

## **HEARING AIDS**

### **I. Purpose**

To assist the VR counselor in providing quality services to eligible individuals who have a hearing impairment that is a substantial impediment to employment.

### **II. Eligibility**

The individual must meet VR eligibility requirements and be ready to obtain or maintain employment.

The services must be reasonable and necessary in order to obtain or maintain the employment outcome.

The VR counselor will assess if the hearing impairment constitutes a substantial impediment to employment based on the audiology report:

- Level of functioning
- Speech reception
- Speech discrimination
- Environmental factors of the work site as it relates to individual hearing loss that would contribute to functional limitations of the hearing loss such as ambient noise, phone use, etc.

The audiology exam must be completed by a licensed audiologist within the last year. The information from the licensed audiologist should list the type of hearing loss the individual experiences. If the audiologist determines the individual requires additional assessment, the individual will be referred to an Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) Specialist in order to rule out a more serious condition or to consider other possible solutions.

### **III. Purchasing Hearing Aids**

VR will assist the individual with purchasing the hearing aids prescribed by an audiologist. The client financial participation will be applied to the cost of the hearing aids. Only essential aids will be covered by VR, and VR will only purchase one aid or set of aids during the life of the VR case.

The counselor must receive approval from the regional administrator or State office (in the absence of the regional administrator) for any exceptions to this policy. Any exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis.