VR-SFP Chapter 5: Orientation and Mobility Services

Revised July 1, 2023

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# 5.4 Orientation and Mobility Training

## 5.4.1 Orientation and Mobility Training Service Description

O&M training prepares an individual who is blind or visually impaired to travel independently with competence and confidence.

Based on the results of the evaluation, the VR counselor or OIB worker determines the training goal and hours to be funded by VR or OIB. No training is provided before a service authorization is issued. Training is provided in person and cannot be conducted remotely.

All O&M training services for VR customers are conducted using:

* nonvisual (blindfold) techniques; and
* a rigid (non-folding) white cane with a metal tip.

All O&M training services for OIB customers are conducted using:

* either nonvisual (blindfold) or visual training, whichever better addresses the customer's needs and circumstances; and
* a rigid (non-folding) white cane with a metal tip, unless an alternate cane is needed.

Any request to change a Service Definition, Process and Procedure, or Outcomes Required for Payment must be documented and approved by the VR director, using the [VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request for Blind and Visually Impaired Services](https://www.twc.texas.gov/vocational-rehabilitation-service-forms), before the change is implemented. The approved VR3472 must be maintained in the provider’s customer case file.

The O&M specialist must discuss the benefits of nonvisual and visual training with each customer. Role modeling and peer support for nonvisual training are encouraged.

The O&M specialist cannot conduct more than six hours or fewer than two hours of O&M instruction per day. The O&M specialist cannot conduct more than six hours of training in a day, even if multiple customers are served during that day. Billing for O&M services must not exceed six hours per day. Lessons are at least two hours long unless approved by an obtained VR3472, Contracted Service Modification Request.

For Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILS-OIB) customers, the length of the training lesson will be determined by the customer’s health, stamina, and ability to participate.

## 5.4.2 Process and Procedure

### 5.4.2.1 General

The VR counselor or OIB worker is responsible for authorizing O&M training for the customer and approving services, including approving the documentation for payment when invoiced.

The provider must not bill for any services other than Orientation and Mobility training, or Orientation and Mobility group training.

Based on the results of the assessment, the VR counselor or OIB worker determines the training goals and hours to be funded by VR or OIB. No training is provided before a service authorization is issued.

O&M training must not exceed the total number of training hours and type of training authorized by the customer's VR counselor or OIB worker on the service authorization.

Consistent and frequent scheduling is recommended to maximize learning. One two-hour lesson a week is the minimum training allowable. Daily O&M training is considered best practice.

**Note:** For OIB customers, if less than 2 hours of training were provided in one session, the trainer must document on the VR2896 in the Brief Description of how the training lesson affected the customer’s health, stamina, and ability to participate.

Time spent transporting customers does not count toward training time. O&M specialists are not reimbursed for time spent in the car, even when a customer is present.

The O&M specialist must notify the customer's VR counselor or OIB worker within 24 hours about all:

* missed, cancelled, or rescheduled appointments;
* issues, concerns, or circumstances that might impact or delay planned services; and
* incidents or injuries that occur during training that might negatively impact the customer's health and safety.

If services are interrupted and training cannot be completed as planned, or if services are postponed indefinitely because of unexpected circumstances, the O&M provider must notify the customer's VR counselor or OIB worker within 24 hours.

The O&M specialist must submit required forms and complete the required training under the specifications of the referral and the service authorization.

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# 5.5 Orientation and Mobility Services Fee Schedule

| **O&M Services** | **Unit Rate** | **Comment** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| O&M Assessment | $75.00 per hour | Limited to three hours per customer |
| O&M Training–Individualized | $75.00 per hour | * Training sessions must last at least two hours
* No more than six hours of training allowed per day

Note: For OIB customers, the length of the training lesson will be determined by the customer’s health, stamina, and ability to participate  |
| O&M Training–Group | * $75.00 per hour for the first customer
* $37.50 per hour for each additional customer
 | * Limit of three customers per group
* Training sessions must last at least two hours
* No more than six hours of training allowed per day
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