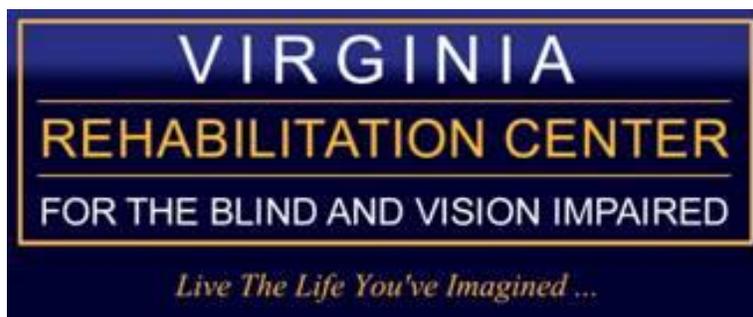


VRCBVI STUDENT HANDBOOK

VIRGINIA REHABILITATION CENTER FOR THE BLIND
AND VISION IMPAIRED (VRCBVI)
401 AZALEA AVENUE
RICHMOND, VA 23227
(804) 371-3151
www.vrcbvi.org



Director's Message

Welcome to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI), which is part of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)! By choosing to come to VRCBVI, you have taken a big step toward achieving independence and acquiring positive attitudes about your capabilities as a person who is blind, vision impaired, or deafblind. We encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities to use the skills of blindness you learn not only in class, but in the evenings and on weekends. Our goal is to help you focus on your capabilities rather than on the perceived limitations society has and that you may have yourself.

I encourage you to come to VRCBVI to focus on learning everything you possibly can so that employment and personal enrichment opportunities are enhanced when you return home. I challenge each of you to think about the changes you will make when you get home. For example, how will you be more independent? What kind of community activities will you participate in? What steps will you take to get or keep a job? I challenge you to understand that when you choose to take personal responsibility after learning the skills of blindness anything is possible. You must develop a can-do attitude to be successful at VRCBVI, at home, and in the workplace.

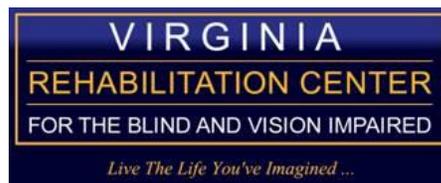
Here at VRCBVI, students have the opportunity to make new friends, develop professional contacts, and participate in a variety of activities that will boost confidence while building new skills. At VRCBVI, students and staff work together as a team. We welcome suggestions and comments.

We hope that the VRCBVI program challenges you to reach your optimum potential and seek opportunities to do things you never thought were possible for people who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind.

At VRCBVI, we are vested in your success in finding and maintaining employment and in living independently. I invite you to come by my office any time you would like to share your ideas, thoughts, or concerns. I have an open-door policy and am always interested in student feedback.

At VRCBVI we raise expectations, promote independence, and prepare you to contribute to your communities and to go to work. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and to celebrate your successes.

Melody Roane, VRCBVI Director



INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Welcome! This Student Handbook is your “guide” to life on the campus of Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI), part of the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI). The Handbook will provide you with information on living, learning, and being successful while you are at VRCBVI in order to maximize the benefits and enjoyment of your training program. The Handbook is designed to answer your questions and provide information about VRCBVI, its services, training programs, and rules and responsibilities for daily activities and dormitory living. VRCBVI Administration realizes that there may be exceptions and special circumstances with regard to the information outlined in the Handbook. Exceptions will be considered by the VRCBVI Director and DBVI Deputy Commissioner for Services on an individual basis.

If you would like more information or have questions about a program or service, please talk with any VRCBVI staff member.

Student Handbook Accessibility

The Handbook is available online at <http://www.vrcbvi.org/>. Other formats are available on request. Copies of the Handbook may be obtained by contacting the VRCBVI Executive Secretary at (804) 371-3324.

VRCBVI and DBVI MISSION, VISION, and VALUES

VRCBVI Mission Statement

The mission of VRCBVI is to prepare blind, vision impaired, or deaf-blind Virginians for their desired levels of employment and independence through the integration of individualized comprehensive blindness skills, employment skills and work experiences.

DBVI Mission Statement

The mission of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is to provide services and resources which empower individuals who are blind, vision impaired or deafblind to achieve their desired levels of employment, education, and personal independence.

DBVI Vision Statement

DBVI envisions a world in which blind, vision impaired and deafblind people can access all that society has to offer and can, in turn, contribute to the greater community. We believe this is achievable.

DBVI Agency Values

- *Recognize the abilities of blind people - We value the contributions of people who are blind, vision impaired and deafblind.*
- *Equal Access – We value equal access to all life activities including information, education, training and employment.*
- *Exemplary Work Habits – We value integrity, honesty, teamwork and dedication.*
- *Diversity – We value diversity, respect for the individual and personal choice.*
- *Employees – We value our employees for their dedication and expertise.*

DBVI Guiding Principles of Instruction

Purpose: Instructors employed by DBVI will provide the individual receiving training with information to make an informed choice about the best training options. This is carried out by the application of the following principles.

1. DBVI values instructors with a broad base of knowledge who have options for meeting the needs of individuals receiving services. The Department is committed to providing instructional staff with training and exposure to different methodologies of instruction.
2. Instructors will possess a functional knowledge and understanding in methods of instruction, enabling them to discuss the implications of strategies appropriate for their discipline and consistent with applicable codes of ethics.
3. Individuals receiving training services and DBVI staff will work as a team.
4. Instructors will offer recommendations for most effective methods of training based on their observations. Based on the information provided by the instructor, the individual has the responsibility to make the decision on the methodology to be used in training.
5. Instructors will provide feedback to individuals about their progress in learning skills. This will include explanation of what the instructor has observed regarding skill levels and recommendations regarding possible changes in training as appropriate. Individuals retain the right to make decisions regarding the training methodology to be utilized unless safety is an issue.
6. Individuals receiving training services will be evaluated on their performance of relevant tasks to include observations regarding safety and effectiveness. Instructors are expected to meet individuals where they are and to consider the individual's current skills when initiating training. The individual will not be required to start training at a basic level if she or he possesses more advanced skills.

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Section 1

ORIENTATION TO VRCBVI

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to provide students and referring vocational rehabilitation counselors and rehabilitation teachers with an overview of the Orientation process at VRCBVI.

Expectations: Students entering VRCBVI will have knowledge of the Orientation process at VRCBVI.

1. Individuals who are accepted as students of VRCBVI will receive a welcome phone call from VRCBVI administration to establish entry date.
2. VRCBVI will email or mail a “Welcome Packet” within three days of notification of entry date. Packet will include:
 - a. Confirmation entry date letter
 - b. VRCBVI Student Handbook
 - c. List of what to bring
 - d. Releases and waivers for review and signature, if appropriate
 - e. Notification of assigned VRCBVI case manager
3. Pre-entry conference (Pre-con) call (within 2-weeks of entry date, when possible) with VRCBVI case manager, student, and referring VR counselor , RT and other appropriate field staff as needed, to review:
 - a. Role of case manager
 - b. Overview of typical training day and class schedule
 - c. What to bring
 - d. VRCBVI amenities
 - e. Evaluation process
 - f. Overview of teaching strategies
 - g. Student mentor
 - h. Any questions
4. New student orientation will occur during student’s first week of evaluation. During this orientation students will:
 - a. Tour the VRCBVI campus

- b. Understand the role of case manager and the training team. The training team includes the student, the referring vocational rehabilitation counselor/rehabilitation teacher, assigned VRCBVI instructors, the assigned case manager, and other appropriate field staff as needed.
 - c. Receive student schedule
 - d. Review VRCBVI Student Handbook
 - e. Meet the Center Director
 - f. Participate in Health Education Orientation provided by the Diabetes Educator and Case Manager.
 - g. Learn about evening and weekend activities (student planned and Center sponsored opportunities)
 - h. Understand the purpose and opportunities related to Independent Study Friday
 - i. Review the purpose of the individualized student training center plan
 - j. Gain an understanding of how progress is reviewed and reported
 - k. Have the opportunity for questions to be answered
5. Students are required to use their cane at all times, including nights and weekends, while a student at VRCBVI.

Participation in Orientation is mandatory.

Section 2

Programs and Services

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to provide students and referring vocational rehabilitation counselors and rehabilitation teachers with an overview of the services and programs offered at VRCBVI.

Expectations: Students entering VRCBVI will have knowledge of the available services and programs.

PROGRAMS

VRCBVI offers a core curriculum which is recommended for all full-time residential students. The student's training team will work with the student to determine training strategies, non-visual or visual, that will work best to meet the individual needs of the student.

Full time students take classes for 25 or more hours a week.
Part time students take classes for 24 or less hours per week.

PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT TRAINING (PAT)

Evaluation

The evaluation process is to determine how VRCBVI can best meet the needs of students. All students complete an evaluation which includes attending classes to determine their current skill level and ability in order to determine training needs which will be used to develop the student's Individualized Training Center Plan.

Core Curriculum

VRCBVI's core curriculum includes:

Braille – 1 hour per day. Braille is literacy to individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind. Learn how to label food items and appliances in the kitchen and take

notes and phone messages for employment, school, or personal use. Return to reading to your children or proofread your resume using UEB Braille. Learn to write Braille using a slate and stylus, which is equivalent to using pen and paper. Increase reading speed and fluency. Students who already know Contracted Braille will perfect their use of the tools to increase proficiency and accuracy in reading and writing. Students are taught to read and write Braille without use of residual vision.

Keyboarding – (Prerequisite for Computer classes) 1 hour per day. Learn to navigate all keys on the keyboard as a means of accessing data through touch typing. Students are expected to perform related tasks without relying on use of their residual vision.

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) – 2 hours per day. Learn to travel independently using a long rigid cane in familiar and unfamiliar areas, in residential and urban areas (including D.C.), using all modes of public transportation with ease and confidence, locating business addresses, shopping independently with and without a shopping assistant. Note: Students are required to use their cane at all times, including nights and weekends, while a student at VRCBVI.

Personal and Home Management (PHM) – 2 hours per day. Learn to live independently by learning to cook from scratch, clean and maintain a home, take care of laundry, banking, budgeting, shopping and other related skills needed to live independently.

Physical Conditioning – 1 hour per day. Improve physical fitness and overall wellness. Learn effective exercise routines that can be performed without the use of equipment. Obtain guidance and support in making healthy lifestyle changes. Gain the confidence to participate in a variety of physical activities.

Conversations About Blindness (CAB) – 1 hour per week. This class provides thought provoking

conversations about living with vision loss and becoming successfully employed. CAB discussions may be led by students.

Electives:

Adult Basic Education (ABE) – 1 hour per day. Academic classes to meet the individual needs of students may include academic refresher, GED preparation, advanced degree entrance test preparation, and English as a Second Language (ESL).

Access Technology (AT) – 1 hour per day. Students get hands-on experience and learn to use digital recorders, the Victor Stream Reader, the APH Refreshabril, and the Braille Edge. Receive training and understand your own device whether it is an iPhone, iPad, iPod, or Android phone or tablet.

Computer – 1 hour per day. Level the playing field by learning the technology you need to be successful at home, on the job or in college. Whether you use JAWS, Windows Eyes, Magic, or Zoom Text, you can gain the skills necessary to pursue your career goals. Get experience with any version of Windows whether it is Windows 7, Windows 8, or Windows 10. Learn how to use Microsoft Office to perform necessary tasks at home, on the job or at school or take the plunge and step into the Mac world.

Health Education – Students can elect to see the Diabetes Educator to learn tips for more effective management of their diabetes and other health related needs, both at VRCBVI and at home. Students must be independent with diabetes self-care and health management to attend VRCBVI as a residential student. VRCBVI does not provide direct medical care as an ongoing service.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Assisting students to become employed in competitive integrated work settings in the community is the foundation of training at VRCBVI. VRCBVI offers the following vocational services:

1. Job Club – Work with fellow job seekers and find out what it takes to succeed in the job market. Gain experience in resume writing, application completion, and interviewing. Learn from instructors, guest speakers, and each other. Come away with valuable skills and resources to help you find the job you want.
2. Vocational Evaluation – Learn about your strengths, abilities, aptitudes, and interests so you can make informed choices about what kind of employment best matches you.
3. Volunteer Work Experience – Work in a community based employment setting to put into practice the skills you have learned. VRCBVI makes an effort to find work experience that best matches your interests and abilities.

SERVICES

VRCBVI provides several services that facilitate students' full participation in programs.

Case Management

1. Students entering VRCBVI are assigned a case manager who will work with the student and the training team to assist the student to develop an Individualized Training Center Plan.
2. Upon completion of the student's evaluation at VRCBVI, an evaluation staffing will occur. The assigned case manager will work with the student and the training team to implement, monitor, and evaluate the individualized training plan, which will serve as a guide for the student to achieve agreed upon goals.
3. The case manager coordinates and facilitates evaluation staffings and six week progress reviews, which include the student's VRCBVI training team. The training team

will review student's progress and recommend new services or changes in services that might be needed.

4. While in training at VRCBVI the case manager is available to assist the student to:
 - a. Guide the process to independence, promoting personal responsibility, and preparing for employment
 - b. Work with the student to be the leader of their VRCBVI training team
 - c. Assist with finding and connecting with community resources, as needed
 - d. Understand the rehabilitation process
 - e. Adjust to and understand vision loss specific to the individual
 - f. Provide supportive counseling as needed
 - g. Problem solve any issue or concern the student may have while attending training at VRCBVI
 - h. Assist students in locating local medical or mental health providers if the student requires care while participating in training at VRCBVI
5. Before completion of student's program at VRCBVI, the training team meets with the student and other appropriate field staff as needed, to develop a plan for transitioning to employment and the student's home community.

Section 3

Campus Life

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to ensure that students participating in training programs at VRCBVI understand their residential options and responsibilities.

Expectations:

VRCBVI will provide full-time students with clean and safe living accommodations while in training.

Students residing on campus will be prepared to fulfill the responsibilities associated with living in the dorm or the independent living apartments.

DORMITORY LIVING

Living in the dormitory provides students with the opportunity to connect with their peers and put into practice the skills they have learned in the VRCBVI programs.

1. In order to reside in the dorm, students must be participating in training Monday through Friday from 8:15am to 5:00pm.
2. Students live in private rooms which are attached to a shared bathroom with one suitemate. Dorm staff conducts weekly inspections of each student's dorm room.
3. Suitemates are assigned by VRCBVI.
4. Residential students are expected to take care of personal and medical needs without assistance after initial training.
5. Exposure to this style of living supports the student's continued development of independence and skills for successful employment.

Independent Living Apartments

The Independent Living (IL) program is designed for students to incorporate newly acquired blindness skills into

managing their own apartment which is located on the VRCBVI campus.

1. Students residing in the Independent Living Apartments are required to participate in a full schedule of classes and maintain the apartment, which includes managing a budget, using O&M skills to shop independently, cooking all meals, cleaning and passing weekly dorm inspections.
2. Students who have lived successfully in the dorm may have the opportunity to reside in the Independent Living Apartments.
3. Space in the Independent Living Apartments is limited and a recommendation from VRCBVI's Personal Home Management Instructor and Case Manager is required for students to attain this privilege.

Residential Life and Responsibilities

1. During orientation, students will receive a keycard access badge/photo ID, which will allow them to enter the dorm building and their dorm room. Students are required to have their keycard access badge with them at all times.
2. Students will notify the dorm supervisor or front desk personnel immediately if they lose their keycard or get locked out of their room.
3. Students may bring small electronic and personal care items to include a portable TV, video games, computer, hair dryer, electric razor, etc. VRCBVI is not responsible for these items.
4. Use of extension cords is not permitted.
5. VRCBVI reserves the right to inspect items brought on campus for purpose of safety and security.
6. Rooms are fully furnished; students may not bring furniture or mattresses to VRCBVI.
7. Students will ensure that their rooms and bathrooms are clean, neat, and remain free of excess clutter.
8. VRCBVI will provide the initial stock of cleaning supplies.
9. The Personal Home Management Instructor is available to students for cleaning skills development as

needed. Rooms are routinely inspected by staff to ensure health and safety expectations are met.

10. Students may not use tacks, staples, or tape on the walls of their dorm rooms.
11. Students will report any damage to their rooms or bath area to the dorm staff immediately.
12. Students will be responsible for the repairs of any damage they cause to their room or bath area.
13. Students are required to do their own laundry. Laundry facilities are available to students at no charge and are open daily. Students are responsible for providing their own supplies. It is recommended that students remain in the laundry area to prevent loss of belongings.

Computers and Internet Access

1. Students who have achieved the approved level of computer skills and have reviewed and signed the Dorm Computer Usage Agreement form may have access to the VRCBVI dorm computers. Please talk with one of the VRCBVI computer instructors or your case manager for further details.
2. Students interested in accessing the internet from personal devices will review and sign the VRCBVI Internet User Agreement & Access Policy. An approved VRCBVI employee will enter the password into your device in order for you to gain internet access.

Quiet Time

Quiet Time is in effect on the VRCBVI campus Sunday through Thursday is from 10:00 pm to 7:00 am; Friday and Saturday, quiet time is from 12:00 am to 8:00 am.

Students may visit with each other in the dorm commons during quiet time and may not visit in each other's dorm rooms.

Leaving Campus/Dormitory

1. All students will sign in and out with the dorm supervisor on duty or AA building front desk personnel when departing from and upon returning to campus.
2. Students leaving the property overnight will give their keycard to the dorm supervisor or the AA building front desk personnel.
3. Students under the age of 18 shall not leave campus without written parental consent.

Visitors

Visitors are allowed Monday through Friday from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM; Saturday and Sunday from 12:00 pm to 10:00 pm. All outside visitors are required to check in at the dorm supervisor's office immediately upon entering campus.

Dining Services

Gracie's, the VRCBVI cafeteria, serves a variety of fresh, healthy foods every day.

1. Residential students with the VRCBVI photo ID receive breakfast, lunch and dinner from Gracie's. Commuter students receive breakfast and lunch.
2. Outside food, drinks or empty storage containers are not permitted. IL students may bring in food prepared in their apartment.
3. For those with special dietary needs, vegetarian meals may be requested in advance and sugar-free options are available.
4. Gracie's is a public eating-place for students, staff, and visitors.
5. Snack items are available for purchase between meals in the cafeteria for purchase during the week in the VRCBVI Café between the 10:00 am – 10:15 am and 3:00 pm – 3:15 pm break.

Gracie's Hours

Breakfast	Monday through Friday	7:30 am - 8:00 am
Weekend Breakfast	Saturday and Sunday	8:30 am – 9:30 am
Lunch	Monday through Friday	12:15 pm - 1:00 pm
Weekend Lunch	Saturday and Sunday	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Dinner	Monday through Friday	5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Weekend Dinner	Saturday and Sunday	5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

RECREATION BUILDING

Swimming Pool

Swimwear is appropriate to wear ONLY in the swimming pool area. Do not wear your swimwear outside of the swimming pool area or on the walkways without a cover up. When sunbathing, wear a cover up to and from the area. Locker rooms are available for students to change.

Fitness / Weight Room

1. T-shirts with sleeves are required. Wearing T-shirts with sleeves reduces the risk of skin or fungal infection to the next person using the equipment.
2. Students may not wear workout clothing that shows the midriff or has slits down the side.

3. Students must wear shorts, sweat pants, or other workout pants that are at least mid-thigh long. No short shorts allowed.

Gymnasium

In addition to typical gymnasium activities, meetings and other special events are held here. Food or drinks are not allowed in the gym.

Recreation Area

1. Students must dress appropriately for the activity in which they plan to participate, whether it is bowling, pool, goalball, or any other recreational activity. Midriffs must be covered, undergarments must not be showing, and pants must be at least mid-thigh long.
2. Students may play portable stereos/CD players on the back patio as long as the volume is reasonable and the content (profanity, distasteful language) does not offend or annoy other students, VRCBVI staff, or visitors.
3. Students must use headphones with CD/DVD players when inside the VRCBVI buildings.

Dog Guide

If student will be bringing a dog guide, notify VRCBVI staff during the pre-admission phone call. Students must follow certain guidelines:

- Student is responsible for expenses related to the health and care of the dog.
- The dog must be kept clean and free of fleas. If a problem arises, VRCBVI requires students to have the dog professionally groomed at your expense.
- Students must provide their dog with fresh water, adequate food, and regular relief times daily.
- Students must bring records indicating that their dog has current vaccinations for rabies, Parvo, and DHLP.

Students must keep their dog on a leash or harness any time it is out of their room. As a matter of courtesy, please travel at a slower pace while in congested hall areas of the building.

Dogs must be relieved in the specified relief area. The designated dog relief area is central to all four buildings of the VRCBVI campus. There is a triangle of grass which is bordered with sidewalk which is the designated dog relief area. The dog handler is responsible for collection and disposal of waste in the designated dog relief receptacle which is located outside the west door of the dorm.

Directions to the dog relief area from the:

Dorm – exit the west door continue west until you come to the first patch of grass to the north

AA building – exit the south door continue south until you come to the first patch of grass

Rec. building – exit the east door continue east until you come to the first patch of grass to the north

Gracie's cafeteria – exit the west door and turn right (north) and then take the first sidewalk going west and continue until you come to the first patch of grass on the west end

Cell Phones

1. Cell phones, PDA's, or other electronic equipment will be turned off or remain on vibrate during classes and meetings.
2. Individual instructors will determine whether cell phone use will be allowed on an as needed basis for the student to conduct business or participate in activities related to their training goals.
3. Students will be mindful of others when using cell phones in public areas. The expectation is that the student's call/voice volume is in a quiet, conversational tone so as not to be disruptive to others.

Tobacco Use

1. All VRCBVI buildings and building entrances and State vehicles are non-smoking and tobacco-product free.
2. Tobacco products will only be allowed in the Smoking Gazebo, located in the quad.

3. Tobacco products include and are not limited to the following: cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, and all vaping products.
4. Tobacco products must be disposed of in a sanitary manner by using the ashtrays in the Gazebo and appropriate trash receptacles.
5. Use of any tobacco product by students under the age of 18 is prohibited.

Mail Services

1. Students will be assigned a personal mailbox to receive mail.
2. Outgoing mail may be given to front desk personnel at the AA building to place in the outgoing mail basket.
3. United States Postal Service pick up time is 10:00 am.

Student Mailing Address: YOUR NAME, student
VRCBVI
401 Azalea Ave.
Richmond, VA 23227

Area Transportation

VRCBVI is located in Henrico County and closely borders the City of Richmond. During evenings, weekends, and on Independent Study Fridays, students are encouraged to visit area attractions, take advantage of local shopping, or conduct personal business. There are convenience, grocery, and drug stores and restaurants within walking distance of approximately three-fourths of a mile.

Area transportation services include:

1. Greater Richmond Transit Company:
www.ridegrtc.com (804) 358-4782
2. CARE Van: www.adaride.com (877) 232-7433
3. Amtrak www.amtrak.com (800) 872-7245
4. Greyhound www.greyhound.com (804) 254-5910
5. Taxi Services: There are several taxi services in the Richmond Area. Students frequently use the Napoleon Taxi Services (804) 354-8294
6. Smartphone Apps: UBER and N'Route

Section 4

Student Success

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to provide information to promote student's success in their training program at VRCBVI.

Expectations:

1. VRCBVI will provide a professional learning environment with many experiences and opportunities to assist students in reaching their goals.
2. Students will conduct themselves in a professional manner and optimize their time at VRCBVI in order to achieve their goals.

EMPLOYMENT LIFESTYLE - PERSONAL APPEARANCE

The dress code at VRCBVI is business casual, meaning slacks, skirts, blouses for women and slacks and collared shirts for men. Students are responsible for maintaining personal dress, grooming, and hygiene standards appropriate for daily interactions in work and community settings.

1. Students will be expected to show concern for their personal appearance by wearing clothing appropriate to the working conditions, in a professional training situation.
2. Students will be properly groomed meaning that their hair is clean and neat and their body clean. Clothing will be clean, free of stains and holes, and otherwise in good condition.
3. Students may wear tennis shoes, exercise clothing, and bathing suits for recreational activities.
4. Students should have one or two "dress up" outfits.
5. Students should have a warm coat, hat, gloves, boots, and scarves for cold weather and a rain coat for rainy weather.
6. Solid durable shoes for walking are required.
7. Students will not wear the following:
 - a. Clothing that allows personal body parts to be uncovered, such as pants that hang below the waist, shirts that expose the stomach, breast area,

- or undergarments, and shorts that expose private body areas.
- b. Hats, shirts or clothing with obscene, vulgar, or offensive language or pictures, or pictures or messages with gang, alcohol, or drug related images or paraphernalia.
 - c. Clothing that is inappropriate for the class room setting including sweat or athletic pants or shirts. Exercise clothing may only be worn during leisure hours or in the Physical Conditioning class.
8. Students may sunbathe on the Recreation Building patio. Please be mindful of your appearance, behaviors, and location for this activity.

Note: Students will be prepared for all weather conditions. Students in Orientation and Mobility will have class regardless of the weather, with the exception of severe weather such as lightning or tornados.

EMPLOYMENT LIFESTYLE – PERSONAL INTERACTIONS

1. Students, staff, and visitors will treat others with dignity and respect.
2. Discrimination, threatening, or making negative comments to another person based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or disability will not be tolerated.
3. Please remember that VRCBVI has families, visitors, and others on the campus every day. Our behaviors should reflect respect for self and others.

Tolerance, Diversity and Settling Differences

VRCBVI serves people from different geographic areas, different cultural and religious backgrounds, and with different disabilities in addition to blindness. Therefore, students will have contact with people whose likes, dislikes, and values may be different from their own.

If another person's conversation or behavior is offensive to you, and you are unable to resolve it in a manner that is satisfactory to all involved, you should bring your concern to the attention of

your Case Manager, VRCBVI Administration, or the Dorm Supervisor on duty to discuss options to help resolve the issue.

Medical Needs

1. All VRCBVI students are required to manage their medical conditions or illnesses independently.
2. Students are required to make their own arrangements to secure medical care if they become ill while participating in VRCBVI programs, including non-scheduled or urgent medical situations, arranging pharmacy trips for medication and all other associated errands. The case manager can be used as a resource to identify local medical providers and transportation resources.
3. Emergency medical situations and training related injuries which may require staff assistance will be addressed with a case manager and/or an administrator, and will be handled on an individualized case-by-case basis. Examples of situations that may require staff assistance and administrative approval include, but are not limited to, emergency medical situations, training-related injuries or illnesses, and any medical situation or condition on which the student requests advice, consultation, or assistance with transportation.

Medical Restrictions

1. Students who have been diagnosed with contagious medical conditions will be required to return to their home community.
2. Students who have to return home due to medical conditions will notify their case manager and make arrangements to return home immediately. The case manager will notify the training team.
3. Students who have documented medical restrictions will be excused from class.
4. If a student needs to be placed on light duty or bed rest due to a medical condition, it is the student's responsibility to obtain the needed documentation from their healthcare provider and inform their instructors and case manager.

5. Students will be responsible for arranging with cafeteria staff to obtain their own meals when medical issues prevent them from being present in the cafeteria during scheduled meals.
6. Students who fail to comply with written medical direction could be terminated from their training program.
7. Students must provide written documentation from their treating physician releasing the student to participate in VRCBVI programs following illness or other medical restriction.

Mental Health Supports

A student requiring mental health or psychological services shall contact his or her case manager, who will work with the student and his or her VR counselor or rehabilitation teacher to facilitate counseling by a local community provider.

ATTENDANCE

Maintaining good attendance is mandatory for students participating in VRCBVI training. Attendance and progress are tracked and reported on a regular basis to the student's referring vocational rehabilitation counselor or rehabilitation teacher.

1. Students are involved in class or training Monday through Friday from 8:15 am through 5:00 pm.
 - a. Full time students who commute participate in classes or training at least 25 training hours a week.
 - b. Part-time students who commute participate in classes or training 24 hours or less a week.
 - c. All students who have 8:15 classes will participate in Morning Announcements at 8:15 am in the Student Commons in the AA Building.
2. Students will attend classes as scheduled.
 - a. Individual class absences must be approved by the student's instructor and case manager.
 - b. Students will notify the front desk and the case manager when they are unable to attend class due to illness. VRCBVI administration may require that the student provide medical documentation from a treating physician when the student misses class due to illness.
 - c. Students must clear non-medical absences with their case manager and then notify each of their instructors.

- d. Students who have multiple absences will meet with their case manager, instructors, and VRCBVI administration to determine whether the student will be allowed to continue in their training at VRCBVI.
3. Students who cannot participate in class due to illness:
 - a. Are prohibited from participating in VRCBVI sponsored physical or recreational activities on or off campus, including the use of the recreation building.

Tardiness

1. Students will be on time for morning announcements and classes.
2. Students who are tardy to morning announcements must contact the front desk, their instructor, and their case manager before class begins.
3. Students who are tardy to class must notify their instructor to explain why they are tardy.
4. Students who have multiple tardies will meet with their case manager, instructors, and VRCBVI administration to determine whether the student will be allowed to continue in their training at VRCBVI.

Section 5

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Purpose: The purpose of this section is to ensure that students participating in training programs at VRCBVI have a safe, secure, and enjoyable experience.

Expectation:

1. VRCBVI will provide students participating in training programs at the Center with a safe and secure environment.
2. Students participating in training programs at VRCBVI will become familiar with and abide by VRCBVI safety and security guidelines (policies).

IDENTIFICATION

1. Students and staff associated with training, programs, and activities at VRCBVI will be provided with easy to recognize photo identification key cards and lanyards.
2. Students and staff will wear their photo ID keycard at all times while on campus participating in VRCBVI training, programs, and activities. For ease of identification AND safety, students are requested to wear their IDs on a lanyard around the neck.
3. In the event of a lost photo ID, the student must notify the front desk or the dorm supervisor, so the keycard can be deactivated and a replacement ID keycard assigned to the student. Replacement lanyards are available at the AA building front desk or in the Dorm Supervisor's office.
4. Students and staff will not wear face masks, full face paint, or any other disguise that prevents visual identification of the wearer. Sleep shades used for the purpose of training are not considered masks.

LEAVING CAMPUS

1. Students residing on the VRCBVI campus are required to sign out when leaving the campus and sign in upon return.

2. Students in the VRCBVI Adult Program are required to sign on and off campus 24 hours a day. Between 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM students are to sign on/off campus at the front desk of the AA building. Between 5:00 PM and 8:00 AM and on weekends sign on/off campus with the Dorm Supervisors.
3. Students departing from VRCBVI overnight are required to turn in their VRCBVI photo ID keycard at the AA building front desk or the Dorm Supervisor's Office prior to leaving campus.

OFF CAMPUS GUESTS

1. Students are welcome to have off campus guests while the student is attending training at VRCBVI.
2. Guests are welcome on campus to see students when students are not in class.
3. Off campus guests are required to sign in and out at the Dorm Supervisor's Office where they will be provided with a Visitors Badge.
4. Off campus guests are required to wear the Visitors Badge while on the VRCBVI and DBVI Azalea Campus.
5. Immediate family members may visit students in their dorm rooms; other guests may visit with students in common areas in the dorm and the AA building.
6. Guests may enjoy a meal in the cafeteria and are required to pay for their meals prior to being served.
7. Guests are required to sign out and leave the VRCBVI campus by 10:00 pm.
8. Individuals who have not signed in with the Dorm Supervisor may be directed to leave the VRCBVI campus.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

1. VRCBVI assumes no responsibility for personal items belonging to students whether in their dorm rooms or elsewhere on the VRCBVI campus. Students are reminded to keep personal belongings locked in their rooms.
2. Students are strongly advised to leave valuables at home.
3. Students are encouraged to refrain from borrowing money or personal items from other students.

CAMPUS SECURITY

The safety of students and the security of the campus community are of vital concern to the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

In an effort to maintain a safe and secure environment, DBVI employs security officers who are on campus 24 hours per day.

1. Security measures on the VRCBVI campus include use and monitoring of video cameras that are strategically placed around the campus. Video cameras are not placed in private areas such as bathrooms, dorm rooms, or locker rooms.
2. Students are encouraged to keep their dorm room doors closed and locked when they are not in their rooms.
3. Students are not to allow unidentified individuals into their rooms at any time for any reason.
4. Students **are not** allowed to have the following prohibited items in their dorm rooms or on campus at any time for any reason:
 - i. firearms, (real or look-alike),
 - ii. ammunition (live or spent),
 - iii. dangerous weapons, or any item that can be used as a weapon,
 - iv. knives,
 - v. explosives or fireworks,
 - vi. handcuffs or other restraining devices,
 - vii. candles, incense, or flammable fuels,
 - viii. pornographic materials shared or displayed in plain sight,
 - ix. gang or drug paraphernalia,
 - x. alcohol,
 - xi. unauthorized prescription drugs,
 - xii. look-alike drugs and/or illegal drugs
5. Students who choose to be in possession of prohibited items are subject to all county, state, and federal laws and regulations which include interaction with law enforcement as needed. Possession of prohibited items may result in termination of training at VRCBVI.

CULTURE OF SAFE AND SECURE CAMPUS LIFE

VRCBVI supports a safe and secure culture for students and staff that is free from discrimination, harassment, sexual or other assault or abuse, or other criminal activity.

1. Instances of criminal activity, including harassment, sexual or other assault or abuse, will not be tolerated by the VRCBVI administration. Any such instance will be reported to the Henrico County or State Police as required by any local, state, or federal law or statute.
2. Students who choose to participate in illegal activity will be removed from the VRCBVI campus and their training at the center will be terminated.
3. Students who have knowledge of or who experience incidences of harassment, sexual or other types of assault or other criminal activity are highly encouraged to alert VRCBVI administration and the Henrico County Police of such information.
4. Student's personal information will be protected within the confines of local, state, and federal law and regulations.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN AND DRILLS

1. VRCBVI conducts emergency and fire drills on a routine basis and students will be provided with information about how to respond during their orientation to the center. Flashing lights are mounted within dorm rooms where deaf and hard of hearing students are residing.
2. Students and staff are required to proceed directly to secure areas when emergency or fire drills occur.
3. Fire exits and maps are posted in each VRCBVI building to facilitate safe exit of facilities.
4. Students and staff will remain in the secure area until informed by VRCBVI administration that is safe to return to the VRCBVI facilities.

Fire

1. Whenever the fire alarm sounds, students are to evacuate the building immediately through the nearest available exit and gather at the building's designated staging area.

2. Students exiting the AA building should gather at the sidewalk north of the AA Building leading out toward Azalea Avenue, across from the DBVI Headquarters Building.
3. When fire drills are held during the day, staff is available to assist students in getting to the proper location.
4. In the evenings and during the night, dorm staff is available to assist residents.
5. From the Dormitory, students should exit through one of the four (4) exits found in the dorm and congregate in the LRC parking lot to the south of the dorm.
6. Students must not wait for someone to come to escort them out of the building. Although staff is available to assist, students are required to exit the buildings as independently and expeditiously as possible. Orientation and Mobility staff will work with students at the beginning of their training to identify exit locations as well as meeting points for evacuations from the buildings on the VRCBVI's campus.

Tornado

1. During a tornado warning or drill, an air horn will sound.
2. Students and staff will gather in the building's designated safe area.
 - a. In the AA Building, students and staff will take shelter in the basement; the stairs to the basement are located in the Northwest corner of the building, or in the men's and ladies' bathrooms in the VRCBVI's North Central hallway.
 - b. Students in the Dormitory will take shelter in their bathrooms or in the public bathrooms across from the dormitory supervisor's office.
 - c. Students and staff in the Cafeteria will take shelter in the Cafeteria bathrooms.
 - d. Students and staff in the Recreation Building will report to the women's bathroom for the duration of the storm or drill, as this is the most central part of the building.

SECTION 6

Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Informed Choice

Purpose: This chapter provides identification of and guidance pertaining to student rights identified through the Rehabilitation Act as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act of 2014, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Regulatory Code of Virginia.

Expectation: Students will develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities to participate in and make informed choices about the training in which they are participating and services they receive at VRCBVI.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students participating in training programs at VRCBVI have the following responsibilities:

1. To participate actively in the training program by being on time, attending class, and participating in required training activities.
2. To cooperate with VRCBVI staff, the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, and the Rehabilitation Teacher in the student's home region.
3. To be compliant with VRCBVI and DBVI policies.
4. To respect the rights and privacy of others.
5. To talk with the case manager about any changes in the student's program.
6. To tell the case manager or instructor when the student has an appointment that will prevent them from attending class.
7. To make informed choices about the vocational rehabilitation services they receive at VRCBVI.

STUDENT RIGHTS - General

Students participating in training programs at VRCBVI have the following rights:

1. To be treated with dignity, respect, and consideration.
2. To be fully informed, by their vocational rehabilitation counselor, rehabilitation teacher, and staff of VRCBVI,

about their rights to request a review of decisions made by the agency while they are participating in training at VRCBVI.

3. To participate in all aspects of planning for and development of the student's training at VRCBVI.
4. To be fully involved with and informed about services, changes, or decisions made regarding their training programs at VRCBVI.
5. To be provided the opportunity to ask questions or make comments, suggestions and complaints as needed.
6. To talk with staff about their training program weekly at a minimum.

Student Rights regarding relationships with VRCBVI/DBVI Staff

VRCBVI staff members and students collaborate to promote positive and successful participation in training.

Rules about student and staff relationships include:

1. Staff and students will treat each other with dignity, respect, and courtesy.
2. Staff and students will not ask each other to perform or give personal favors.
3. Staff and students will not borrow from or loan money to each other.
4. Staff and students will not have personal intimate relationships with each other.

Student Rights regarding Confidentiality

Students participating in training at VRCBVI have the right to have all of their personally identifying information remain confidential.

1. Personal information that identifies a student shall not be disclosed to, exchanged with, or requested from another person or entity unless the student (or the student's representative, as appropriate) gives informed written consent or unless federal or state law

or regulations permit or require release without consent.

2. Personal information is defined as all information that describes, locates, or indexes anything about the student who is applying for or receiving VR services, including real or personal property holdings derived from tax returns, education records, financial transactions, medical records, ancestry, criminal record, employment record, or that affords a basis for inferring personal characteristics, such as finger and voice prints, photographs, or things done by or to such individual: and the record of the individual presence, registration, or membership in an organization or activity, or admission to an institution. Formats for personal information may include, but are not limited to, written records, photographs, audiotapes, videotapes, electronic data, or other media reproductions.
3. Students will not be denied access to any program or activity if they do not wish to sign a release of information for VRCBVI to use their photograph or to be in audiotapes, videotapes, electronic, data, or other media reproductions such as Facebook postings.
4. If VRCBVI staff wishes to share personal information regarding a student with other individuals, the staff member must explain the purpose for sharing the information and must obtain a written release of information from the student.
5. A release of information is not required for VRCBVI staff to communicate about a student with other DBVI staff who are working with the student or who are trying to assist the student to resolve concerns.
6. Personal health information about a student may be released when the student has an emergency, including health emergency that require immediate medical attention or law enforcement involvement.
7. Personal information shall be released to Adult or Child Protective Services if VRCBVI staff has reason to suspect instances of abuse and neglect or if required to do so through federal or state regulations.

8. Other detailed information regarding a student's rights pertaining to confidentiality and use of personal information can be located in the DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Manual Chapter regarding Consumer Rights and Informed Choice.

Student Rights regarding Informed Choice

Students have the right to make informed choices about their training programs at VRCBVI. Informed choice means that the student and as appropriate, their representative, work with their vocational rehabilitation counselor and VRCBVI staff to make decisions about the services they receive. The vocational rehabilitation counselor and the VRCBVI staff provide the student with guidance and counseling to assist the student to make choices about their vocational goal and vocational rehabilitation services that include evaluation, assessments, or training they receive while at VRCBVI.

Informed choices made by the student do not obligate VRCBVI or DBVI to buy specific vocational rehabilitation services, engage specific service providers, or pay costs above what is allowed by DBVI policy.

Individuals who feel they have not been given the opportunity to informed choice, regardless of the reason, must be informed of the right to appeal the decision. The student's vocational rehabilitation counselor and the VRCBVI staff must provide the student with information about the Client Assistance Program.

Student Civil Rights

Students participating in training at VRCBVI have certain civil rights guaranteed by law. Among these rights are the rights to receive services on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, sex, national origin, age, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or disabling condition; confidentiality of personal information, access (with certain exceptions) to case folders; and access to the Client Assistance Program administered in Virginia by the disABILITY Law Center of Virginia. The legal basis for these civil rights are the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as

amended, the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and their implementing regulations.

Student rights to request a review of decisions made by VRCBVI

Students may request a review of decisions if they do not agree with a decision made about services they have asked for and did not get, about a VRCBVI handling of their issues or concerns, or about any other decision made for which a student may not agree. While a decision is being reviewed, the original VRCBVI decision will stand.

Informal Resolution

Informal Resolution between the student and the VRCBVI staff member

1. The VRCBVI Staff member will make every effort to resolve disputes with the student based on relevant DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Policies and Procedures, federal regulations and law, and the applicable Code of Ethics. VRCBVI staff must document all concerns of the individual and subsequent actions taken to address those concerns in the individual's case file.

Informal Resolution between the Student and the Supervisor

1. When issues or concerns of the student cannot be resolved between the student and the VRCBVI staff member within ten full working days the individual may request in writing, by e-mail, by phone call, or in person, within that same ten days, to speak with the VRCBVI staff member's supervisor.
2. The supervisor shall meet with the student in a timely manner not to exceed 5 working days of receipt of the Student's request.
3. The supervisor shall document all concerns of the student and subsequent actions taken to address those concerns in the individual's case file and in the

form of a letter or memorandum to the student in the student's preferred format; no exceptions.

Informal Administrative Review or IAR

1. When issues or concerns of students cannot be resolved between the student and the supervisor, the student may request an IAR in writing, by e-mail, by phone call, or in person to speak with the Director of VRCBVI or the Deputy Commissioner for Services.
2. The Director of VRCBVI or Deputy Commissioner for Services shall meet, by phone or in person, with the individual in a timely manner not to exceed five working days of receipt of the student's request for IAR.
3. The Director of VRCBVI or Deputy Commissioner for Services shall prepare and submit to the student by e-mail, hard copy, or scanned copy, a written report of the IAR within three working days of meeting with the individual.
4. The IAR will contain documentation of review of the student's case file, discussions with relevant VRCBVI and DBVI staff and the student who has requested the IAR, and the rationale of the decision made during the IAR including identification of relevant laws, regulations, and DBVI Policy.
5. The Director of VRCBVI or Deputy Commissioner shall ensure that the report of the IAR is added to the individual's case file.
6. In circumstances when the student's concerns are associated with the Director of VRCBVI or Deputy Commissioner for Services the IAR will be conducted by the DBVI Commissioner.

Mediation

Students participating in training at VRCBVI may proceed directly to mediation rather than participate in the VRCBVI informal dispute resolution process VRCBVI has implemented. Details regarding the mediation process may be located in the DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Policy and Procedures Manual

pertaining to Consumer Rights and Informed Choice located on the DBVI website, vdbvi.org.

Impartial Due Process Hearing

1. Students participating in training may request a review of determinations made by VR CBVI by requesting Impartial Due Process Hearing whereby an impartial hearing officer shall be randomly selected and an impartial due process hearing conducted within 60 days from the individual's request unless an informal resolution or a mediation agreement is achieved prior to the 60th day or the parties agree to a specific extension of time.
2. Details regarding the Impartial Due Process Hearing may be located in the DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Policy and Procedures Manual pertaining to Consumer Rights and Informed Choice.

Section 7

Quick Reference Guide

VRCBVI Facilities

The VRCBVI campus is within the DBVI complex on Azalea Avenue and consists of the Activities and Administration (“AA”) Building, Dormitory, Cafeteria, and Recreation Building. Agency Headquarters, and the Library and Resource Center (“LRC”) are also located on our beautiful DBVI complex.

VRCBVI PHONE DIRECTORY

RECEPTION DESK.....(804)371-3151
3092
DORMITORY.....(804)371-3226

FAX LINE.....(804)371-

Inside the building dial 1 + last 4 digits of phone number

VRCBVI STAFF

CHITTUM, Greg.....371-3204
DAVIS, Michelle.....371-3406
Dorm Office.....371-3226
FISH, Michael.....371-3327
FOLEY, Kris.....371-3325
HANSE, Buffa.....371-3372
HARNER, Jeff.....371-3320
Keyboarding.....371-3329
JORDAN, Marshall.....371-3326
KELLER, Becky.....371-3093
LADD, Kim.....371-3977
MORGAN, Sarah.....371-3606
PHELPS, Amy.....371-3052
VACANT Voc. Eval....371-3204
PRICE, Linda.....371-3079
INSTR. KITCHEN.....887-7321
RAGLAND, Irma.....371-3937

ROANE, Melody.....371-3323
ROGERS, Brooke.....371-3338
SKORACKYJ, Olga....371-3324
TAYLOR, Lorraine.....371-3696
TRIPLETT, Michael....371-3405
COMM. KITCHEN.....371-3960
VILLAFANE, Michael..371-3994
WIGGINS, Joanne.....371-3993

VRCBVI CAFÉ.....371-3450
Gracie's Cafeteria.....371-3385

DORM/SECURITY.....887-7346

VIRGINIA VOICE.....266-2477

DBVI REGIONAL OFFICES	FAX
Bristol.....(276)642-7300.....	642-7317
Fairfax.....(703)359-1100.....	359-1111
Norfolk.....(757)466-4162.....	455-0142
Richmond....(804)371-3353.....	371-3174
Roanoke.....(540)561-7475.....	561-7431
Staunton.....(540)332-7729.....	332-7733

Telephones are not provided in dorm rooms or independent living apartments. Students are encouraged to bring a cell phone for their own personal use, if possible. There are telephones available for student use at the Security Desk in the dorm, as well as in the south hallway of the dorm.

Thank you for your attention to the information outlined in the Student Handbook. We hope your training at VRCBVI will exceed your expectations and will provide you with the skills needed to reach your goals.