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| GRETCHEN WHITMERGOVERNOR | DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY Lansing | JEFF DONOFRIODIRECTOR |

**Memorandum**

**DATE:** April 8, 2020

**TO:** Lisa Kisiel

BSBP Field Services Division Director

**FROM:** William Robinson, Director

 Bureau of Services of Blind Persons (BSBP)

**SUBJECT:** Covid-19 Response: Post-secondary – Summer Tuition

I am writing you regarding the existing post-secondary policy related to summer tuition. Prior to the Covid-19, BSBP policy did not support sponsorship of summer tuition for post-secondary candidates unless by exception. Exceptions were limited to situations where a summer school course or courses were necessary in order to allow for completion of studies in August or December of the same year or in the case where courses would not otherwise be offered to allow the student to advance in their degree – for example, as in the case of a cohort track that included summer school courses for completion.

The Covid-19 crisis resulted in conversion of in person post-secondary instruction to online instruction.

Recognizing that many students are unable to leave their homes or post-secondary residence; and, recognizing that uncertainty exists as to what opportunities exists for students during the summer months, **as BSBP Director I hereby grant counselors exception under these unusual circumstances to the existing post-secondary policy related to payment for summer studies.**

Counselors may authorize payment for summer courses for participants currently enrolled or that may be newly enrolled for post-secondary studies in order to accelerate their training and advance their entry date into the job market.

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Covid-19 Response: Post-secondary – Summer Tuition

BSBP will support part-time to full-time online courses, books and supporting supplies.

BSBP *will not* support room and board costs unless: the student’s training was approved prior to the interruptions created by Covid-19, in which case the counselor may continue to authorize support if room and board was previously approved except that room and board related to on-campus housing and meal plans are no longer allowable as long as the post-secondary campus remains closed to students.

Normal approval paths and memorandums to document approvals outside spending authorities remain in effect.

cc: FSD Managers, Mike Pemble