

**Draft**  
**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Virtual Teaching Workgroup**  
June 10, 2022

**Members Present**

Brian Dulude  
Ted Chittenden  
Eve Sanchez  
Frank Vance  
Mohammed Falah  
Patty Arnold  
Fernando Hernandez

**Members Absent**

John McCann

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

**Guests Present**

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Brian Dulude called the meeting to order at 10:33 am. Introductions were made, and a quorum was present.

**Virtual Teaching Discussion**

Brian Dulude asked that everyone discuss their experiences teaching virtually and what types of topics everyone taught. Eve Sanchez stated that communication was important and making sure the instructor was able to describe what they were asking of the individual. Eve Sanchez noted that Braille instruction went well, even if some individuals felt stressed when an instructor was watching them. Ms. Sanchez stated that iOS instruction tended to be most difficult. Patty Arnold stated that she provided instruction on Assistive Technology (AT), low vision and rehabilitation teaching and that communication was essential. She noted that she was able to use Face Time or Zoom to watch what an individual was doing and was able to provide more instruction if necessary. Mohammed Falah stated that he taught Orientation and Mobility (O&M) and the instructor needed to be able to give detailed instructions to teach the individual the skills and proper techniques. Mr. Falah stated that some individuals were not able to learn virtually only,

and he would meet with them once or twice before continuing virtual services. Ted Chittenden inquired how Mohammed Falah was able to determine whether an individual required in person teaching first. Mohammed Falah stated that he would instruct how to hold and use the cane and would listen to see if they were holding it correctly. Mohammed Falah stated that when he was instructing an individual, he could tell whether they were understanding and would request to meet in person if needed.

Brian Dulude inquired regarding the most difficult aspects of teaching virtually. Frank Vance stated that some people had difficulties accessing a Zoom meeting if they did not have access to a smart phone. Brian Dulude stated that Zoom allowed a meeting moderator to call an individual into the meeting and inquired whether anyone had tried that. Mr. Dulude stated that at the bottom of the participant list, there was an option to call individuals, although he believed they needed to be added as a Contact prior. Mohammed Falah stated that Zoom allowed a meeting organizer to send a Zoom link to an individual or to call them by phone. Eve Sanchez stated that Zoom also sent a link to individuals that they could click on to access a meeting. Patty Arnold stated that an individual could click on the link, although they still had to connect to audio or video, which was difficult for some individuals. Brian Dulude inquired whether Mohammed Falah would be willing to create a document with instructions for calling an individual into a meeting. Mohammed Falah stated he would develop instructions and distribute to the workgroup members. Patty Arnold stated that she had to remind individuals to remain patient during the teaching process and that she would be giving detailed instructions. Brian Dulude agreed and suggested that instructors could explain the process during the initial meetings. Mohammed Falah stated that some individuals received equipment in the mail, and would lose or misplace pieces, which could be challenging. Brian Dulude inquired regarding the turnaround for individuals to receive equipment in the mail. Mohammed Falah stated that most individuals received canes within one week, although iOS devices took longer. Ted Chittenden inquired whether individuals in rural areas received equipment as quickly as urban individuals. Mohammed Falah stated that individuals in Pima and Maricopa counties received equipment quickly, and periodically instructors would travel to rural areas to provide services to individuals. Eve Sanchez stated the Purchasing Tech (PT) with OIB would instruct individuals not to open their equipment, and to wait until someone could go through the device with them. Patty Arnold stated the benefit to having the same device to be able to understand what the individual was holding and how to orient it. Eve Sanchez stated that OIB would also put batteries in devices, which could be difficult for some individuals to manage. Ted Chittenden inquired whether individuals would be able to change

batteries in a device if they did not have prior experience. Eve Sanchez stated they would not do that for everyone, and hopefully individuals would identify support members to assist them with similar functions. Fernando Hernandez stated that some individuals were scared to learn cooking skills such as using knives or the oven, and it was easier to teach them in person. Eve Sanchez suggested role playing with individuals using a plastic knife and Play Doh, or something that the individual would be comfortable using. She noted that individuals should receive instructions one step at a time and were not advised to turn the oven on when first learning. Mohammed Falah agreed and stated that he preferred to meet with individuals in person first to ensure they were holding the cane correctly and to assess their skills overall before meeting virtually.

Brian Dulude inquired whether anyone had any success stories they would like to share. Patty Arnold stated she had success teaching an individual, who was not familiar with AT, to use technology through step-by-step instruction. Mohammed Falah stated he taught an individual to use a cane, and the individual was able to navigate outside and then move to virtual teaching. Eve Sanchez stated that anyone could send their success stories to her or Brian Dulude, which could be shared in the GCBVI Annual Report.

Brian Dulude stated that in the past month, the total number of referrals to Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) was 51 and 18 of those were requesting services from OIB. He noted that was a testament that the virtual teaching was working. Brian Dulude stated that some clients might require some in person teaching, although the virtual teaching methods were working. Mr. Dulude suggested the workgroup discuss O&M instruction at the next meeting and focus on what was working and what was not working.

### **Agenda and Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Virtual Learning Workgroup is TBD. Agenda items are as follows:

- O&M Virtual Instruction

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Public Comment**

A call to the public was made with no response's forthcoming.

## **Adjournment of Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am.