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Third Congress

OF THE

Republic of the Philippines

First Session

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[REPUBLIC ACT No. 1179]

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PROMOTION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OF THE BLIND AND OTHER HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THEIR RETURN TO CIVIL EMPLOYMENT.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. This Act may be cited as Vocational Rehabilitation Act.

OBJECTIVES

SEC. 2. (*a*) To provide for the promotion of vocational training for the blind and other persons disabled by natural and/or accidental causes resulting in job handicap in the form of physical or mental impairment and their subsequent return from helplessness to competence; from dependency to self-sufficiency; from hopelessness to active participating and contributing members of society;

(*b*) To prepare such disabled persons for suitable employment so as to place them on the right jobs suitable to their abilities and talents;

(*c*) To train them to be able to take their rightful place in the economic and social activities of the country; and

(*d*) To make available to such persons vocational rehabilitation services as a legal right.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OFFICE

SEC. 3. *Creation of.*—In order to ensure the most effective scheme of vocational rehabilitation of the blind and other handicapped persons to implement the social welfare program of the government in the amelioration of this deprived class of society, there is hereby established a Vocational Rehabilitation Office hereinafter referred as the Office. The Office shall be under the executive supervision and control of the Social Welfare Administrator and shall be headed by a chief who shall be referred to as Supervisor of the Vocational Rehabilitation Office. The said Supervisor shall be appointed by the Social Welfare Administrator and shall receive a compensation of five thousand four hundred pesos *per annum.*

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE ADMINISTRATOR

SEC. 4. Under this Act, the Social Welfare Administrator shall:

(*a*) Designate the Vocational Rehabilitation Office as the sole agency for the administration, supervision and control of the vocational rehabilitation program;

(*b*) Formulate the program, policies and methods in carrying out the work to render any or all services for the blind and handicapped persons;

(*c*) Provide that the vocational rehabilitation program be made available only to classes of employable individuals defined under this Act;

(*d*) Appoint qualified and technical personnel to carry out the work of the Vocational Rehabilitation Office as provided herein;

(*e*) Appoint, subject to civil service rules, such staff members as may be necessary and proper to carry out the provisions of this Act. Said staff members shall be composed of public officials whose status and conditions of service are such that they are independent of changes of government and of improper external influences, and recruited with sole regard to their qualifications; and that such persons shall be free from political domination and

influence, and that subject to the needs of the service, they shall be assured of stability of employment in keeping with the highest standards of personal administration.

(*f*) Promulgate rules and regulations governing the administration of this Act; and exercise such powers and delegate such of these powers, except the making of rules and regulations, as he finds necessary in carrying out the purposes of this Act.

THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

SEC. 5. To effect and facilitate rehabilitation of disabled individuals, the Office shall adopt and maintain a plan, to be known as Vocational Rehabilitation Plan, which shall be as follows:

(*a*) *Early start.*—The Office shall take care of the prompt location of the blind and handicapped either by correspondence or other means, so that rehabilitation may begin before he is unduly subjected to the disintegrating effects of idleness and hopelessness.

(*b*) *Rehabilitation diagnosis.*—The clinic of the Office shall subject each individual to medical examination, personal interviews and tests of aptitudes and interests with a view to meeting his problems and needs, discovering the nature and extent of his disability, and determining the type of work he might best perform. These medical examinations which include not only general medical examination but also specialist and laboratory examinations, may also be secured from hospitals and other allied government agencies according as each individual case may require.

(*c*) *Counseling and guidance.*—Each individual shall be given advice and made to understand by the counselor designated by the Office for each individual of his assets and liabilities, the causes of his problems and the steps necessary to correct these difficulties so as to enable him to adjust to his handicaps and select the type of job fitted to his abilities.

(*d*) *Medical service.*—Physical restoration, when needed to remove or reduce disabilities shall be furnished

and secured for the individual by the Office or by other allied government agencies on behalf of the client.

(*e*) *Vocational training.*—Having selected a specific job goal through the help and advice of the counselor, the Office shall furnish the disabled the necessary training and education necessary to fit them for the chosen work.

(*f*) *Auxiliary service.*—The Office shall provide transportation, books, other training materials, occupational tools, equipment and licenses where necessary during the period of vocational rehabilitation.

(*g*) *Placement.*—The Office shall secure for each individual employment best suited to his capacity and talents and for which he is trained.

(*h*) *Follow-up.*—The Office shall conduct and follow-up on the individual's job performance for a reasonable time to make whatever adjustments may be necessary, or to provide further medical, surgical, and psychiatric care if needed, or to supplement training if required.

PERSONAL STANDARD

SEC. 6. *General requirements of personnel of the Office.*—The officers and staff members of the Office should have a general knowledge of the adjustment and vocational training for the blind and other disabled persons, and a knowledge of all the services, both public and private, available to the blind and other disabled persons; and must be conversant in the casework techniques incident to the employment problems of the blind and other handicapped persons.

DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE SUPERVISOR OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION OFFICE

SEC. 7. It shall be the duty of the Supervisor.—

(*a*) To supervise and coordinate all rehabilitation services to the blind and other handicapped persons.

(*b*) Over-all supervision of all the disabled persons undergoing training in the Adjustment Center.

(*c*) To advise the different blind and other handicapped groups and associations in their activities for self-help.

(*d*) To keep tract of the latest progress in rehabilitation of the blind abroad and to direct efforts for the application of such which may be applied to the disabled persons in the Philippines.

(*e*) Whenever possible, to render vocational information service, self-inventory service and counseling service to the blind and other handicapped persons to help them determine decisions and plans to improve their lot.

(*f*) To supervise and arrange placement of training of the blind and other handicapped persons to the right job, either in sheltered workshop, self-employment, or employment with business or industrial or agricultural enterprises.

(*g*) To help maintain public relations especially among the local, civic, religious, and welfare agencies as those abroad.

(*h*) To help promote cordial relationships and healthy recreational activities among the organizations of the blind and other handicapped persons.

(*i*) To perform such duties as may be assigned to him by the Social Welfare Administrator from time to time.

ADJUSTMENT AND TRAINING CENTER PROGRAM

SEC. 8. To establish immediately an Adjustment and Training Center for the disabled persons with the following characteristics:

(1) A concentrated, individualized program for each client.

(2) The nucleus, at least, of a full-time staff. This nucleus shall consist of a rehabilitation specialist who shall act as supervisor of the center; qualified vocational counselors and instructors for the work projects and a property clerk.

(3) The evaluation, through a "team" approach, of the individual as a total personality.

(4) Opportunity for participation in a group as a motivating and learning device.

(5) An organized and systematic program to:

a. Assist each individual to acquire efficiency in the special techniques necessary to perform the demands of daily living;

b. Help each individual gain insight into his physical, psycho-social and vocational needs;

c. Provide exploratory or try-out work experiences to:

1. Demonstrate the wide variety of tasks each individual can perform;
2. More thoroughly evaluate the aptitudes and skills of each individual;
3. Train each individual to perform certain household tasks;
4. Develop desirable work habits and attitudes.

(6) There is a terminal point for each individual in the center program.

(7) There is a consolidation of the program experiences by the "team" to form the basis for future planning with each individual.

(8) In general, the Adjustment Center is a process of developing within the client a proper perspective toward his disability, as well as that of developing certain basic skills of the client in order to compensate for his handicap and loss of normal faculties.

a. Program flexibility.—

Flexibility in the outlined program may be obtained without sacrificing orderly procedure. While there must be a general schedule of instruction going on all the time, there has to be a schedule for an individual that will meet his needs in line with his capacities, his previous experiences and his objectives.

b. Program balance.—

An individual's program may be kept in balance through the use of a schedule which will be of maximum benefit to him. The formulation of such a schedule will be made

apparent through consideration of diagnostic reports and proposed objective.

c. Client introduction to Center—

The introduction of the client to the center and to the program is of utmost importance since his first impressions are the most lasting. All preliminary reports of the client should be reviewed very carefully by the person who interviews him upon his arrival at the center. The first few days should be taken up by a free program of orientation to the center, both the physical plant and the program. When more experienced trainees are available, the new client should be assigned to a trainee whose interest and background most closely parallel his own and through this trainee he will soon become familiar with the various classrooms and extra curricular opportunities provided by the center. A similar procedure can be adopted for use by centers that service clients who enter in groups.

The Adjustment Center should operate eight hours a day, five instruction days per week for a minimum duration of three months with individual extension possible up to a maximum of six months. There shall be a gratuity allowance for the trainees to be fixed by the Social Welfare Administrator, and assigned as maintenance while in training.

d. Discharge of clients from Center—

When, through staff conference, it is determined that a client is prepared to accept vocational training or placement, definite plans are made for his discharge. If the counselor or the referral agency, concurs in the findings of the staff, the trainee is then called in for a personal conference at which time his entire progress is reviewed with him. At this conference also is ascertained his understanding of his future plans made by the referral agency. The definite time of departure is agreed upon, and transportation arrangements are made. Any necessary notification to his family, cooperating person or

agency, is sent. It is very important that the trainee have a thorough understanding of his future plans and that he is satisfied in his own mind that he is ready for the next step in his rehabilitation program.

e. Records of Center Program—

The center workshop and agricultural projects should maintain and preserve service, employment and other operating records in sufficient detail to evaluate the capacities and limitations and his needs in relation thereto, outline his program, chart his progress and record his ultimate disposition.

The employment records for each client should show, in addition to identifying information, the kind of work performed, the hours worked (daily and weekly), the amount produced, the rate of pay, the amount earned in cash and otherwise, the date of payment and the period covered. The amount of premium pay for overtime work, cash subsidies or other cash assistance, deductions from wages, etc., should be recorded as separate items.

In addition to the above records, which apply to both homebound clients and those working in the workshop, each homebound client (or a person in the home of a homebound client) should maintain a daily record of work performed. In addition to the identifying information, such record should show for each workday the date, the starting and stopping times, the total hours worked, and the units produced. This record should be submitted to the center at stated intervals and should become part of the employment records.

All employment records should be preserved by the center for at least such periods as may be required by the Social Welfare Administration.

The center project should have adequate accounting, operation, sales and other records essential to the effective management of their responsible management board or committee at least quarterly. Their books should be

audited annually by a certified public accountant or government auditor designated for that purpose.

ELIGIBILITY

SEC. 9. To be eligible for vocational rehabilitation a person must:

(*a*) Be of work age.

(*b*) Have a substantial job handicap in the form of physical or mental impairment.

(*c*) Have a reasonably good chance of becoming employable or of getting a more suitable job through rehabilitation services.

AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

SEC. 10. Money to be made available for the purpose of the Act shall be raised by:

(*a*) Authorizing the President of the Philippines to set aside an annual fund raising week to be known as "Aid to the Blind and Handicapped Week". Money realized from such fund raising campaign shall constitute a trust fund to be known as "Blind and Handicapped Fund" which shall be under the control and administration of the Social Welfare Administrator.

(*b*) Authorizing the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office to hold, coincident with the fund raising week, one special sweepstakes race the whole proceeds of which shall after deducting the payment of prizes and expenses provided in Act Numbered Forty-one hundred thirty, as amended by Commonwealth Act Numbered Five hundred forty-six, be turned over to the Social Welfare Administrator which shall constitute a part of the said Blind and Handicapped Fund.

(*c*) Authorizing the appropriation out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated any such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act. The construction of the Training Center may be drawn from this allocation.

DEFINITIONS

SEC. 11. The following terms as used in this Act have the following meanings:

(*a*) *Vocational rehabilitation or rehabilitation services.*—Any service necessary to render a disabled individual fit to engage in a remunerative occupation.

(*b*) *Blind.*—A person having visual acuity not to exceed 20/200 in the better eye with correcting lenses, or visual acuity greater than 20/200 but with a limitation in the fields of vision such that the widest diameter of the visual fields subtends an angle no greater than twenty degrees. But a person who is blind in one eye only, or who has a visual acuity greater than 20/200 without a field defect shall not be considered blind for the purposes of this Act.

(*c*) *Disabled person.*—Includes not only the blind but also persons, with substantial job handicap in the form of physical or mental impairment.

EFFECTIVITY

SEC. 12. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved,

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Finally passed by the Senate on May 19, 1954, in consolidation with Senate Bill No. 143.

Secretary of the Senate

This Act, which originated in the House of Representatives, was finally passed by the same on May 18, 1954.

Secretary of the House of Representatives

Approved:

June 19, 1954.

President of the Philippines

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