

3558--D

Cal. No. 839

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

February 5, 2013

Introduced by Sens. GRIFFO, BALL, BRESLIN, DeFRANCISCO, HOYLMAN, LARKIN, MARTINS, MAZIARZ, PARKER, RANZENHOFER, SAVINO, VALESKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Higher Education -- recommitted to the Committee on Higher Education in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reported favorably from said committee, ordered to first report, amended on first report, ordered to a second report and ordered reprinted, retaining its place in the order of second report

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the licensing of orientation and mobility specialists and rehabilitation therapists

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. The education law is amended by adding a new article 168 to
2 read as follows:

3 ARTICLE 168

4 VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES

5 SECTION 8900. INTRODUCTION.

6 8901. DEFINITIONS.

7 8902. USE OF THE TITLES "LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY
8 SPECIALISTS" AND "VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS".

9 8903. STATE BOARD FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES.

10 8904. REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENSE.

11 8905. LIMITED PERMITS.

12 8906. EXEMPT PERSONS.

13 8907. SPECIAL PROVISIONS.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

LBD06474-09-4

8908. SEPARABILITY.

S 8900. INTRODUCTION. THIS ARTICLE APPLIES TO THE PROFESSION OF VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES, AND PROVIDES FOR THE LICENSING OF LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS AND VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS. THE GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR ALL PROFESSIONS CONTAINED IN ARTICLE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY OF THIS TITLE SHALL APPLY TO THIS ARTICLE.

S 8901. DEFINITIONS. FOR PURPOSES OF THIS ARTICLE, THE FOLLOWING TERMS SHALL HAVE THE FOLLOWING MEANINGS:

1. THE PRACTICE OF "ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING" SHALL MEAN:

(A) THE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED FOR SKILLS TRAINING IN METHODS OF SAFE MOVEMENT AND IN STRATEGIES TO GATHER REQUIRED ENVIRONMENTAL AND SPATIAL INFORMATION; (B) THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE INTEGRATED SERVICE PLANS TAILORED TO MEET SUCH INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED IN SUCH ASSESSMENT PROCESS; (C) THE PROVISION OF TRAINING IN, AND UTILIZATION OF (I) EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTIVE DEVICES INTENDED AND DESIGNED FOR USE BY PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, AND (II) SPECIALIZED TECHNIQUES ADAPTED FOR PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO ORIENTATION; SENSORY DEVELOPMENT; SYSTEMS OF SAFE MOVEMENT, INCLUDING LONG CANE TECHNIQUES; RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION AND, AS APPROPRIATE, PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS; AND, IN APPLIED SETTINGS, REINFORCING INSTRUCTION FOR THE USE OF OPTICAL DEVICES AS PRESCRIBED BY OPTOMETRISTS AND OPHTHALMOLOGISTS; AND (D) THE EVALUATION OF CLIENTS RECEIVING SUCH SPECIALIZED TRAINING.

2. THE PRACTICE OF "VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY" SHALL MEAN: (A) THE ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL NEEDS OF PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED FOR SKILLS TRAINING IN INDEPENDENT LIVING AND COMMUNICATIONS; (B) THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROPRIATE INTEGRATED SERVICE PLANS TAILORED TO MEET SUCH INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AS IDENTIFIED IN SUCH ASSESSMENT PROCESS; (C) THE PROVISION OF TRAINING IN, AND UTILIZATION OF (I) EQUIPMENT AND ADAPTIVE DEVICES INTENDED AND DESIGNED FOR USE BY PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, INCLUDING, IN APPLIED SETTINGS, REINFORCING INSTRUCTION FOR THE USE OF OPTICAL DEVICES AS PRESCRIBED BY OPTOMETRISTS OR OPHTHALMOLOGISTS, AND (II) SPECIALIZED TECHNIQUES ADAPTED FOR PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO BRAILLE AND OTHER COMMUNICATION SKILLS; ADAPTED COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY; PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS; HOME MANAGEMENT SKILLS; PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS; RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND, AS APPROPRIATE, PROFESSIONAL REFERRALS; AND (D) THE EVALUATION OF PERSONS RECEIVING SUCH SPECIALIZED TRAINING.

3. THE PRACTICE OF "VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES" SHALL MEAN PROVIDING ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF, AND TRAINING FOR, PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED WHEN SUCH ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND TRAINING INCORPORATES THE FULL RANGE OF SPECIALIZED SKILLS AND TASKS SUBSUMED IN THE TWO PROFESSIONS DEFINED IN THIS SECTION AS: (A) ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING AND (B) VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY. SUCH SERVICES SHALL BE RENDERED ON THE PRESCRIPTION OR REFERRAL WHICH MAY BE DIRECTIVE AS TO TREATMENT BY A LICENSED PHYSICIAN OR OPTOMETRIST, PROVIDED HOWEVER THAT NO SUCH TREATMENT DIRECTIVE AND LOW VISION EXAMINATION SHALL BE REQUIRED WHEN THE PERSON BEING REFERRED HAS BEEN DIAGNOSED WITHIN THE PREVIOUS TWELVE MONTHS AS VISUALLY IMPAIRED, BLIND OR LEGALLY BLIND AS THOSE TERMS ARE DEFINED IN SUBDIVISION FIVE OF THIS SECTION AND SUCH SERVICES ARE BEING RENDERED CONSISTENT WITH THAT DIAGNOSIS, PRESCRIPTION OR REFERRAL. VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS AND ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS MAY NOT PRESCRIBE OPTICAL LOW VISION DEVICES.

4. "APPLIED SETTINGS" MEANS THOSE LOCATIONS WHERE PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED ENGAGE IN DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITIES UTILIZING THE TOOLS

1 SUPPLIED AND TECHNIQUES TAUGHT BY THE LICENSED PRACTITIONERS DEFINED IN
2 THIS ARTICLE.

3 5. "VISUALLY IMPAIRED" MEANS A PERSON WHO IS TOTALLY BLIND, LEGALLY
4 BLIND OR PARTIALLY SIGHTED. A PERSON WHO IS BLIND IS ONE WHO HAS NO
5 USEABLE VISION. A PERSON WHO IS LEGALLY BLIND IS ONE WHO SATISFIES THE
6 DEFINITION SET FORTH IN SUBDIVISION B OF SECTION THREE OF CHAPTER FOUR
7 HUNDRED FIFTEEN OF THE LAWS OF NINETEEN HUNDRED THIRTEEN. A PERSON WHO
8 IS PARTIALLY SIGHTED IS ONE WHO HAS FUNCTIONAL VISION IMPAIRMENT THAT
9 CONSTITUTES A SIGNIFICANT LIMITATION OF VISUAL CAPABILITY RESULTING FROM
10 DISEASE, TRAUMA, OR CONGENITAL CONDITION, THAT CANNOT BE FULLY AMELIO-
11 RATED BY STANDARD REFRACTIVE CORRECTION, MEDICATION, OR SURGERY, AND
12 THAT IS MANIFESTED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: INSUFFICIENT VISUAL
13 RESOLUTION, INADEQUATE FIELD OF VISION OR REDUCED PEAK CONTRAST SENSI-
14 TIVITY.

15 S 8902. USE OF THE TITLES "LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIAL-
16 ISTS" AND "VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS". 1. PRACTICE OF ORIE-
17 NTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING AND USE OF THE TITLE "LICENSED ORIENTATION
18 AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS". ONLY A PERSON LICENSED OR OTHERWISE AUTHOR-
19 IZED UNDER THIS ARTICLE SHALL PRACTICE ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING
20 OR USE THE TITLE "LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS" IN
21 CONNECTION WITH HIS OR HER NAME OR WITH ANY TRADE NAME IN THE CONDUCT OF
22 HIS OR HER PROFESSION.

23 2. PRACTICE OF VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY AND USE OF THE TITLE
24 "VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST". ONLY A PERSON LICENSED OR OTHERWISE
25 AUTHORIZED UNDER THIS ARTICLE SHALL PRACTICE VISION REHABILITATION THER-
26 APY OR USE THE TITLE "VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST" IN CONNECTION
27 WITH HIS OR HER NAME OR WITH ANY TRADE NAME IN THE CONDUCT OF HIS OR HER
28 PROFESSION.

29 S 8903. STATE BOARD FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES. A STATE BOARD
30 FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES SHALL BE APPOINTED BY THE BOARD OF
31 REGENTS UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE PURPOSE OF
32 ASSISTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS AND THE DEPARTMENT ON MATTERS OF PROFES-
33 SIONAL LICENSING AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION
34 SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED EIGHT OF THIS TITLE. THE BOARD SHALL CONSIST OF NOT
35 LESS THAN FOURTEEN INDIVIDUALS, FOUR OF WHOM SHALL BE LICENSED ORIE-
36 NTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS, FOUR OF WHOM SHALL BE LICENSED VISION
37 REHABILITATION THERAPISTS, ONE OPHTHALMOLOGIST SPECIALIZING IN LOW
38 VISION TREATMENT, ONE OPTOMETRIST SPECIALIZING IN LOW VISION TREATMENT
39 AND FOUR OF WHOM SHALL BE BLIND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC AT LARGE
40 WHOSE NAMES WILL BE PLACED IN NOMINATION FOR THE BOARD FROM ORGANIZA-
41 TIONS OF THE BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED. MEMBERS OF THE INITIAL BOARD
42 NEED NOT BE LICENSED PRIOR TO THEIR APPOINTMENT TO THE BOARD. OF THE
43 MEMBERS FIRST APPOINTED, FOUR SHALL BE APPOINTED FOR A THREE YEAR TERM,
44 FIVE SHALL BE APPOINTED FOR A FOUR YEAR TERM, AND FIVE SHALL BE
45 APPOINTED FOR A FIVE YEAR TERM. THEREAFTER ALL MEMBERS SHALL SERVE FOR
46 FIVE YEAR TERMS. IN THE EVENT THAT MORE THAN FOURTEEN MEMBERS ARE
47 APPOINTED, A MAJORITY OF THE ADDITIONAL MEMBERS SHALL BE LICENSED ORIE-
48 NTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS AND LICENSED VISION REHABILITATION THER-
49 APISTS. THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD SHALL SELECT ONE OF THEMSELVES AS CHAIR
50 TO SERVE FOR A ONE YEAR TERM. AN EXECUTIVE SECRETARY SHALL BE APPOINTED
51 BY THE BOARD OF REGENTS UPON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMISSIONER.

52 S 8904. REQUIREMENTS FOR A LICENSE. 1. TO QUALIFY FOR A LICENSE AS AN
53 ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST, AN APPLICANT SHALL FULFILL THE
54 FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

55 (A) APPLICATION: FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT;

1 (B) EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE: (I) HAVE SATISFACTORILY COMPLETED AN
2 APPROVED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY CURRICULUM IN A BACCALAUREATE OR
3 MASTERS PROGRAM, OR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT
4 WHICH IS SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT TO A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM, IN
5 ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS; AND

6 (II) HAVE A MINIMUM OF THREE MONTHS OF SUPERVISED ORIENTATION AND
7 MOBILITY EXPERIENCE WHICH SUPERVISION AND EXPERIENCE SHALL BE SATISFAC-
8 TORY TO THE STATE BOARD FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES AND IN
9 ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS;

10 (C) PASS AN EXAMINATION SATISFACTORY TO THE STATE BOARD FOR VISION
11 REHABILITATION SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGU-
12 LATIONS.

13 (D) AGE: BE AT LEAST TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE;

14 (E) CHARACTER: BE OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPART-
15 MENT;

16 (F) REGISTRATION: ALL LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS
17 SHALL REGISTER TRIENNIALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
18 COMMISSIONER'S REGULATION;

19 (G) MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY: (I)(A) EACH LICENSED ORIENTATION
20 AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST REQUIRED UNDER THIS ARTICLE TO REGISTER TRIENNI-
21 ALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT TO PRACTICE IN THE STATE SHALL COMPLY WITH THE
22 PROVISIONS OF THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS
23 PRESCRIBED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN
24 CLAUSES (B) AND (C) OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH. ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY
25 SPECIALISTS WHO DO NOT SATISFY THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY
26 REQUIREMENTS SHALL NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE UNTIL THEY HAVE MET
27 SUCH REQUIREMENTS, AND THEY HAVE BEEN ISSUED A REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE,
28 EXCEPT THAT AN ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST MAY PRACTICE WITHOUT
29 HAVING MET SUCH REQUIREMENTS IF HE OR SHE IS ISSUED A CONDITIONAL REGIS-
30 TRATION PURSUANT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

31 (B) ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE
32 MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT FOR THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRA-
33 TION PERIOD DURING WHICH THEY ARE FIRST LICENSED. ADJUSTMENT TO THE
34 MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS MAY BE GRANTED BY THE
35 DEPARTMENT FOR REASONS OF HEALTH OF THE LICENSEE WHERE CERTIFIED BY AN
36 APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL, FOR EXTENDED ACTIVE DUTY WITH THE
37 ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, OR FOR OTHER GOOD CAUSE ACCEPTABLE TO
38 THE DEPARTMENT WHICH MAY PREVENT COMPLIANCE.

39 (C) A LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST NOT ENGAGED IN
40 PRACTICE, AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE
41 MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT UPON THE FILING OF A STATE-
42 MENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT DECLARING SUCH STATUS. ANY LICENSEE WHO RETURNS
43 TO PRACTICE OF THE PROFESSION OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST
44 DURING THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD SHALL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT
45 PRIOR TO REENTERING THE PROFESSION AND SHALL MEET SUCH MANDATORY CONTIN-
46 UING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS AS SHALL BE PRESCRIBED BY REGULATIONS OF
47 THE COMMISSIONER.

48 (II) DURING EACH TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD AN APPLICANT FOR REGIS-
49 TRATION AS AN ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST SHALL COMPLETE A MINI-
50 MUM OF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF ACCEPTABLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES WHICH
51 CONTRIBUTE TO CONTINUING COMPETENCE, AS SPECIFIED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (IV)
52 OF THIS PARAGRAPH, PROVIDED FURTHER THAT AT LEAST SIXTEEN HOURS SHALL BE
53 IN RECOGNIZED AREAS OF STUDY PERTINENT TO THE PROFESSIONAL SCOPE OF A
54 LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST. ANY ORIENTATION AND MOBIL-
55 ITY SPECIALIST WHOSE FIRST REGISTRATION DATE FOLLOWING THE EFFECTIVE
56 DATE OF THIS SECTION OCCURS LESS THAN THREE YEARS FROM SUCH EFFECTIVE

1 DATE, BUT ON OR AFTER JANUARY FIRST, TWO THOUSAND FIFTEEN, SHALL
2 COMPLETE CONTINUING COMPETENCY HOURS ON A PRORATED BASIS AT THE RATE OF
3 ONE-HALF HOUR PER MONTH FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY FIRST, TWO
4 THOUSAND FIFTEEN UP TO THE FIRST REGISTRATION DATE. THEREAFTER, A LICEN-
5 SEE WHO HAS NOT SATISFIED THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIRE-
6 MENTS SHALL NOT BE ISSUED A TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE BY THE
7 DEPARTMENT AND SHALL NOT PRACTICE UNLESS AND UNTIL A CONDITIONAL REGIS-
8 TRATION CERTIFICATE IS ISSUED AS PROVIDED FOR IN SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF
9 THIS PARAGRAPH. CONTINUING COMPETENCY HOURS TAKEN DURING ONE TRIENNIUM
10 MAY NOT BE TRANSFERRED TO A SUBSEQUENT TRIENNIUM.

11 (III) THE DEPARTMENT, IN ITS DISCRETION, MAY ISSUE A CONDITIONAL
12 REGISTRATION TO A LICENSEE WHO FAILS TO MEET THE CONTINUING COMPETENCY
13 REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, BUT WHO
14 AGREES TO MAKE UP ANY DEFICIENCIES AND COMPLETE ANY ADDITIONAL LEARNING
15 ACTIVITIES WHICH THE DEPARTMENT MAY REQUIRE. THE FEE FOR SUCH A CONDI-
16 TIONAL REGISTRATION SHALL BE THE SAME AS, AND IN ADDITION TO, THE FEE
17 FOR THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION. THE DURATION OF SUCH CONDITIONAL REGIS-
18 TRATION SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT BUT SHALL NOT EXCEED ONE
19 YEAR. ANY LICENSEE WHO IS NOTIFIED OF THE DENIAL OF REGISTRATION FOR
20 FAILURE TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE, SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT, OF REQUIRED
21 CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND WHO PRACTICES WITHOUT SUCH
22 REGISTRATION, MAY BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO
23 SECTION SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED TEN OF THIS TITLE.

24 (IV) AS USED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "ACCEPTABLE
25 LEARNING ACTIVITIES" SHALL MEAN ACTIVITIES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE
26 PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF AN ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST AND
27 WHICH MEET THE STANDARDS PRESCRIBED IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMIS-
28 SIONER. SUCH LEARNING ACTIVITIES SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO,
29 COLLEGIATE LEVEL CREDIT AND NON-CREDIT COURSES, SELF-STUDY ACTIVITIES,
30 INDEPENDENT STUDY, FORMAL MENTORING ACTIVITIES, PUBLICATIONS IN PROFES-
31 SIONAL JOURNALS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND TECHNICAL
32 SESSIONS; SUCH LEARNING ACTIVITIES MAY BE OFFERED AND SPONSORED BY
33 NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZA-
34 TIONS OR PARTIES ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT, AND ANY OTHER ORGANIZED
35 EDUCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPART-
36 MENT. RECOGNIZED AREAS OF STUDY SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO:
37 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TRAINING IN ORIENTATION, MOBILITY, NAVIGATION,
38 INDEPENDENT LIVING, COMMUNICATIONS AND USE OF PRESCRIBED AND, ADAPTIVE
39 OPTICAL DEVICES; UTILIZATION OF SPECIALIZED TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT
40 INTENDED FOR USE BY PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED; THE MEDICAL
41 ASPECTS OF VISION LOSS AND ITS FUNCTIONAL IMPACT ON PERSONS WHO ARE
42 VISUALLY IMPAIRED; AND SUCH OTHER TECHNICAL SUBJECT MATTER AREAS APPRO-
43 PRIATELY RELATED TO THE PRACTICE OF VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES AS
44 MAY BE SATISFACTORY TO THE BOARD AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSION-
45 ER'S REGULATIONS. THE DEPARTMENT MAY, IN ITS DISCRETION AND AS NEEDED TO
46 CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE PUBLIC, REQUIRE THE
47 COMPLETION OF CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN SPECIFIC
48 SUBJECTS TO FULFILL THIS MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT.
49 LEARNING ACTIVITIES MUST BE TAKEN FROM A SPONSOR APPROVED BY THE DEPART-
50 MENT, PURSUANT TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER.

51 (V) ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALISTS SHALL MAINTAIN ADEQUATE
52 DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLETION OF ACCEPTABLE CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING
53 ACTIVITIES AND SHALL PROVIDE SUCH DOCUMENTATION AT THE REQUEST OF THE
54 DEPARTMENT. FAILURE TO PROVIDE SUCH DOCUMENTATION UPON THE REQUEST OF
55 THE DEPARTMENT SHALL BE AN ACT OF MISCONDUCT SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY
56 PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO SECTION SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED TEN OF THIS TITLE.

(VI) THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY FEE SHALL BE FIFTY DOLLARS, SHALL BE PAYABLE ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF EACH TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD, AND SHALL BE PAID IN ADDITION TO THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION FEE REQUIRED BY PARAGRAPH (H) OF THIS SUBDIVISION.

(H) FEES: PAY A FEE OF ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR AN INITIAL LICENSE AND A FEE OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR EACH TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD.

2. TO QUALIFY FOR A LICENSE AS A VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST AN APPLICANT SHALL FULFILL THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:

(A) APPLICATION: FILE AN APPLICATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT;

(B) EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE: (I) HAVE SATISFACTORILY COMPLETED AN APPROVED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST CURRICULUM IN A BACCALAUREATE OR MASTERS PROGRAM, OR A CERTIFICATE PROGRAM SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT WHICH IS SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT TO A BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS; AND

(II) HAVE A MINIMUM OF THREE MONTHS OF SUPERVISED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST EXPERIENCE WHICH SUPERVISION AND EXPERIENCE SHALL BE SATISFACTORY TO THE STATE BOARD FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS;

(C) PASS AN EXAMINATION SATISFACTORY TO THE STATE BOARD FOR VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS.

(D) AGE: BE AT LEAST TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE;

(E) CHARACTER: BE OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT;

(F) REGISTRATION: ALL LICENSED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS SHALL REGISTER TRIENNIALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS;

(G) MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY: (I) (A) EACH LICENSED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST REQUIRED UNDER THIS ARTICLE TO REGISTER TRIENNIALLY WITH THE DEPARTMENT TO PRACTICE IN THE STATE SHALL COMPLY WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS PRESCRIBED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN CLAUSES (B) AND (C) OF THIS PARAGRAPH. VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS WHO DO NOT SATISFY THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS SHALL NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE UNTIL THEY HAVE MET SUCH REQUIREMENTS, AND THEY HAVE BEEN ISSUED A REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE, EXCEPT THAT A VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST MAY PRACTICE WITHOUT HAVING MET SUCH REQUIREMENTS IF HE OR SHE IS ISSUED A CONDITIONAL REGISTRATION PURSUANT TO SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

(B) VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT FOR THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD DURING WHICH THEY ARE FIRST LICENSED. ADJUSTMENT TO THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS MAY BE GRANTED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR REASONS OF HEALTH OF THE LICENSEE WHERE CERTIFIED BY AN APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL, FOR EXTENDED ACTIVE DUTY WITH THE ARMED FORCES OF THE UNITED STATES, OR FOR OTHER GOOD CAUSE ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT WHICH MAY PREVENT COMPLIANCE.

(C) A LICENSED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST NOT ENGAGED IN PRACTICE, AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, SHALL BE EXEMPT FROM THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT UPON THE FILING OF A STATEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT DECLARING SUCH STATUS. ANY LICENSEE WHO RETURNS TO PRACTICE OF VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY DURING THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD SHALL NOTIFY THE DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO REENTERING THE PROFESSION AND SHALL MEET SUCH MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS AS SHALL BE PRESCRIBED BY REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER.

1 (II) DURING EACH TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION PERIOD AN APPLICANT FOR REGIS-
2 TRATION AS A VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST SHALL COMPLETE A MINIMUM OF
3 TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF ACCEPTABLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO
4 CONTINUING COMPETENCE, AS SPECIFIED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (IV) OF THIS PARA-
5 GRAPH, PROVIDED FURTHER THAT AT LEAST SIXTEEN HOURS SHALL BE IN RECOG-
6 NIZED AREAS OF STUDY PERTINENT TO THE PROFESSIONAL SCOPE OF A LICENSED
7 VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST. ANY VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST
8 WHOSE FIRST REGISTRATION DATE FOLLOWING THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS
9 SECTION OCCURS LESS THAN THREE YEARS FROM SUCH EFFECTIVE DATE, BUT ON OR
10 AFTER JANUARY FIRST, TWO THOUSAND FIFTEEN, SHALL COMPLETE CONTINUING
11 COMPETENCY HOURS ON A PRORATED BASIS AT THE RATE OF ONE-HALF HOUR PER
12 MONTH FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY FIRST, TWO THOUSAND FIFTEEN UP TO
13 THE FIRST REGISTRATION DATE. THEREAFTER, A LICENSEE WHO HAS NOT SATIS-
14 FIED THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS SHALL NOT BE
15 ISSUED A TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE BY THE DEPARTMENT AND SHALL
16 NOT PRACTICE UNLESS AND UNTIL A CONDITIONAL REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE IS
17 ISSUED AS PROVIDED FOR IN SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH. CONTIN-
18 UING COMPETENCY HOURS TAKEN DURING ONE TRIENNIUM MAY NOT BE TRANSFERRED
19 TO A SUBSEQUENT TRIENNIUM.

20 (III) THE DEPARTMENT, IN ITS DISCRETION, MAY ISSUE A CONDITIONAL
21 REGISTRATION TO A LICENSEE WHO FAILS TO MEET THE CONTINUING COMPETENCY
22 REQUIREMENTS ESTABLISHED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, BUT WHO
23 AGREES TO MAKE UP ANY DEFICIENCIES AND COMPLETE ANY ADDITIONAL LEARNING
24 ACTIVITIES WHICH THE DEPARTMENT MAY REQUIRE. THE FEE FOR SUCH A CONDI-
25 TIONAL REGISTRATION SHALL BE THE SAME AS, AND IN ADDITION TO, THE FEE
26 FOR THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION. THE DURATION OF SUCH CONDITIONAL REGIS-
27 TRATION SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT BUT SHALL NOT EXCEED ONE
28 YEAR. ANY LICENSEE WHO IS NOTIFIED OF THE DENIAL OF REGISTRATION FOR
29 FAILURE TO SUBMIT EVIDENCE, SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT, OF REQUIRED
30 CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND WHO PRACTICES WITHOUT SUCH
31 REGISTRATION, MAY BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO
32 SECTION SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED TEN OF THIS TITLE.

33 (IV) AS USED IN SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "ACCEPTABLE
34 LEARNING ACTIVITIES" SHALL MEAN ACTIVITIES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE
35 PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OF A VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST AND WHICH
36 MEET THE STANDARDS PRESCRIBED IN THE REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER.
37 SUCH LEARNING ACTIVITIES SHALL INCLUDE, BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO, COLLEGI-
38 ATE LEVEL CREDIT AND NON-CREDIT COURSES, SELF-STUDY ACTIVITIES, INDE-
39 PENDENT STUDY, FORMAL MENTORING ACTIVITIES, PUBLICATIONS IN PROFESSIONAL
40 JOURNALS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND TECHNICAL SESSIONS; SUCH
41 LEARNING ACTIVITIES MAY BE OFFERED AND SPONSORED BY NATIONAL, STATE AND
42 LOCAL PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OR PARTIES
43 ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT, AND ANY OTHER ORGANIZED EDUCATIONAL AND
44 TECHNICAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT. RECOGNIZED
45 AREAS OF STUDY SHALL INCLUDE BUT NOT BE LIMITED TO: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS
46 TRAINING IN MOBILITY, NAVIGATION, INDEPENDENT LIVING, COMMUNICATIONS AND
47 ORIENTATION, USE OF PRESCRIBED AND, ADAPTIVE OPTICAL DEVICES; UTILIZA-
48 TION OF SPECIALIZED TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT INTENDED FOR USE BY PERSONS
49 WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED; THE MEDICAL ASPECTS OF VISION LOSS AND ITS
50 FUNCTIONAL IMPACT ON PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED; AND SUCH OTHER
51 TECHNICAL SUBJECT MATTER AREAS APPROPRIATELY RELATED TO THE PRACTICE OF
52 VISION REHABILITATION SERVICES AS MAY BE SATISFACTORY TO THE BOARD AND
53 IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS. THE DEPARTMENT MAY,
54 IN ITS DISCRETION AND AS NEEDED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE HEALTH AND WELFARE
55 OF THE PUBLIC, REQUIRE THE COMPLETION OF CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING
56 ACTIVITIES IN SPECIFIC SUBJECTS TO FULFILL THIS MANDATORY CONTINUING

1 COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT. LEARNING ACTIVITIES MUST BE TAKEN FROM A SPON-
2 SOR APPROVED BY THE DEPARTMENT, PURSUANT TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE
3 COMMISSIONER.

4 (V) VISION REHABILITATION THERAPISTS SHALL MAINTAIN ADEQUATE DOCUMEN-
5 TATION OF COMPLETION OF ACCEPTABLE CONTINUING COMPETENCY LEARNING ACTIV-
6 ITIES AND SHALL PROVIDE SUCH DOCUMENTATION AT THE REQUEST OF THE DEPART-
7 MENT. FAILURE TO PROVIDE SUCH DOCUMENTATION UPON THE REQUEST OF THE
8 DEPARTMENT SHALL BE AN ACT OF MISCONDUCT SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY
9 PROCEEDINGS PURSUANT TO SECTION SIXTY-FIVE HUNDRED TEN OF THIS TITLE.

10 (VI) THE MANDATORY CONTINUING COMPETENCY FEE SHALL BE FIFTY DOLLARS,
11 SHALL BE PAYABLE ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF EACH TRIENNIAL REGISTRA-
12 TION PERIOD, AND SHALL BE PAID IN ADDITION TO THE TRIENNIAL REGISTRATION
13 FEE REQUIRED BY PARAGRAPH (H) OF THIS SUBDIVISION.

14 (H) FEES: PAY A FEE OF ONE HUNDRED SEVENTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR AN INITIAL
15 LICENSE AND A FEE OF ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-FIVE DOLLARS FOR EACH TRIENNIAL
16 REGISTRATION PERIOD.

17 S 8905. LIMITED PERMITS. PERMITS LIMITED AS TO ELIGIBILITY, PRACTICE
18 AND DURATION SHALL BE ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT TO ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AS
19 FOLLOWS:

20 1. ELIGIBILITY. A PERSON WHO FULFILLS ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR AN ORIEN-
21 TATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST OR VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST,
22 EXCEPT THAT RELATING TO THE EXAMINATION, SHALL BE ELIGIBLE FOR A LIMITED
23 PERMIT.

24 2. LIMIT OF PRACTICE. ALL PRACTICE UNDER A LIMITED PERMIT SHALL BE
25 UNDER THE DIRECT SUPERVISION OF A LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY
26 SPECIALIST OR A VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST.

27 3. DURATION. A LIMITED PERMIT SHALL EXPIRE ONE YEAR FROM THE DATE OF
28 ISSUANCE OR UPON NOTICE TO THE PERMITTEE BY THE DEPARTMENT THAT THE
29 APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE HAS BEEN DENIED, OR UPON NOTICE TO THE PERMIT-
30 TEE OF FAILURE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LICENSING EXAMINATION, WHICHEVER
31 FIRST OCCURS.

32 4. FEES. THE FEE FOR EACH LIMITED PERMIT SHALL BE SEVENTY DOLLARS.

33 S 8906. EXEMPT PERSONS. THIS ARTICLE SHALL NOT BE CONSTRUED TO AFFECT
34 OR PREVENT THE FOLLOWING, PROVIDED THAT NO TITLE, SIGN, CARD OR DEVICE
35 SHALL BE USED IN SUCH MANNER AS TO TEND TO CONVEY THE IMPRESSION THAT
36 THE PERSON RENDERING SUCH SERVICE IS A LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY
37 SPECIALIST OR VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST:

38 1. THE PRACTICE OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION REHA-
39 BILITATION THERAPY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF A PROGRAM OF STUDY BY STUDENTS
40 ENROLLED IN APPROVED EDUCATIONAL OR TRAINING PROGRAMS IN (A) ORIENTATION
41 AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR (B) VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY.

42 2. THE PERFORMANCE OF ANY OF THE DUTIES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
43 INCLUDED IN THE DEFINITION OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING BY ANY
44 OTHER DULY LICENSED, CERTIFIED OR REGISTERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER,
45 PROVIDED THAT SUCH DUTIES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE WITHIN THE
46 SCOPE OF HIS OR HER PRACTICE AS DEFINED IN THIS ARTICLE PURSUANT TO
47 WHICH SUCH PERSON IS LICENSED, CERTIFIED OR REGISTERED; PROVIDED, HOWEV-
48 ER, THAT SUCH PRACTITIONERS MAY NOT HOLD THEMSELVES OUT UNDER THE TITLE
49 "LICENSED ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY SPECIALIST" OR AS PERFORMING LICENSED
50 ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING.

51 3. THE PERFORMANCE OF ANY OF THE DUTIES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
52 INCLUDED IN THE DEFINITION OF VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY BY ANY OTHER
53 DULY LICENSED, CERTIFIED OR REGISTERED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER, PROVIDED
54 THAT SUCH DUTIES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES ARE WITHIN THE SCOPE OF HIS
55 OR HER PRACTICE AS DEFINED IN THIS ARTICLE OR COMMISSIONER'S REGULATION
56 PURSUANT TO WHICH SUCH PERSON IS LICENSED, CERTIFIED OR REGISTERED;

1 PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH PRACTITIONERS MAY NOT HOLD THEMSELVES OUT
2 UNDER THE TITLE "LICENSED VISION REHABILITATION THERAPIST".

3 4. THE PRACTICE, CONDUCT, ACTIVITIES, SERVICES OR USE OF ANY TITLE BY
4 ANY PERSON LICENSED OR OTHERWISE AUTHORIZED TO PRACTICE MEDICINE WITHIN
5 THE STATE PURSUANT TO ARTICLE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-ONE OF THIS TITLE OR BY
6 ANY PERSON REGISTERED TO PERFORM SERVICES AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
7 PURSUANT TO ARTICLE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY-ONE-B OF THIS TITLE.

8 5. THE PRACTICE OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION REHA-
9 BILITATION THERAPY BY ANY LEGALLY QUALIFIED PRACTITIONER OF ORIENTATION
10 AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY OF ANY OTHER
11 STATE OR TERRITORY WHO IS SERVING IN THE ARMED FORCES OR THE PUBLIC
12 HEALTH SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES WHILE ENGAGED IN THE PERFORMANCE OF
13 HIS OR HER DUTIES.

14 6. THE INSTRUCTION IN THE USE OF A DOG GUIDE.

15 S 8907. SPECIAL PROVISIONS. A PERSON SHALL BE LICENSED WITHOUT EXAM-
16 INATION PROVIDED THAT, WITHIN THREE YEARS OF THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THIS
17 ARTICLE, SUCH PERSON:

18 1. FILES AN APPLICATION AND PAYS THE APPROPRIATE FEES TO THE DEPART-
19 MENT;

20 2. (A) HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, OR EQUIVALENT AS DETER-
21 MINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, WITH A SPECIALIZATION IN ORIENTATION AND MOBIL-
22 ITY TRAINING; OR (B) HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, OR EQUIVALENT
23 AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT, WITH A SPECIALIZATION IN VISION REHA-
24 BILITATION THERAPY; OR (C) HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER, OR
25 EQUIVALENT AS DETERMINED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN A REHABILITATION FIELD OR
26 IN SPECIAL EDUCATION AND (I) HAS COMPLETED ALL ADDITIONALLY REQUIRED
27 ELEMENTS OF THE ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION REHABILI-
28 TATION THERAPY CURRICULUM SATISFACTORY TO THE BOARD AND IN ACCORDANCE
29 WITH THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS; OR (II) HAS BEEN CERTIFIED IN
30 ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY BY A
31 NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ACCREDITING BODY ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT; AND

32 3. SUBMITS EVIDENCE OF A MINIMUM OF THREE YEARS EXPERIENCE OR EMPLOY-
33 MENT IN THE PRACTICE OF ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING OR VISION
34 REHABILITATION THERAPY SATISFACTORY TO THE BOARD AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH
35 THE COMMISSIONER'S REGULATIONS, WHETHER SUCH EXPERIENCE OR EMPLOYMENT
36 OCCURS WITHIN OR WITHOUT THIS STATE.

37 S 8908. SEPARABILITY. IF ANY SECTION OF THIS ARTICLE, OR PART THEREOF,
38 SHALL BE ADJUDGED BY ANY COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION TO BE INVALID,
39 SUCH JUDGMENT SHALL NOT AFFECT, IMPAIR OR INVALIDATE THE REMAINDER OF
40 ANY OTHER SECTION OR PART THEREOF.

41 S 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015. The commissioner of
42 education and the board of regents are authorized to promulgate such
43 rules and regulations and take any other measures as may be necessary
44 for the timely implementation of this act on or before its effective
45 date, including but not limited to the appointment of the state board
46 for vision rehabilitation services, the acceptance and processing of
47 applications for licensure, and the issuance of licenses.