lesson and will note the consumer's progress towards his/her individualized established goals and will be documented in consumer database within 7 business days.

Progress Reports

In conjunction with Individualized Employment Plans, (IEP), reports shall be generated using the Functional Vision Assessment template at least annually to coordinated with the attending schools' IEP meeting date.

IEP O&M goals will be updated at each marking period and noted in consumer database. All reports will be entered into consumer database.

When a case is closed, a report summarizing activity will be entered into consumer database and consumers will be notified verbally and if necessary, in writing.

Consumer cancellations shall be documented in the client contact log.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

When a goal is identified that falls under another team, the O&M Specialist will make the appropriate referral via the Central Intake Process.

All consumer database logs must be updated at least monthly, and whenever services have been provided.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF O&M TO DVI REFERRAL SOURCE

The COMS will attend interdisciplinary team meetings as requested, will update client contact logs in consumer database and will consult with the DVI referral source as necessary and appropriate for seamless service delivery.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DVI REFERRAL SOURCE TO O&M

The DVI referral source will keep the assigned O&M Specialist apprised of any circumstances impacting travel training and assist the O&M Specialist with obtaining medical information and/or class schedules for efficient service delivery.

MEDICAL RELEASE

If the consumer is neither receiving services from other DVI programs and necessary data is not available, the COMS will secure information from the consumer, and possibly through his/her medical provider, concerning his/her physical/functional limitations.

The COMS shall focus the O&M lesson plan on the consumer's documented physical and psychosocial medical needs, goals, and skill level, etc.

Compliance with paragraphs 1.91 and 1.92 will be dictated by the O&M Specialist's initial assessment, interview, and established objectives with the consumer.

LOW VISION SERVICES

The O&M Specialist will review all eye reports loaded in the consumer's electronic consumer database Case Service Record and provide low vision services under the following circumstances:

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

When a referred consumer has already had a Low Vision screening (LV) or Low Vision Examination (LVE) the O&M Specialist will informally evaluate the consumer using both near and distance aids, and sun lenses to ensure the consumer is able to efficiently utilize the prescribed devices. The O&M Specialist will upgrade these aids for mobility purposes as necessary. The use of these aids during lessons will be documented in the lesson plans.

If a referral is received for a consumer who is not active with Education, Independent Living Services or Vocational Rehabilitation and has not had a LV screening and/or exam the O&M Specialist shall provide a partial evaluation for near and distance aids, and sun lenses for the appropriate services and generate a requisition in consumer database for the recommended device(s). When a referral is necessary to another DVI Program, the Specialist shall continue to work in conjunction with the teams that receives the referral to provide collaboration of services.

When a referral to another team is not appropriate, the O&M Specialist shall arrange for the LV exam, accompany the consumer to the doctor's appointment and order the recommended aids.

A Functional O&M and Vision Interview Form and Functional O&M and Vision Observation Form, will be completed for all referrals including consumers who have received O&M instruction in the past to identify, if any, changes in visual capacities (Forms #4 and #6). Results shall be documented in consumer database in a consumer database Contact Log.

O&M SERVICES REFUSED

If following an explanation of O&M services a consumer refuses said services, the referral source shall be notified, and an "O&M Services Refusal" form (Form #10) shall be completed and signed by the consumer, if possible. The original shall be given to the consumer and a copy entered consumer database. The purpose of this form is to document that the potential consumer understands what services are being offered and that they can contact DVI in the future for assistance should s/he change his/her mind.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Policy #10: Low Vision

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the low vision program is to provide students with an assessment to determine if any optical devices will enable him/her to improve visual functioning. The following will help to clarify the process and procedure.

A. Low Vision Kit Assignments

Two kits are assigned to the Independent Living Service (ILS) Program. One kit is located at the Biggs building and the other kit at the Milford State Service Center and may be accessed through the Outlook Calendar on the Division's shared network drive.

B. Service Procedure

Any student served by the Education Program is eligible for a low vision screening. The TVI as well as the IEP team can make the determination if a low vision screening is appropriate. If it is determined that a screening might be helpful, it is the responsibility of the TVI to do the screening.

Before a low vision screening takes place with a student, the following forms need to be completed:

- American Printing House (APH) Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment
- The student's parent or guardian must bring their insurance card(s) to the appointment.
- Permission to Send Information form
- Contracted Low Vision Specialist form

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Following the screening, the TVI will make an appointment for the student with one of our Contracted Low Vision Specialists (CLVS). It is important for the TVI to speak with the student's parents or guardians and ask them to bring their insurance cards to the appointment by the CLVS and DVI will pay for any remaining charges. If the family does not have insurance, DVI will pay the services and aids. The TVI is responsible for having a current requisition in consumer database after confirming the appointment with the student.

This form is completed after confirmation of the CLVS appointment for the student. The date of service must be noted. The completed purchase order form is given to the Statewide Coordinator for electronic approval in consumer database.

When the CLVS appointment is confirmed, the TVI needs to send a copy of Form #3 and Form #4 and a blank Low Vision Examination Form pre-signed by the TVI.

The TVI must attend the CLVS appointment. The CLVS, the TVI, the student, and the parent or guardian, as a team, shall determine the low vision aid(s) appropriate for the student.

C. Equipment Purchase

The following steps should be followed when ordering the aid(s) for the student:

The Education Administrative Assistant will fill out the appropriate purchase order and it will be given to the TVI for review/approval and then given to the Education Director for final approval. Following this, the Fiscal Program shall create the Purchase order (PO) and disseminate the information to the ILS Program's Administrative Assistant(s) for placement of the order.

The TVI can give the aid(s) to the student after the parent or guardian sign an Equipment/LV Aid Placement form.

D. Loan of Equipment

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Low vision aids can be loaned to a student based on the CLVS recommendations. A Low Vision Loan Agreement must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian before giving the aid to the student.

The low vision aid should be loaned out from the DVI repository, not from the low vision kit.

The low vision aid will be loaned to the student for evaluation purposes of 30 days or less. All loaned equipment must have a "Property of DVI" label. The TVI will monitor the student's progress using the aid. If at the end of the evaluation period the student has not or cannot effectively use the aid, the equipment will be returned to DVI. Any problems experienced using the aid will be discussed with the CLVS for recommendations and a possible follow-up examination.

E. Training of Student

It is the responsibility of the TVI to provide training to the student on the effective use of the low vision aid(s).

F. Information/Frequency Requested

- The TVI is responsible for completing the DVI Low Vision Screening Form.
- (See LV Form #13) each month. The Low Vision Coordinator requests that the form should arrive no later than the 10th of each month on activities performed the previous month.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Policy #11: Vocational Rehabilitation

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of vocational rehabilitation is to work with the education program and the schools to help provide transition services to the students and families when they reach the age of 14. When students graduate from high school, they no longer receive services from the Education program, and they become eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

A. Referral

- The TVI is responsible for referring students when they reach the age of 13.
- The TVI is responsible for discussing the referral with the student's parent or guardian. This is important so they have an understanding of the process and responsibilities of the vocational rehabilitation program.
- When making a referral, the TVI needs to make the referral in consumer database.

B. Eligibility

The criteria for eligibility for VR services is based on:

- Visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye with best spectacle correction, or a visual field restriction of 20 degrees or less in the better eye which creates an impediment to employment.
- The student shall be supported in being assess for competitive integrated employment regardless of the severity of their disability/disabilities.

C. Notification of IEP Meeting

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

If the student was not being provided services by the DVI Education program prior to turning 14 years old, the TVI is responsible to notify VR, in a timely manner as possible, when a student's IEP is being held by adhering to the following procedures:

- TVI makes referral in consumer database.
- Once the VR worker is assigned, the VR worker will E-mail the TVI.
- The TVI will forward the E-mail from the VR worker to the school Ed to inform the ED of the name and contact information of the VR worker. The E-mail subject shall be "VR transition worker please invite to the IEP".

It is the responsibility of the VR representative to help give input into the transition needs of the student as part of the IEP team.

It is important to keep an open line of communication between VR and the Education program as to any special needs that will impact employability.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Policy #12: DVI-IRM (Information Resources Management)

The focus of the iOS Mobile Device program at the Division for the Visually Impaired is to provide tools and resources to the 21st century learners and educators. Excellence in education requires that technology is seamlessly integrated throughout the educational program. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future, and one of the learning tools of these 21st century students are mobile devices. The individual use of a mobile device is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for college and the workplace.

The policies referenced, procedures and information within this document apply to all iOS mobile devices issued by DVI for its clients, including any other device considered by the Administration to come under this policy.

Teachers may set additional requirements for use in their classroom. This policy is to help develop a standard for DVI that is in compliance with both DTI and DHSS Rules and regulations for the use of portable wireless computing devices, the acquisition and management of the apps installed on them, and their connection to the State of Delaware networks. These rules are necessary to preserve integrity, availability and confidentiality of these networks.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Policy #13: Training Center

I. PURPOSE

The training center and its staff are available to the education program to assist in providing evaluation of assistive technology to their students if needed. In addition, they will help with the installation of equipment. The training center is also available to provide training to education staff when requested.

A. Referral Process

- The TVI must complete the Training Center Referral Form and attach the most recent eye report, low vision screening form, medical information if pertinent, and any other information that may be helpful.
- The Permission to receive service from DVI Training Center must be completed and signed by parent or guardian.
- All referrals and requests must be sent to the Training Center Supervisor.

B. Meetings/Consultations

- When the student is assigned to a Training Center Senior Rehabilitation Instructor (SRI), the SRI will contact the student to arrange for scheduling services.
- Once the student is scheduled, the SRI will notify the teacher in writing or e-mail. The SRI will also contact the teacher to discuss the specifics of the referral.

C. Reports

- The teacher will receive a written report 10 working days after an evaluation is completed.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #14: Inclement Weather

Teachers will be required to work the number of school days as specified by the Delaware Board of Education. That amount is currently 188 days.

As different districts have different school calendars throughout the normal year, an independent DVI calendar will be developed to determine the days to be worked throughout the school year. If there is a closure for an entire day(s) declared in the corresponding district due to inclement weather, the DVI teachers in the respective offices will not work those corresponding days. Those days are required to be made up by working the established make-up days within the appropriate district.

When Milford School District and/or Colonial School District have delayed openings or early dismissal, DVI Education teachers will report to work as required of all non-essential merit employees. Delayed openings and early dismissals for non-essential state employees can be heard on local radio stations, or at the state website

<http://www.delawarepersonnel.com/closings/>. Please click on “Current Advisory” for the latest update. Biggs Building teachers will follow the advisory for New Castle County employees and Milford teachers will follow the advisory for Sussex County.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Policy #15: General Procedures

A. Audit File Maintenance

- A copy of the most current IEP/IFSP/ISP must be in every student's audit file.
- A copy of the current functional vision assessment must be in every student's audit file.
- A learning media assessment must be done on every student at the time of the functional vision assessment. Learning media assessment must be clearly identified if embedded in the FVA. LMA must include recommendations for communication medium. This includes all students with severe disabilities.
- FVA's/LMA's must be done for the school districts' eligibility meeting or when identifying re-eligibility. Use the districts evaluation date for your records.
- Copies of current quarter's progress report must be placed in audit folder.
- A copy of signed releases must be placed in audit file. Release should be given to administrative assistant as soon as they are obtained. Teacher doing the functional vision assessment should have a copy of the permission to evaluate form to give to the school.
- Obtaining initial eye examination reports will be the coordinated effort of the TVI and administrative assistant. If the TVI obtains permission slips, they are to be turned into the administrative assistant. New eye exams received on a student assigned to a TVI will show up on the work list in consumer database and can be printed from there. It is the responsibility of teachers and TVIs to provide any eye examination report, sent directly to them, to the administrative assistant so that it can be faxed into consumer database and placed in the audit folder. Eye examinations should be no more than three years old. See the Statewide Coordinator if you are unable to obtain an updated eye examination.

B. Progress Report Policy

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Progress reports must be done on every student on a quarterly basis. This includes students with IEP goals and students who are seen on a consultation basis. A copy of all progress reports must be placed in the audit folder.

C. Consumer Database Responsibilities

TVIs and paraprofessionals are responsible for putting information on each student contacts in consumer database contact logs.

TVIs are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate school district and school placement are listed in consumer database.

TVIs are responsible for ensuring the correct visual category is identified in consumer database (totally blind, legally blind, SVI).

Education staff may seek the support of the administrative assistant to assist with the above; however, the responsibility for accurate and updated information is that of the TVIs.

All referrals to other programs must be done in consumer database.

The Administrative Assistants will be responsible for placing orders in consumer database for student's equipment and software. Quote and waiver must be obtained and placed in a Word file. Justification must be written also and placed in Word file. Also, the Material Center must be checked to make sure equipment is not available.

All education staff members are responsible for checking their worklist in consumer database, at least once a week.

D. Weekly Schedule

A weekly schedule is required to be submitted to the supervisor and the corresponding administrative assistant no later than 10AM on the Monday of each week.

All schedules must be done in Microsoft Outlook.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

The Statewide Coordinator and the administrative assistant must be allowed access to the schedules of all education staff.

- Eligibility meeting & IFSP
- Working with parents, students and other related staff.
 - The TVI is responsible for working with students on their caseload. The TVI should provide various activities to the student which will facilitate accomplishing the goals as written in the IFSP. The TVI must monitor progress on these goals.
- Case management

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Education Program Policy #16: Referral to Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Purpose

To develop a uniform procedure for the referral of transition students from the Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) Education Program's Teacher for the Visually Impaired (TVI) to the DVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR) for assessment and initiation of VR services.

The time to refer a secondary student for VR services is when the DVI TVI and IEP Team has begun to identify transition or other post-secondary services on the IEP that target an employment outcome for a visually impaired student once the student reaches 14-years. Career exploration should have taken place and the referral by the DVI TVI to the DVI VR Program. All students that turn 14 during the school year shall be referred to the DVI VR Program, per Improvement Area IV, Transition, and Outcome of RSA.

As the student transition from high school, there should be no gap in services between the education and the vocational rehabilitation systems. While the DVI TVI is responsible for providing education and transition services to their students who are still in the secondary school system, the DVI VR Counselor shall provide transition services that involve planning and preparing for the student's future employment. The DVI VR Counselor, together with the student, the DVI TVI, the student's family or legal representative, and other parties working with the student, coordinates the appropriate vocational rehabilitation services for the student. DVI-TVI shall insure that the DVI-VR Transitions Counselor is invited to the student's IEP.

As an active participant in the transition planning process, the DVI VR Counselor shall:

- Inform students, parents or legal representative, and other interested parties about the Division's Vocational Rehabilitation Policies as they relate to transition planning and rehabilitation services and outcomes;
- Work in conjunction with the DVI TVI and the School District(s) to appropriately identify students who may benefit from DVI VR services;
- Determine eligibility for DVI vocational rehabilitation services;

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

- Counsel transitioning students and their parents or legal representative about vocational and career planning and employment outcomes related to the individualized education program (IEP) through coordinating with the DVI TVI as it relates to the student;
- Advise students, parents or legal representative, and the DVI TVI during the transition planning and service delivery process regarding current labor market information; community resources, including community-based services; the need for involvement by other state agencies; adult service programs; and independent living centers;
- Contribute to the transition planning by communicating with the DVI TVI so that students, parents or legal representative, and school district staff can avail themselves of the DVI VR counselors' expertise;
- Develop the Individualized Plan for Employment prior to school exit and within 90 days of eligibility determination;
- Provide transition services if they are beyond the scope of the DVI Education Program and within the scope of VR services; and
- Provide other applicable employment-related services.
- DVI TVI will provide DVI VR Counselor a documentation for proof of completion (i.e. transcript, certificate of completion and diploma at the end of the school year to assist with the WIOA credential and measurable gains requirement.

DVI VR Funding Responsibilities

- DVI VR funds assessment for post-secondary education and post-secondary vocational services for an employment outcome.
- DVI VR funds assistive technology for post-secondary education and post-secondary vocational services for an employment outcome.
- All student equipment will be ordered during the senior year.
- A signed IPE is necessary before any services or equipment is provided.
- Additionally, the DVI VR Program shall make a referral(s) for each DVI Education Program student to other DVI service Programs such as Orientation & Mobility,

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Independent Living, and Assistive Technology where warranted and applicable on an individual case-by-case basis within the first year of transition.

- All information shall be shared with the DVI TVI and shall be updated within the Division's consumer database data base system.

Division for the Visually Impaired

Education and Orientation/Mobility Program Policies & Procedures

Approved:

Reviewed:

Revised: