Chapter 16:

Services to Family Members

Vermont Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Policy and Procedures Manual

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# Section I. Definitions

"Family member" for purposes of receiving vocational rehabilitation services, means an individual:

1. Who either:
	1. Is a relative or guardian of an applicant or eligible individual; or
	2. Lives in the same household as an applicant or eligible individual.
2. Who has a substantial interest in the well-being of that individual; and
3. Whose receipt of vocational rehabilitation services is necessary to enable the applicant or eligible individual to achieve an employment outcome.

# Section II. General Policy

A. As appropriate to the vocational rehabilitation needs of each individual and consistent with each individual's informed choice, vocational rehabilitation services to family members of an applicant or eligible person may be provided if necessary to enable the applicant or eligible person to achieve an employment outcome.

B. Services may be delivered without restriction as to age of the family member(s).

C. The record of services must show the service needed, its relationship to the person's ability to reach an employment outcome, its anticipated cost, duration, and how the service provider was chosen.

**Guidance – Examples of services to family members:**

*Services to prepare a family member to assist an individual with self-employment. Such as providing the family member with training in business practices, accounting, or other related training that will directly support the consumer’s business.*

*Family, marriage, or group counseling related to the adjustment of vision loss.*

 *Childcare services to enable the individual to participate in training.*

***End Guidance.***

# Section III. Spending and Related Guidelines

1. The Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) with input from the State Rehabilitation Council, shall establish and maintain reasonable spending guidelines which shall be reviewed annually.
2. DBVI may not place absolute dollar limits on a specific service or total services provided. However, it can set reasonable spending guidelines to ensure reasonable costs to the program. The guidelines may not be so low as to deny the individual a necessary service.
3. When considering exceptions to the spending guidelines, the director or designee must consider the individual’s ability to contribute to their services. The individual’s contribution must be:
4. Reasonable;
5. Based on the individual’s financial need; and
6. Not so high as to effectively deny the individual a necessary service.
7. DBVI cannot require individuals who are SSDI or SSI beneficiaries to provide funding toward their services, including post-secondary education and training.
8. Cost of services to family members shall be in accordance with any DBVI policies and spending guidelines existing for a specific service. If guidelines do not exist, cost must be reasonable as determined by the DBVI counselor.
9. Comparable services and benefits shall be used as applicable as defined in Chapter 19, “Comparable Services and Benefits”.
10. Duration of these services shall be limited to accomplishing the objective for which the service is needed unless there is reasonable evidence to indicate that the provision of these services will not accomplish the objective.
11. The spending guideline for any service or combination of services to a family member is $500 per individual.