

**STATUS 26 - CLOSED REHABILITATED**

**Definition**

A consumer in Status 26 is one who has successfully attained their vocational goal and reached an employment outcome. With respect to an individual, an employment outcome means:

- entering or retaining full-time or, if appropriate, part-time competitive employment in the integrated labor market,
- satisfying the vocational outcome of supported employment, or
- satisfying any other vocational outcome RSA may determine to be appropriate (including satisfying the vocational outcome of self-employment, telecommuting, or business ownership), in a manner consistent with the Rehabilitation Act.

**Purpose**

The purpose of Status 26 is to indicate when a consumer has been successfully rehabilitated.

**When to Move Into Status 26**

A consumer is moved into Status 26 when all of the following are applicable:

- consumer's I P E has been completed
- the consumer is engaged in employment that is commensurate with ability or circumstances at the time of closure
- consumer is engaged in a satiable occupation for a minimum of 90 days

**Bills**

Before a case can be closed all outstanding encumbrances must be paid or canceled.

**Note:** A consumer will not be closed in Status 26 more than once in any fiscal year.

**READER SERVICE FOR THE BLIND****Definition**

Reader service is oral reading or taped recording provided by a vendor to a blind consumer. The material read is that which is otherwise inaccessible to the consumer. Reader service may be used for academic training, vocational training, and to maintain employment.

**Who is Eligible**

Any person who is legally or totally blind and is receiving academic or vocational training, or is employed and in need of this service in order to maintain employment is eligible for reader service.

**Payment**

The fee for this service should be negotiated between the counselor and the reader and reported on the DSB statement of reader service form (see forms section). The statement of reader service form should be submitted to the counselor by the consumer at the end of each calendar month for payment. The counselor will complete a DSB-1080 and pay the vendor directly for this service. The counselor may approve amounts up to a maximum of \$8.00 per hour. Any amount above \$8.00 must have the written approval of the Program Administrator.

**Allowable Hours**

The counselor and consumer should negotiate the number of hours of reader service needed in order for the consumer to complete training or maintain employment. This is a limited service and the consumer should understand this at the onset of this service.

**Consumer Responsibility**

It is the consumer's responsibility to

- utilize all other reading sources to the maximum degree possible prior to seeking payment by DSB, and
- submit the DSB statement of reader service form at the end of each month.

**ACADEMIC TRAINING (Continued)**

**Private versus Public**

Consumers may choose between a private college/university and a state college/university, but if they choose a private one, they must pay any cost difference.

**Out-of-State Tuition and Fees**

If a consumer chooses to attend an out-of-state college/university, the maximum amount payable would be the same as that which would have been paid in-state. The consumer would be responsible for paying any cost difference.

If the training is not available within the state, the agency will pay the academic training expenses charged by the particular out-of-state college/university for a full-time student. Comparable benefits and other policy criteria would still apply.

**Tutoring and Remedial Classes**

DSB will only pay for a limited amount of tutoring. Counselors should use their judgement and knowledge of the student in determining whether to pay tutoring expenses for classes.

DSB will only pay for a total of six (6) semester hours of remedial work. These remedial hours must be completed during the first academic year. The counselor will include a statement to this effect on authorizations for college/university tuition. Any exceptions would require approval from the Program Administrator.

**Excluded Fees**

The following college/university fees will not be paid by DSB:

- late fees
- parking fees
- auto registration/decals
- ID card replacement
- drop/add course change fees
- fees for checks returned for insufficient funds
- overdue library fees
- non-resident fees
- withdrawal from college/university fees

**ACADEMIC TRAINING (Continued)**

**Unusual Circumstances**

If it is believed that extenuating circumstances warrant an exception to the policies regarding DSB support, probation, and reinstatement, the counselor must

- present a written request of such to the Field Supervisor, and
- obtain written approval of the request.

**Setting Realistic Goals on the IPE**

The counselor must be mindful to specifically outline both consumer and counselor responsibilities on the IPE. Counselors will not sign off on an IPE with a Bachelor's degree that will not lead to employment, but is more for self-enrichment. Counselors will encourage the consumer to set realistic employment goals. Tools, such as aptitude/interest tests, may be useful in assisting consumers in finding a suitable career. These tools are sometimes available free of charge on the Internet.

**ACADEMIC TRAINING (Continued)**

**Other Counselor Responsibilities**

The counselor will explain academic training policies/requirements to the consumer and have him/her sign a Student Responsibilities Relating to Academic Training form (included at the end of Section VR 12). A copy of the signed form will be given to the consumer and the original placed in the case record.

The counselor must record the specific courses and hours taken by a consumer at the beginning of each semester. The counselor will adjust payments for reader service according to any changes in the consumer's course schedule.

**NOTE:** Where feasible, the VR counselor may make arrangements with the college/university to obtain any required information.

**Notification of Intent**

Every new student must notify his/her VR counselor by July 1 prior to his/her first semester of his/her intent to enroll at a college/university.

Continuing students must notify their VR counselors at least 30 days prior to the start of each semester or summer session of their intent to attend college/university.

**Other Consumer Responsibilities**

Once admitted to college/university training, the following is required of the consumer:

1. Maintain and complete a "full-time" course load each semester. (Counselors may make an exception if the consumer is a graduating senior or is medically unable.)
2. Maintain a "C" average within a given semester.
3. Provide the VR counselor with:
  - a. class schedule,
  - b. proof of PELL grant application/outcome,
  - c. add/drop sheets, and
  - d. grade slips.

**Note:** Refer to policy 12.19 through 12.21 for exceptions and additional information.

**ACADEMIC TRAINING (Continued)**

**Questionable Academic Performance**

If the individual's history includes a record of marginal/poor academic performance, the counselor is advised to obtain diagnostic tests for help in:

- identifying causes of deficient performance,
- evaluating continued existence of problems, and
- developing remedial plan of action.

**What is a "Full-time" Course Load?**

A "full-time" course load consists of at least:

- 12 semester hours for undergraduate school
- 9 semester hours for graduate school (unless completing a thesis/dissertation)
- 3 hours per summer semester

**Note:** Counselors may make an exception if the consumer is a graduating senior or is medically unable. Refer to policy 12.19 through 12.21 for exceptions and additional information.

**Counseling the Potential College or University Student**

The counselor will make every effort to:

- assist the consumer in exploring vocational objectives,
- offer information in choosing a college/university to fit a vocational goal,
- relate the chosen objective to an appropriate major field of study,
- link specific objectives and the major field of study with employment, and
- encourage consumer independence in seeking admission to college/university.

**JOB COACH SERVICES (Continued)**

**Guidelines for Payment**

VR counselors may approve up to 200 hours of job coach services per consumer. Any other extensions would require approval by the Program Administrator for Field Services and may require a re-evaluation of the placement.

Job coach services may not be provided to a consumer while on-the-job training is being provided to that consumer.

**Non-Supported Employment Job Coaches**

With non-supported employment cases, the job coach services occur and are completed during active statuses. The consumer functions independently on the job at the completion of job coach services. The service is short term.

The counselor is required to assess the skills of a job coach in relation to a consumer's need. Job coach services are reimbursed at a rate up to \$16.00 per hour plus mileage. The Counselor may approve up to \$25.00 per hour for job coaches with special skills, e.g., working with deaf/blind or head-injured consumers. Any exceptions would require approval of the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator can approve per diem at current state rates if overnight travel is required/approved.

The service provider must provide:

- a training report and
- daily travel and mileage log.

**Supported Employment Job Coaches**

With supported employment cases, job coach services can only be purchased through organizations which have fiscal capability to commit to providing/arranging for ongoing support after VR services are completed and VR funding ceases.

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**ACADEMIC TRAINING**

**Introduction**

It is the policy of this agency to provide academic training for the purpose of reaching a specific goal. This training is limited to:

- a course of study related to the individual's vocational objective, and
- the attainment of a college/university degree required for entry-level employment in that chosen field.

**Duration of Academic Training**

As long as the consumer meets other requirements in policy, DSB will pay its portion of academic training expenses for up to 5 consecutive years to assist a consumer in obtaining a bachelor's degree necessary to reach the employment goal listed on his/her IPE.

**NOTE:** The only exceptions to this time frame are medical emergencies or other circumstances beyond a consumer's control. Any change in the timeframe would require the Program Administrator's written approval.

**Advanced Degrees**

Academic training beyond a bachelor's degree may be provided only if it is necessary for employment and requires the Program Administrator's written approval. This determination must take into consideration the nature of the consumer's disability, individual needs, the labor market, and job requirements.

**Second Degrees**

There are two circumstances in which DSB will pay its portion of academic training expenses for a second bachelor's degree:

- if the individual became a DSB consumer after already having one bachelor's degree and is no longer able to do that type of work or
- if the consumer's vision has diminished to the extent that he/she can no longer do the type of work for which he/she originally trained.