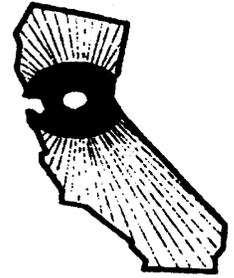


Judy Wilkinson, President

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND



CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND
EXECUTIVE OFFICE
2143 Hurley Way, Suite #250
Sacramento, CA 95825

916 441-2100 1-800-221-6359 FAX 916-441-2188

Resolution 2019-1 DOR Financial Participation Requirements

Whereas, the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is proposing to implement consumer financial participation requirements on the cost of postsecondary services, including tuition; and

Whereas, it is our understanding that this financial participation fee would be levied in accordance with a sliding scale on the earned income of individuals and families that exceeds approximately \$62,000 or 300% of the federal poverty level; and

Whereas, the department has not indicated under what means testing methodology it has determined that \$62,000 represents 300% of the federal poverty level for a family of one or two persons; and

Whereas, this requirement is being imposed in an effort to create savings necessary to ensure that reductions in consumer services do not occur, although the estimated savings from this proposal would amount to less than one half of 1% of the department's budget; and

Whereas, the department has elected to implement this requirement, while simultaneously expending a substantial amount of funds to increase the number of managerial positions in each of its 14 districts; and

Whereas, implementation of this requirement eviscerates a tradition of more than a century of not imposing upon students and their family's financial requirements upon postsecondary tuition; and

Whereas, the implementation of this requirement would penalize those who elected to work while in school and thus are promoting the very value that DOR services are intended to guarantee, that of becoming self-sufficient, independent persons through employment; and

Whereas, implementation of this highly intrusive policy would require spouses, parents, and working students to provide their tax returns and divulge other private financial information; and

Whereas, this blatant invasion of privacy would likely have a chilling effect on immigrants and people in minority communities, resulting in the parents of potential consumers and the potential consumers themselves deciding not to apply for rehabilitation services for which they are eligible and truly need; and

Whereas, the department has offered no research findings concerning the extent to which this chilling effect would occur; and

Whereas, without providing any evidence for this assertion, the department estimates that only 6% of clients will be impacted, but it is very possible that, given the high cost of living in major population areas of California, this estimate may prove to be woefully low; and

Whereas, the department has made no mention of a monitoring protocol for determining the correctness of this estimate; and

Whereas, the department has not indicated the scope, if any, of discretionary hardship exceptions; and

Whereas, the imposition of this requirement could signal the beginning of more severe financial participation requirements whenever the department finds the need to obtain additional funds, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, by the California Council of the Blind, in convention assembled this 8th day of June, 2019 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Fresno Convention Center in the city of Fresno, California that this organization strongly oppose the department's misguided efforts to impose the above described financial participation requirements; and be it further

Resolved, that this opposition include advocacy with the Legislature and the Governor, as well as potential litigation.