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Transportation Services Discussion Paper

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Background

4 Support Services is a Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) service available to applicants and eligible
5 VR customers. VR customers may receive the assistance that they need to support VR services
6 that are included in the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) or that may be necessary for a
7 customer to participate in assessments to determine eligibility for VR services and identify VR
8 needs. These services may include transportation services.

9 It is stated in 34 CFR §361.48(b)(9) and 34 CFR §361.5(c)(56) that as appropriate to the VR
10 needs of each individual and consistent with each customer's IPE, VR services are available to
11 assist the individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, advancing in, or
12 regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths,
13 resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

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Issues

15 VR has identified three issues in current policy that, if addressed, will update and improve VR
16 policies and procedures regarding the reasonable and appropriate use of transportation services.

- 17 1. There is a significant discrepancy between the mileage rate paid to a customer and mileage
18 paid to a third party.
19 2. Current rates for transportation services have not been updated since 2009 and do not align
20 with the mileage rates published on the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts website. The
21 current published rates are:
22 ➤ Mileage times a maximum of \$.21 per mile, not to exceed \$50 per week, when
23 paid directly to the customer.
24 ➤ Mileage times a maximum of \$.55 per mile when paid directly to a third party.
25 3. Policy does not provide guidance to VR staff about transporting VR customers.

26 If the rate increases are approved, the fiscal impact would be an estimated increase of \$48,239
27 based on applying the proposed rates to actual expenditures for transportation payments paid to
28 customers during FFY 2019.

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Decision Point

30 Staff seeks direction on revising VR policy, as follows, to address the issues identified above and
31 to create a new methodology, identified below:

- 32 • Set the mileage rate for providing transportation for all private vehicles that is based on the
33 rates published on the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts website.
34 • Clarify that VR staff must not transport VR customers.

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Rehabilitation Council of Texas

36 RCT suggested removing the requirement of customers providing receipts.
37 VR agreed to remove the requirement of receipts. VR will require a log to be completed for
38 transportation services.