

# NC DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND POLICIES AND PROCEDURES VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

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<b>Section:</b>	<b>R</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rehabilitation Center for the Blind</b>
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The Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (RCB) was established in 1946 to provide comprehensive adjustment services to individuals who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind from throughout North Carolina.

Comprehensive services requiring an interdisciplinary approach are provided on a residential or day basis through a variety of programs, ranging from adjustment to special vocational training services.

Primary consideration is given to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible individuals who are newly blinded and pursuing vocational goals, those requiring special training to attend Post-Secondary Training or pursuing vocational goals, and those requiring Independent Living Rehabilitation (ILR) skills to maintain their personal independence.

Most of the training areas are available 12 months of the year. Others are offered, as needed, or when special populations are being served. Services are available to blind and visually impaired individuals, 14 years of age or over.

The Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) gives preference to the RCB for comprehensive adjustment services for eligible individuals. Individuals may choose an in-state public or out-of-state vendor that may be at a higher or lower cost than the RCB. If the RCB, in-state public vendor, or out-of-state vendor will meet the individual's rehabilitation needs, DSB will not be responsible for those costs in excess of the cost of the RCB. However, if the individual chooses an in-state public or out-of-state vendor at a cheaper cost than the RCB and all three vendors will meet the need, the individual may choose the in-state public or out-of-state vendor. Any exceptions should be reviewed and approved by the Vocational Rehabilitation Area Supervisor or his/her designee, as appropriate.

## **Adjustment to Blindness Training**

Individuals who enter the training program are enrolled in those activities that will assist them in meeting their VR goals. The length of the training will depend on each individual's needs, abilities, and but generally the individual will stay 12 to 15 weeks or less. While the areas required for each individual's specific plan will vary according to the needs of each individual, the total list of courses includes:

### **Communications Skills:**

**Braille** – Instruction may include Grade 1 and Grade 2 Braille, slate and stylus or Braillewriter use, and Nemeth code.

**Handwriting** – Instruction is provided to develop or regain the ability to use print or cursive writing.

**Adult Basic Education** – The teacher and individual design a program of remediation to meet the individual's vocational needs. Remediation may include GED preparation, grammar, spelling,

composition, reading, and vocabulary development, elementary arithmetic, vending facility math and use of a talking calculator.

**College preparation** – This class includes discussion of appropriate accommodation for success in college.

**Beginning Keyboarding** – Individuals develop keyboarding skills using computers with image enlargement and/or voice access. Beginning keyboarding emphasizes the touch system, correct techniques and development of speed and accuracy. This course is designed primarily for the individual with no keyboarding experience.

**Intermediate Keyboarding** – Beginning Word – This course is designed to enable an individual to perform personal correspondence on the computer.

**Advanced Keyboarding** – Word – This course is designed to increase speed and improve accuracy to meet employment tests and job requirements.

**Internet and E-Mail** – This course is designed as an introduction to e-mail and the Internet.

### **Personal and Home Management Skills:**

**Techniques of Daily Living** – Adaptive techniques for cleaning floors, bath, kitchen; dusting; polishing; and basic organization skills are taught. Instruction may be provided in bathing, washing hair, shaving, brushing teeth, labeling methods for clothing identification and matching, laundry skills, time telling skills, basic hand sewing and grooming techniques.

**Cooking** – Basic cooking is designed for individuals who have had no previous cooking experience and have potential for assuming some cooking responsibilities. Training concentrates on very simple food preparation. Advanced cooking goals range from acquiring the ability to cook for self to handling all of the cooking needs of a family.

**Individual Education** – Emphasis is on banking services, such as management of checking and savings accounts, and recording check stub information. Budgeting, credit, interest, and other individual information is discussed.

### **Orientation and Mobility:**

**Pre-Cane Skills** – Individuals practice walking with a sighted guide, protective techniques, trailing, locating dropped objects, room familiarization, entering and exiting a vehicle, and orientation to specific indoor areas.

**Cane Skills** – Methods for carrying a cane when walking with a sighted guide, storing of the cane, types of canes, indoor and outdoor cane techniques, use of the cane in inclement weather, use of the cane on rough terrain, and ascending and descending stairs.

**Community Orientation** – Individuals master basic and advanced residential travel, sidewalk orientation, use of auditory and tactual clues, tactual maps, address systems, cardinal directions, the sun as an orienteer, traffic as an orienteer, traffic lights and various traffic signs, street crossings, route planning, route reversal, and drop-offs.

**Light Business and Urban Travel** – This instruction deals with more difficult street crossing and sidewalk orientation; location of places of business; techniques for traveling in a shopping mall; store familiarization; use of escalators, elevators, and electric and revolving doors; solicitation of information and assistance; route planning; and route reversal.

**Bus and Cab Travel** – Solicitation of information from a bus company, entering and exiting a bus, location of seat, paying fare, location of destination, solicitation of aid and information from driver and fellow passengers, familiarization with various cab companies, variations in rates, and assisted and independent bus and taxicab rides may be covered.

**Inclement Weather and Night Travel** – Instruction in techniques for travel in various weather and lighting conditions, use of appropriate apparel, and use of altered or modified environmental clues may also be provided.

### **Recreation:**

**Physical Conditioning** – This program focuses on the individual's approach to physical fitness through a program of conditioning, development of strength and nutrition. Medical approval is required for participation.

**Community Life** – Individuals' interest with respect to leisure and recreation activities are explored to assist the individual in identifying, locating and using recreational resources in his/her community. Activities addressed are games, sports, nature activities, collection activities, crafts, educational, entertainment and cultural activities, and volunteer and organizational activities.

**Evening Recreation** – Evening recreational activities are offered to expose individuals to recreational opportunities for the visually impaired in the community and on campus. Instruction in table games may be offered in the evening to expose students to the various adaptive games that are available. Independent planning for leisure activities is also encouraged.

### **Pre-Vocational Services:**

**Job Exploration** – In this class individuals explore their career choices through the use of the Internet, career manuals, job banks, and informational interviews.

**Job Seeking Skills** – This class is designed for individuals who will be pursuing employment. It focuses on skill identification, resume development, interviewing and completion of applications.

**Horticulture** – This class is designed to introduce methods of propagation, plant identification, plant maintenance, soil composition, and basic tools and materials used in the greenhouse or garden.

### **Deaf-Blind Services:**

RBC has specialized services for individuals who are blind or who have a combined loss of vision and hearing. Individuals coming to the RCB will learn adaptive skills to cope with the progressive loss of vision or the progressive loss of hearing. Individuals will have the opportunity to try various devices and technology that can enhance their ability to function more independently. Interpreter services are available for those whose primary mode of communication is sign language.

Deaf-Blind Services (On-Line DSB-4044-VR Deaf-Blind Assessment with instructions)

### **Counseling Services:**

Each individual is assigned an RCB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, who works with the individual to plan a training program, which will meet his/her particular needs. The RCB Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor acts as liaison between Agency field staff and other community resources.

### **Psychological Services:**

Testing Services are available from a staff psychologist. Some psychological services are contracted on an individual basis in the community for financially eligible individuals.

### **Medical Services:**

RCB nurse interviews all individuals to identify and address medical needs, coordinate physician consultations, monitor medications, and coordinate transportation for medical appointments. The nurse provide information about diabetes, its complications and treatments as well as other medical conditions.

### **Residential Services:**

Two dormitories are available to individuals who are receiving services. The dorms are equipped with laundry facilities and a student lounge for relaxing and socializing.

A dorm supervisor and resident life staff members are on duty whenever classes are not in session to provide assistance to any of the facility's residents.

### **Food Services:**

The campus cafeteria is open for dining Monday through Friday to all individuals receiving services. For individuals who are on special diets or have other nutritional needs, the staff will accommodate the special needs.

## **Independent Living Rehabilitation Seminar**

This one week training program is designed to provide visually impaired older adults with personal adjustment skills training with special emphasis on computer literacy, Braille and Low Vision adaptations.

## **SAVVY Youth in Transition**

This three-week program, Summer Adjustment to Blindness Vital to Visually Impaired Youth (SAVVY), provides visually impaired high school students with personal adjustment skills training designed to supplement the academic and adjustment skills training that they receive at school and at home. Students also participate in social skills development through classroom instruction and community experiences. A vocational awareness component provides for career planning.

## **SAVVY College Prep**

This program is designed to help college-bound students prepare for life after high school. Individualized sessions may include the following areas: note taking, determining learning styles, improving computer skills, time management, coping with test anxiety, money management, and self advocacy.

### **SAVVY World of Work**

This week internship program is designed to prepare students for success in the world of work and in adult living. Teens learn work ethics and work behaviors through paid internship experiences. Teens increase communication skills and interpersonal skills while building confidence and self-reliance.

### **Special Assessments and Training Modules**

#### **Technology Assessments and Training:**

The RCB offers short term sessions on various technology devices and software applications as Braille 'N Speak, Braille Lite, JAWS, Internet Training, Windows with Microsoft Word. Use the referral guidelines for assessments/training requests.

#### **Low Vision Assessments and Training:**

The RCB offers short term assessments and training on various low vision devices including, if needed, a clinical Low Vision examination by the consulting Low Vision Optometrist. The assessment will include, if appropriate, a CCTV assessment with the Assistive Technology Instructor (On-Line DSB-2007 Evaluation and Video Magnification (CCTV) with instructions). Use the referral guidelines for assessments/training requests; the Referral for Low Vision Screening (On-Line DSB-2205-A Referral for Low Vision Evaluation with instructions) should also be included for low vision assessments/training requests. Refer to policy Assistive Devices/Equipment (On-Line DSB-0950-VR Verification of Items Received with instructions)

### **Referral Guidelines for all Programs**

To be eligible for admission to the RCB, the individual must:

- Be medically, physically, and psychologically able to attend scheduled classes,
- Have a favorable prognosis to complete and benefit from the services requested,
- Demonstrate that current behavior will not jeopardize the health, safety, or VR program of self or others at the RCB.

Individuals must be willing and able to comply with RCB rules and regulations and not appear as a sexual offender or any type of conviction related to child abuse or assault on a child on either the North Carolina Sex Offenders and Public Protection Registry or the North Carolina Department of Correction websites. If it is determined that the individual is listed as a sexual offender or convicted of any type of offense related to child abuse or assault on a child, the Chief, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Facilities must be contacted before making a referral, as each situation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine if it is reasonably prudent to provide services on this campus, as The Governor Morehead School (GMS) is a day and residential educational institution for

blind and visually impaired children. If RCB cannot serve the individual on the school campus, that individual should be served in the home community.

Referral information, including request for special training, low vision assessments, etc., should be sent to the Program Manager and include the following information:

- A current eye report unless the condition is unstable. If the condition is unstable, more recent information would be helpful to better serve the individual. If available, low vision reports should be included.
- A current medical or medical Health Checklist (On-Line DSB-4045-VR Health Checklist with instructions) that is within the past 12 months unless the condition is unstable. If the condition is unstable, more recent updates will be needed.
- All medication should be clearly labeled with the physician's instructions stated on the label or a copy of the prescription with the physician's instructions should be included.
- Psychological reports when available.
- Copy of the Application Form (On-Line DSB-4004-VR Rehabilitation Application with instructions), copy of case progress notes (On-Line DSB-4011-VR Case Progress Notes with instructions) or letter explaining the purpose of the program along with any necessary information about home, family, community situation, court stating, etc. that could impact on the RCB program.
- Educational history, giving academic achievement and shall adjustment should be provided for those under 18 years of age.
- Copy of the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)/Independent Living Plan (ILP) if one is available.
- Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) (On-Line DSB-4005b-VR Individual Plan for Employment with instructions)
- Independent Living Rehabilitation (ILR) Services Program (On-Line DSB-4005b-ILR Independent Living Plan with instructions)
- Copy of the Individual Financial Statement, if one is available.  
Financial Responsibilities/Economic Need Requirements (On-Line DSB-4040-VR Economic Need Survey with instructions)
- Any additional information that is requested on an individual basis.

The Admissions Committee of the RCB sets the admission date and mails a letter to the individual with a copy to the referring Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. If the applicant should fail to attend, the Admissions Committee will notify the referring Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.