



STATE OF DELAWARE
STATE COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

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Ms. Bonnie Hitch
Delaware Transit Corporation
900 Public Safety Boulevard
Dover, DE 19901

RE: DART Reduced Fare Program Application

Dear Ms. ^{Bonnie} Hitch:

The State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) has reviewed the December 10, 2010 version of the DART Reduced Fare Program Application. SCPD has the following observations and recommendations. Parenthetically, this analysis is compiled without the benefit of background information on the program. For example, there could be federal grant or funding guidance which affects program eligibility which has not been shared.

1. Consistent with information shared by the Division of Visually Impaired (DVI), DART "could adopt the following criteria for "Sight Disability": "Vision in the better eye after correction is 20/70 or less; or visual field is contracted (commonly known as tunnel vision) to 10 degrees or less from a point of fixation or so the widest diameter subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees." DVI notes that this standard would cover all individuals eligible for DVI services who would be ineligible for a driver's license. However, the above standard may be unduly narrow. For example, if someone has a visual condition (Nyctanopia) that makes night driving dangerous, that person should logically be a good candidate for this program. Moreover, there may be visual conditions that make driving dangerous apart from deficits in acuity or field of vision. For example, someone may be able to focus accurately for short periods and then lose that ability through eye musculature "fatigue" or involuntary spasmodic tic. Another person may lack depth perception. I therefore recommend the following, which is partially based on the attached DVI Webpage:

Sight Disability: 1) total or legal blindness (20/200 in better eye with correction, or a field restriction of 20 degrees or less); OR 2) partial sight (20/70 to 20/200 in better eye with correction); OR 3) significant visual perception or processing abnormality (specify: _____).

2. The term "mental retardation" is pejorative and no longer "politically correct". SCPD recommends substituting "intellectual disability" with no further definition. If DART wishes to add some criteria, consider the following:

Intellectual Disability - significant impairment of both cognitive functioning and multiple adaptive capacities

3. The definition of "mental illness", which refers to an "affliction" and need for care for the

“welfare of the community”, is highly objectionable. SCPD recommends substituting “mental illness” with no further definition. If DART wishes to add some criteria, consider the following:

Mental Illness - psychiatric disorder that results in disruption of a person’s thinking, feeling, mood, or ability to relate to others

4. The “other” category in Section 5 is too narrow since it is limited to “mobility” impairments. There are neurological, sensorimotor, memory, strength, and postural abnormalities that could affect driving. SCPD recommends deleting “that impairs mobility”.

5. The definition of “non-ambulatory disabled” is grammatically infirm and unintelligible. It also omits persons who use a scooter rather than a wheelchair, does not adopt “people-first” language, and contains an odd “public transportation is a reasonable expectation” standard. Consider the following substitute:

Non-ambulatory Rider [uses manual or electronic wheelchair or scooter due to inability to walk or travel without use of such a seated mobility device]

6. For similar reasons consider the following substitute for “semi-ambulatory disabled”:

Semi-ambulatory Rider [uses mobility assistive device (e.g. walker; crutch; cane; brace; artificial limb) due to inability to independently walk any significant distance without use of such device]

7. Consider the following substitute for “ambulatory disabled”:

Ambulatory Rider [use of personal transportation difficult or unsafe due to disability-related impairment but not reliant on mobility device]

8. Given the prevalence of traumatic brain injury (TBI), especially among veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, SCPD recommends inserting a “check-off” section for “traumatic brain injury”.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact SCPD if you have any questions or comments regarding our observations or recommendations on the DART Reduced Fare Program Application.

Sincerely,


Daniese McMullin-Powell, Chairperson
State Council for Persons with Disabilities

cc: Mr. Stephen Kingsberry
Mr. Bob Goodhart
Mr. Lloyd Schmitz
Mr. Brian Hartman, Esq.
Developmental Disabilities Council
Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens

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- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Volunteer Services

INFORMATION

Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility for services is established by an individual's visual acuity as determined by their eye doctor.

Totally Blind: No light perception.

Legally Blind: 20/200 in the better eye with correction, or a field restriction of 20 degrees or less.

Severely Visually Impaired / Partially Sighted: 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye with correction.

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Last Updated: Friday February 04 2011

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