Chapter 9:

Personal Assistance Services

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

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Contents

[Section I. Definitions 2](#_Toc45211057)

[Section II. General Policy 2](#_Toc45211058)

[Section III. Spending and Related Guidelines 3](#_Toc45211059)

# Section I. Definitions

1. "Personal assistance services " means a range of services provided by one or more individuals designed to assist an individual with a disability resulting in functional vision loss to perform daily living activities, on or off the job, that the individual would typically perform without assistance if the individual did not have a disability. 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.
2. “Attendant care” means assistance needed for self-care and in performing activities of daily living such as getting dressed, toileting, and eating.
3. “Job Coach” means a person who assists another person in learning vocational tasks.
4. “Note-taker” means a person who manually records the pertinent parts of a meeting, training, or conversation that may include translation to braille. Note-taking services are generally provided only for individuals who are blind or visually impaired who do not have training in, or have limited use of, an alternative method such as braille or for whom technology options are not appropriate.
5. “Reader” means a person who reads ordinary written material to an individual who is blind or visually impaired which is not readily accessible via any of the accepted non-visual methods of reading such as braille or audio recordings.
6. “Tutor” means a person who assists another person in learning an academic subject and/or basic skills.

# Section II. General Policy

After other comparable services and benefits have been identified and used, if available, personal services may be provided as they are needed to determine a person’s eligibility, to develop a plan of services, or to meet the objectives of the IPE, including post-employment services. The duration for providing a personal service is limited to the time it takes to accomplish (or fail to accomplish) the objective(s) for which it is needed. Personal services providers must be told of and agree to the Agency of Human Services’ policy on confidentiality.

The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living “Attendant Services Program” (ASP) is the primary resource for attendant care services. DBVI counselors may refer individuals in need of attendant care to ASP for eligibility determination and services. If ASP has a waiting list, DBVI may furnish attendant care services on a short-term basis to enable the individual to participate in specific aspects of the vocational rehabilitation process.

Additional support may be located through local mental health agencies, the Association for Cerebral Palsy, the Vermont Center for Independent Living, and other community resources. DBVI may assist individuals in gathering information to make informed decisions procuring personal care assistance.

DBVI may assist individuals in discussing personal assistance needs with employers and advocating for their on-site needs.

# Section III. Spending and Related Guidelines

1. Attendant care services may be provided at the rate established by the ASP.

1. State minimum wage plus up to an additional $5.00 per hour may be paid for other personal assistance services (i.e. Job Coaching, Note-taker, Reader, and Tutoring services).
2. Generally, fees for personal assistance should not exceed a total of $500. If costs are anticipated to exceed this amount, approval of the Director or designee is necessary.
3. Duration of the provision of personal assistance services shall be limited to the time necessary to successfully accomplish the objective(s) for which these services are needed, or the time it takes to determine that the objective is unattainable.