

ADJUSTMENT SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED POLICIES

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I. PURPOSE OF SERVICE

Persons who are blind or visually impaired have the right to be taught skills to enable them to function equally and adequately among those who have vision. In addition, they have the right to be enabled to function at the highest possible level of independence. Services described in this section are designed to provide these opportunities for independence.

II. LEGAL BASIS

On the basis of its authority in GS 143-157 the North Carolina Commission for the Blind has mandated that Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired are to be provided in every county of the State. Policies and procedures for service implementation are to be developed by the NC Division of Services for the Blind and approved by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

III. DEFINITION

Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired are services provided in any combination as needed and appropriate to enable blind and visually impaired persons to attain and/or maintain the highest level of functioning possible, to promote their well being and to prevent or reduce dependency. This is achieved through a focused regimen of counseling and casework assistance to consumers and their families to help them choose, obtain and use needed resources, services and mechanisms of support. Within the context of this service function, one or more of the following service areas and resource items may be provided.

A. Skills Development to Meet the Demands of Daily Living

Adjustment services are provided by the Social Worker for the Blind to enable the consumer to meet his/her demands of daily living. Skills development is provided through special training in service areas such as, but not limited to:

1. Grooming skills, such as:

- Separation and matching of clothing
- Personal hygiene
- Organization of personal items
- Labeling of articles and clothing with Braille labels or other Identification methods

2. Homemaking skills, such as:

- Use of special cleaning techniques for home and clothing
- Use of laundry and cleaning equipment
- Cooking and serving meals
- Care of yards and entry ways to promote general health and safety

3. Personal skills, such as:

- Telling Time
- Money identification

4. Communication skills, such as:

- Telephone dialing and use of 4-track tape player
- Use of writing guides for signature, check writing, and addressing envelopes
- Accessing services from agencies such as Radio Reading
- Service and Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
- Braille instruction--given the shortage of qualified Braille instructors, either the SWB or ILRC may provide this service.

5. Orientation and Mobility Skills, such as:

- Training in self-protection and pre-cane techniques
- Use of sighted guides
- Referral to Orientation and Mobility Specialist for training in cane techniques and electronic travel aids (ETA'S)

B. Skills Development through Group Services

Adjustment Services that enhance skills development for the consumer's adjustment to and acceptance of his/her visual limitations through the following:

1. Camping experiences at Camp Dogwood in Sherrill's Ford
2. Utilizing local recreation programs
3. Participating in group learning experiences and local support groups.

IV. TARGET POPULATION

Blind or visually impaired persons who need specialized services in order to promote more independent functioning and to reduce dependency.

V. GOALS

Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired will be offered to achieve one of the following consumer goals:

A. Personal Self-Sufficiency

Providing persons who are limited in their self-care capabilities with means for meeting routine daily living needs, thus supporting the individual's efforts to maintain the maximum degree of independence possible.

B. Preventing or Reducing Inappropriate Institutional Care

Skills training to care for one's daily needs, regardless of visual loss, is provided to prevent placement in institutional care.

C. Preventing or Remediating Abuse, Neglect or Exploitation

Instruction in self-help skills, mobility and communication is provided to prevent the blind and visually impaired person from self neglect and abuse or from neglect or abuse by family members. The ability to care for one's self after training is the method of prevention.

VI. ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired is based on two criteria: **vision status** and **need for the service**.

A. Eligibility Based on Vision Status

To be eligible for Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired on the basis of vision, an applicant must meet the definition of either legal blindness or visual impairment (see definitions in Section 250).

B. Eligibility Based on Need for Service

To be eligible for Adjustment Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired on the basis of need, a blind or visually-impaired person must need specialized services in order to promote more independent functioning and to reduce dependency.