Request for Comments

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

State Services for the Blind

Possible Amendment to Rules and Repeal of Rules Relating to Rehabilitation; Visually Impaired, *Minnesota Rules*, Chapter 3325; Revisor's ID Number R-04930

Subject of Rules. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) requests comments on its possible amendment to rules and repeal of rules governing Rehabilitation; Visually Impaired. DEED is considering rule amendments and repealing rules as required by Minnesota Statutes, section 248.07, subdivision 14a. This request for comments is the first of several opportunities for public comment and input on this rulemaking. At this stage, DEED does not have draft rules. DEED is seeking feedback about the following potential topics for amended rules and repeal of rules for Rehabilitation; Visually Impaired:

1. Ensure alignment with federal laws, including the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) (Public Law 113-128) and implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. §§ 361, 363, 397), and the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Guidance (2 C.F.R. § 200).
2. Incorporate WIOA requirements related to the provision of pre-employment transition services for youth with disabilities.
3. Update the eligibility criteria for SSB's Vocational Rehabilitation program so eligibility is based on an applicant's barriers to employment, not medical definitions of whether the applicant has a disability.
4. Refine rules related to SSB's support for maintenance. Maintenance is monetary support for food, housing, transportation, and other services needed by an SSB customer to support the customer's vocational rehabilitation services and that are beyond the customer's normal expenses.
5. Revise rules related to SSB's support for post-secondary training.
6. Modify rules related to the scope of services provided by SSB's Senior Services/Independent Living program services, including eliminating the maximum number of hours of rehabilitation technology training and broadening the types of assistive technology that SSB may provide.

7. Remove unnecessary administrative burdens that prevent SSB from providing, and customers from receiving, quality vocational rehabilitation services.
8. Remove and replace outdated requirements and terminology, such as replacing the term “visually impaired” with “low vision.”
9. Refine rules related to qualifications for SSB community rehabilitation programs and community partners, including but not limited to, comprehensive training centers and individuals providing rehabilitation teaching services, orientation and mobility services, and rehabilitation technology-assistive technology services.
10. Revise rules using plain language, so rules are clear to all readers.
11. Ensure SSB’s procurement requirements are in alignment with federal law and informed choice.

As time permits, DEED may consider adopting other new rules or amending rules identified in the rule review process.

Persons Affected. The amendment to the rules and repeal of rules would likely affect applicants, potentially eligible students, and eligible individuals receiving rehabilitation services from SSB and their designated representatives or legal representatives. The amendment to the rules and repeal of rules would also likely affect SSB staff, as well as community rehabilitation programs and independent contractors that provide services to SSB customers.

Statutory Authority. DEED’s statutory authority for these rules is as follows: *Minnesota Statutes*, section 248.07, subd. 14a, requires the department to adopt rules to set standards for the provision of rehabilitation services, including program definitions; basic eligibility; financial need; definition of legal blindness; formal rehabilitation plans; placement in training programs; tools and equipment; and for appeals including timely agency response.

Public Comment. Interested persons or groups may submit comments or information on these possible rules in writing until 4:30 p.m. on December 18, 2026. DEED will not publish a notice of intent to adopt the rules until more than 60 days have elapsed from the date of this request for comments.

During the public comment period, submit written comments or information to:

1) Court of Administrative Hearings (CAH) Rulemaking eComments website at https://minnesotaoah.granicusideas.com/discussions; or

2) CAH Attn: William Moore, CAH, P.O. Box 64620, St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0620 or fax 651-539-0310 or email William.T.Moore@state.mn.us.

You may view frequently asked questions about the CAH Rulemaking eComments website at https://mn.gov/oah/assets/ecomments-faq_tcm19-82012.pdf. Any questions about submitting comments via the Rulemaking eComments website should be directed to William Moore of the CAH at 651-361-7900 or by email at William.T.Moore@state.mn.us.

Comments received are public and will be available for review at the CAH Rulemaking eComments website at https://minnesotaoah.granicusideas.com/discussions and at the CAH at the address listed above.

DEED plans to appoint an advisory committee to comment on the possible rules. An advisory committee comprised of SSB staff and stakeholders will offer non-binding recommendations to the agency. The advisory committee will provide specialized expertise and a broad range of perspectives and experiences.

This public comment opportunity is associated with the development of possible rules. Comments received in response to this notice will not be included in the formal rulemaking record submitted to the Administrative Law Judge if and when a proceeding to adopt rules is started. The Department is required to submit to the judge only those written comments received in response to the rules after they are proposed. If you submit comments during the development of the rules and you want to ensure that the Administrative Law Judge reviews the comments, you must resubmit the comments after the rules are formally proposed.

Rules Drafts. DEED has not yet drafted the possible rules amendments and rules repeal. DEED will make the draft rules amendments and rules repeal available upon completion.

DEED Contact Person. Submit written comments via the CAH Rulemaking eComments website at *https://minnesotaoah.granicusideas.com/discussions* as described above in the Comments section.

Submit clarification questions and requests for additional information to Courtney Wanek:

Courtney Wanek
2200 University Ave W Suite 240
St. Paul, MN 55114
Email: courtney.wanek@state.mn.us
Phone: 651-539-2355

Submit questions about the rulemaking process to Kristina Petronko:

Kristina Petronko
Great Northern Building,
180 E 5th St, Suite 1200,

St. Paul, MN 55101-1678
Email: Kristina.Petronko@state.mn.us
Phone: 651-396-7424

Alternative Format. Upon request, this information can be made available in an alternative format, such as large print, braille, or audio. To make such a request, please contact the agency contact person at the address or telephone number listed above or use your preferred relay service.

Dated: October 19, 2026

Evan Rowe, Deputy Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development