



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## *Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired*

397 Azalea Avenue  
Richmond, Virginia 23227-3600

Raymond E. Hopkins  
Commissioner

September 21, 2017

Dear DBVI Stakeholders and Community Partners,

The Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired has been fortunate in recent years to have adequate human and financial resources to serve all Virginians who are blind, Deafblind, and vision impaired seeking services from the Department to assist them to acquire the skills and tools necessary to attain or retain employment. Through the efforts of our staff and partners such as you, we have successfully served more individuals than ever; helping them to achieve their goals of competitive integrated employment at ever increasing rates.

We have determined that DBVI presently lacks the resources to assure that it can provide vocational rehabilitation services to all who might be eligible for services. Federal law directs that under such circumstances, vocational rehabilitation agencies should prioritize services to individuals in accordance with an Order of Selection for Services policy. DBVI has provided vocational rehabilitation services under an Order of Selection policy for many years with the good fortune of having all disability priority categories open with a few exceptions. Present circumstances necessitate that we close the three disability priority categories on October 1, 2017, with the beginning of a new grant year.

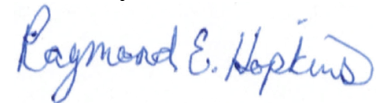
Personnel in the DBVI Vocational Rehabilitation Program will continue to take applications for services and determine eligibility as usual. Once an individual has been determined eligible for VR services, their case will be placed in a delayed services status (a wait list). As it is concluded that resources are available to serve more eligible individuals, cases will be moved from the wait list into an active status. This process will allow the program's management to control the flow of cases into active statuses based on the availability of funds.

Please understand that this action does not alter services to persons with active VR cases as of September 30, 2017. You are encouraged to continue to refer potential applicants to our VR program. Applications will be processed and eligibility determined in all cases. Individuals whose cases are placed in a delayed service status will be offered information about and referral to other programs and services offered by this Department, community rehabilitation programs and other agencies. Certain services will continue to be available to persons with vision disabilities who require vocational rehabilitation services to retain employment and students who are potentially eligible for pre-employment transition services.

There are multiple factors that cause us to take these actions at this time. We cannot predict how long we will need to operate with priority categories closed. With your support and the cooperation of our staff, we are convinced this process will be managed with minimal negative impact on our clientele.

I thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Raymond E. Hopkins". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and a distinct 'H'.

Raymond E. Hopkins, Commissioner