

Resolution 1988-01

RE: Nebraska Services for the Visually Impaired

WHEREAS, we, the members of the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska, are dedicated to the common goals of security, equality, and opportunity for all blind persons; and

WHEREAS, we are a state affiliate of our nation’s largest and oldest organization of the blind, the National Federation of the Blind; and

WHEREAS, since 1940, our goals have lead us to monitor and effect change within agencies for the blind, both public and private, to enable the blind to take an equal place in society by receiving reasonable rehabilitation services and meaningful training; and

WHEREAS, a long-range planning process has been initiated within the Department of Public Institutions (DPI) which will directly affect the manner in which services are delivered by Nebraska Services for the Visually Impaired (SVI): and

WHEREAS, some controversy exists concerning training of the blind, stemming from different philosophical approaches to blindness; and

WHEREAS, we believe that SVI, through certain of its policies, is helping the blind of Nebraska to obtain the kind of training which they need in order to become productive and competent members of society; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska in Convention assembled this 9th day of October, 1988 in the city of Grand Island, Nebraska, that this organization goes on record in support of the following policies currently in effect at SVI:

1. The use of sleep shades as the most effective way of teaching blind or visually impaired persons alternative techniques of specific value to the blind;
2. The current methods of hiring and training travel instructors including the employment of blind travel instructors despite the fact that they cannot be certified as Orientation and Mobility Instructors; (We believe that the visual requirement for certification is unfounded, and therefore discriminatory. Moreover, Nebraska has a record of more than ten years of successful travel teaching by blind instructors.)
3. Cane travel instruction in the Orientation Center exclusively, since most Dog Guide schools require cane skills, and since home teaching is available to all, regardless of travel tool preference;
4. A training period under sleep shades for all staff members;
5. The basing of these policies on the philosophy that blind and visually impaired persons can compete on terms of equality with the sighted, given proper training and opportunity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, this resolution be submitted as an addendum to the existing public record.

Adopted Unanimously