



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

34 CFR Chapter III

[Docket ID ED-2024-OSERS-0138]

**Final Priorities and Requirements — Rehabilitation Long-
Term Training Program**

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative
Services (OSERS), Department of Education.

ACTION: Final priorities and requirements.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) announces
priorities and requirements under the Rehabilitation Long-
Term Training (RLTT) program with a focus on the
Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) and
six rehabilitation topic areas. The Department may use
these priorities and requirements for competitions in
fiscal year (FY) 2025 and later years. This action is
intended to address the national needs for the RLTT
program, particularly the retention of vocational
rehabilitation (VR) personnel at State VR agencies and
recruitment of VR professionals where there are shortages
through the training of RSA scholars.

DATES: The priorities and requirements are effective
[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE
FEDERAL REGISTER].

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diandrea Bailey, U.S.
Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room

4A10, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 987-0126.

Email: 84.129@ed.gov.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the RLTT program is to provide financial assistance for academic training in areas of personnel shortages identified by the Secretary and published in a notice in the *Federal Register*. Grantees must award at least 65 percent of project funds as scholarships (i.e., awards of financial assistance, including disbursements or credits for student stipends, tuition and fees, books and supplies, and student travel in conjunction with training assignments) to students (herein referred to as RSA scholars) enrolled in the RLTT program.

Assistance Listing Number: 84.129.

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 772.

Applicable Regulations: 34 CFR parts 385 and 386.

We published a notice of proposed priorities and requirements (NPP) for this competition in the Federal Register on January 21, 2025 (90 FR 6910). That notice contained background information and our reasons for proposing the priorities and requirements. There are differences between the NPP and this notice of final

priorities and requirements (NFP), as discussed in the *Analysis of Comments and Changes* of this document.

Public Comment: In response to our invitation in the NPP, 63 parties submitted public comments. The comments were largely supportive of the priorities or related topic areas. There were no comments in opposition to the priorities or requirements. Several commenters submitted recommendations or requests for changes within the scope of the NPP. Some commenters provided valuable insights about the State VR and RLTT programs as well as other disability-related issues beyond the scope of these priorities. Generally, we do not address technical and other minor changes or suggested changes the law does not authorize us to make under the applicable statutory authority. In addition, in general, we do not address broad comments that raised concerns not directly related to the proposed priorities or requirements.

Analysis of Comments and Changes: An analysis of the comments and of any changes in the priorities and requirements since publication of the NPP follows.

Comment: Multiple commenters articulated the need for integrating vocational evaluation and career assessment training in Priority 1 (RLTT Program for State VR Agencies' Comprehensive System of Professional Development) or in Priority 2 (RLTT Program for Rehabilitation Topic Areas) given the lack of available degree programs (especially at

the graduate level) on the integration of vocational evaluation and career assessment training. Commenters noted the importance of this process for individuals with disabilities to gain better understanding of their occupational interests and for VR professionals to have important information to best serve their clients.

Discussion: The Department recognizes the importance of vocational evaluation and career assessment in the VR process leading to quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities in the State VR Services program.

Changes: The Department has added language in Priorities 1 and 2 to clarify that vocational rehabilitation and career assessment may be a part of proposed projects within either priority.

Comment: One commenter recommended that the mental health disorders list in Priority 2, Topic Area 3 (Rehabilitation of Individuals With Mental Health Disorders or Illnesses) be aligned with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to facilitate the transition of students and youth from school to postsecondary life.

Discussion: The list was originally presented as examples of mental health disorders that may be addressed under Priority 2, Topic Area 3 (Rehabilitation of Individuals With Mental Health Disorders or Illnesses). Upon further review, there are a range of mental health disorders that

might be addressed. Specifying a narrow range of select disorders in absence of a full list may be misleading and constrain the range and scope of proposed projects. In identifying which mental health disorders may be addressed, applicants may cite IDEA or use other relevant points of reference.

Changes: We have removed "Such mental health disorders and illnesses might include mood disorders (e.g., depressive disorders and bipolar disorders), suicidality, schizophrenia, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mild to severe mental health disorders. This can include mental health issues related to long-term effects of post-acute infection syndromes (COVID-19 and myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS) for which mental health care may be part of treating a potentially more systematic illness." from Priority 2, Topic Area 3.

Comment: One commenter recommended that Priority 2 incorporates bachelor's degree programs in rehabilitation counseling.

Discussion: Priority 2 addresses bachelor's level training under Topic Area 4 (Undergraduate Education in the Rehabilitation Services). Priority 2 references undergraduate training for rehabilitation generalists and paraprofessionals but not rehabilitation counselors. We

concur that it is reasonable to incorporate rehabilitation counseling as an undergraduate training option.

Changes: The Department adds a reference to rehabilitation counseling as an optional undergraduate field of study within Priority 2, Topic Area 4.

Comment: A few commenters suggested transition services to youth, assistive technology, and traumatic brain injury (TBI) as additional priority areas.

Discussion: The NFP currently addresses VR transition services to youth and students with disabilities or pre-employment transition services in Priority 1 (RLTT Program for State VR Agencies' Comprehensive System of Professional Development), Priority 2 - Topic Areas 1 (Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling: Master's Degree) and 4 (Undergraduate Education in the Rehabilitation Services) as well as Application Requirements (b) and (d). Assistive technology is a core element of Topic Area 2 (Rehabilitation Technology) and is also referenced in Topic Area 6 (Rehabilitation of Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing) and Application Requirement (b). Although TBI is not explicitly referenced, prospective applicants may highlight TBI under Application Requirement (b)(4), which requires training on the specialized needs of individuals with specific types of disability. Applicants may also highlight transition services, assistive technology, or TBI in other priorities or topic areas, as appropriate. As

such, the Department believes that these topic areas are sufficiently incorporated in the priorities and requirements.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter recommended adding occupational therapy as a training area within Priority 2, Topic Area 5 (Rehabilitation of Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision).

Discussion: Topic Area 5 supports training on specialized services such as orientation and mobility, among others, that help individuals who are blind or have low vision achieve or maintain competitive integrated employment. The topic area does not specify the pertinent professions or areas of expertise but gives prospective applicants the flexibility to choose their proposed training focus, which may include occupational therapy.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter expressed concern that references to racial and ethnic, diversity in Priority 1 (RLTT Program for State VR Agencies' Comprehensive System of Professional Development) may inadvertently narrow the pool of eligible recipients and limit the priority's effectiveness.

Discussion: All individuals should have equal access to educational opportunities as required by Federal Civil Rights law. Therefore, programs funded under this priority must provide the necessary training to all rehabilitation

personnel, so that these personnel may effectively deliver rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. As such, we are removing references to racial and ethnic diversity.

Changes: Consistent with the Administration's priority that all recipients of services supported by Federal funding be treated equally, we have removed racial and ethnic diversity references from the Priority 1 (RLTT Program for State VR Agencies' Comprehensive System of Professional Development) description. We also remove a reference to cultural diversity from Application Requirement (b) (4).

Comment: A few commenters suggested the Application Requirements reference specific accreditation entities, namely the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs and Certified Rehabilitation Counselors.

Discussion: Priorities 1 and 2 already stipulate that the academic training for all participants must meet the personnel standards of section 101(a) (7) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended and the program regulations at 34 CFR 361.18. Application requirement (b) (2) stipulates that grantees must prepare training participants to meet all applicable certification standards. We maintain flexibility in how applicants

address these program regulations and application requirements.

Changes: None.

Comment: One commenter suggested to increase the percentage set aside for scholarships from 65 percent to 85 percent to ensure that a greater share of resources directly supports students.

Discussion: While we acknowledge that maximizing the percentage set aside for scholarships is an important policy goal, the Department did not specifically propose changes and invite public comment regarding this regulatory requirement in the NPP. As such, this comment is outside of the scope of this rulemaking.

Changes: None.

Final Priorities: This document contains two priorities. The Department may use one or more priority for the FY 2025 RLTT program competition and for any subsequent competitions.

Final Priority 1: RLTT Program for State VR Agencies' CSPD: Master's Degree or Certificate, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.129W.

Projects that propose a CSPD project that provides training to currently employed State VR agency personnel, including VR counselors with disabilities. Within CSPD training, applicants may identify an area of concentration

consistent with this priority, such as vocational evaluation and career assessment or others.

The academic training for all participants must meet the designated State unit (DSU) personnel standards required under section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and 34 CFR 361.18. The training must also meet the qualifications for the master's degree or academic certificate specified in the State's CSPD plans or of the States with which the State VR counselors and other personnel are working.

CSPD proposed projects must develop and use innovative approaches to train VR professionals, including using cutting-edge technology or innovative applications of advanced technology (e.g., hybrid learning and competency-based programs) to maximize participation in, and improve the effectiveness of, the academic training.

Final Priority 2: RLTT Program for Rehabilitation Topic Areas, ALNs 84.129B, 84.129E, 84.129H, 84.129L, 84.129P, and 84.129Q.

Projects that provide academic training to RSA scholars where the training leads to a degree (undergraduate or master's level) or academic certificate in one of six rehabilitation topic areas that follow. Within these topic areas, applicants may identify an area of concentration consistent with this priority, such as vocational evaluation and career assessment or others.

1. Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counseling:

Master's Degree (ALN 84.129B). Projects in this topic area must be designed to support RSA scholars interested in pursuing a master's degree in VR counseling. Projects must increase the skills of RSA scholars so that they are, upon successful completion of their program of study, prepared to, effectively and with an advanced level of expertise, help individuals with disabilities (consumers) meet their career and personal goals and help employers in their hiring efforts. Projects should also increase RSA scholars understanding of and ability to support consumers access to pre-employment transition services.

2. Rehabilitation Technology (ALN 84.129E). Projects in this topic area must provide scholarships to RSA scholars to pursue a degree or certificate in the application of advanced technology in rehabilitation services, and for use in careers in rehabilitation technology. Rehabilitation technology training includes training on the use, applications, and benefits of technology (including assistive technology and artificial intelligence tools) for individuals with disabilities to achieve and/or maintain competitive integrated employment and independence.

The rehabilitation technology training program must be designed to ensure that RSA scholars acquire a 21st-century understanding of the evolving technology labor force, the

needs of individuals with disabilities that might be addressed via technology, and the ways technology can unlock individuals' strengths.

3. Rehabilitation of Individuals With Mental Health Disorders or Illnesses (ALN 84.129H). Projects in this topic area must be designed to support RSA scholars interested in pursuing a degree or certificate for careers that provide specialized services to individuals who have mental health disorders or illnesses and are participants in the State VR programs. Additionally, projects must be designed to prepare RSA scholars to address a range of issues in VR services for individuals with mental health disorders or illnesses to assist them to achieve and maintain competitive integrated employment.

4. Undergraduate Education in the Rehabilitation Services (ALN 84.129L). Projects in this topic area must train undergraduate RSA scholars interested in pursuing careers as rehabilitation counselors or generalists, VR paraprofessionals, or other entry-level positions in the public VR services. Projects must also be designed to provide training and clinical learning experiences to equip RSA scholars with foundational knowledge of disability conditions, VR processes, interviewing techniques, and other skills required for working with consumers in the public VR services, including the skills to coordinate the diagnosis and evaluation of a person's disabling condition,

create individual plans, arrange various VR services, assist VR counselors in working with persons with disabilities in selecting a vocational goal, provide personal and social adjustment services, conduct job placement activities, and provide follow-up services to individuals after other services are completed. Pre-employment transition services should be included as part of programmatic content.

5. Rehabilitation of Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision (ALN 84.129P). Projects in this topic area must train RSA scholars interested in pursuing a degree or certificate for careers in providing specialized services to persons who are blind or have low vision. Projects must be designed to provide training and hands-on experiences in VR services for persons who are blind or have low vision to assist them to achieve and/or maintain competitive integrated employment, including training in orientation and mobility, methods of independent and safe travel, and application of advanced technology.

6. Rehabilitation of Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (ALN 84.129Q). Projects in this topic area must train RSA scholars interested in pursuing a degree or certificate for careers in providing specialized rehabilitation to persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. The training must include opportunities for RSA scholars to acquire the necessary skills to communicate effectively

with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and to assess and address the communication needs of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Additionally, projects must have plans to support RSA scholars in developing competency in sign language/ASL and other communication methods as well as familiarity with the use of various assistive listening devices and application of other advanced assistive technology.

Projects must provide assistance to scholars to secure or maintain employment with State VR agencies, where the job duties include provision of rehabilitation of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing (e.g., assessment services, vocational and adjustment counseling services, provision of independent living skills training, interpreting services, interpreter referral services, advocacy services, and job placement services).

The academic training for all participants must meet the DSU personnel standards required under section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and 34 CFR 361.18.

Rehabilitation topic area projects under this priority must develop and use innovative approaches to train RSA scholars, including using cutting-edge technology or innovative application of advanced technology (e.g., hybrid learning or competency-based programs) to maximize

participation in, and improve the effectiveness of, the academic training.

In addition to academic training, RSA funded projects may provide a one-time stipend, to an amount as specified in the Notice Inviting Applications published in the *Federal Register* to RSA scholars based on identified needs for--

(a) completing an internship (e.g., room and board, travel);

(b) obtaining qualifying employment in the specific field of study within a period of time after graduating and maintaining qualifying employment a minimum period of time beyond the required service obligation period as specified in the NIA; and

(c) utilizing a vetted employment expert or consultant to assist the RSA scholar in securing employment within a period of time after graduating with a State VR or related agency in the field of study as specified in the NIA.

Types of Priorities:

When inviting applications for a competition using one or more priorities, we designate the type of each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational through a notice in the *Federal Register*. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by (1) awarding additional points, depending on the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority we are particularly interested in applications that meet the priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

FINAL REQUIREMENTS:

The Department establishes the following requirements for the RLTT program. We may apply one or more of these requirements in any year in which this program is in effect. *Application Requirements:* All applicants must--

(a) Provide data on the current and projected employment needs and personnel shortages in State VR agencies and other related agencies (as defined in 34 CFR 386.4) in their local area, region, and State; and describe how the proposed project will address those employment needs and personnel shortages;

(b) Describe how the project will train RSA scholars, as applicable, including how the project will provide them with an understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities to ensure that the RSA scholars have a 21st century understanding of the evolving labor force and the needs of individuals with disabilities. Applicants must describe how, upon completion of the training program, State VR personnel including VR counselors or RSA scholars will be prepared to assist individuals with disabilities to meet current demands and emerging trends in the labor market, including how--

(1) The program provides a breadth of knowledge, experience, and rigor that will adequately prepare scholars to meet the employment needs and goals of VR consumers and aligns with evidence-based (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) practices and with competency-based skills (e.g., advanced counseling skills, critical thinking skills, and skills in building collaborative relationships);

(2) The program prepares RSA scholars to meet all applicable certification standards;

(3) The program addresses new or emerging consumer employment needs or trends at the national, State, and regional levels;

(4) The program trains RSA scholars to possess the skills needed to address the specialized needs of

individuals with specific types of disability conditions, which may include, but are not limited to, physical disabilities, mental health disorders or illnesses, intellectual and developmental disabilities, blindness, and deafness;

(5) The program trains RSA scholars to understand the applications and strategies related to the integration of advanced assistive technology and artificial intelligence tools into VR services to fuel competitive integrated employment in the 21st century for individuals with disabilities and recognize the assistive technology needs of consumers and employers who hire individuals with disabilities throughout the rehabilitation process so that they will be better able to coordinate the provision of appropriate advanced assistive technology services and devices including artificial intelligence in order to assist the consumers to obtain and retain competitive integrated employment;

(6) The program teaches RSA scholars to work effectively with employers, including by teaching strategies for developing relationships with employers in their State and local areas, identifying employer needs and skill demands, making initial employer contacts, presenting job-ready clients to potential employers, and conducting follow-up with employers;

(7) The program teaches RSA scholars to work effectively with state education agencies (SEAs), and local educational agencies (LEAs), particularly special education systems and educators. This includes instruction on collaborating effectively with SEAs, LEAs, school administrators, and special education teachers to ensure their awareness of pre-employment transition services and vocational rehabilitation transition services, and ensuring the successful planning and provision of these services; and

(8) The latest technology is incorporated into the methods of instruction (e.g., technology that supports the use of hybrid education to reach scholars who live far from the university and the use of technology to acquire labor market information);

(c) Describe their methods to--

(1) Recruit highly capable prospective State VR counselors or RSA scholars who have the potential to successfully complete the academic program, all required practicum and internship experiences, and the required service obligation;

(2) Educate potential RSA scholars about the terms and conditions of the service obligation under 34 CFR 386.4, 386.34, and 386.40 through 386.43 so that they will be fully informed before accepting a scholarship and aware

of the consequences should they fail to complete the program;

(3) Maintain a system that ensures that RSA scholars sign a payback agreement when they start and an exit certification form when they exit the program, regardless of whether they drop out, are removed, or successfully complete the program;

(4) Provide academic support and counseling to RSA scholars throughout the course of the academic program to ensure successful completion;

(5) Ensure that all RSA scholars complete an internship in a State VR agency (as defined in 34 CFR 386.4) as a requirement for program completion, unless the Secretary determines upon grantee request that there is sufficient justification for not completing an internship;

(6) Provide career counseling, including informing RSA scholars of professional contacts and networks, job leads, including those available through the RSA Payback Information Management System (PIMS), and other necessary resources and information to support RSA scholars in successfully obtaining and retaining qualifying employment;

(7) Maintain bi-monthly contact with RSA scholars upon successful academic training program completion and provide post-graduation support to assist RSA scholars to achieve qualifying employment as well as employment

support, at a minimum, for the RSA scholars' initial three to six months of employment;

(8) Maintain quarterly communication with RSA scholars after program exit until the beginning of their service obligation date to ensure that scholar contact information in PIMS is up to date;

(9) Maintain and safeguard credentials to access PIMS for the timely review and approval of scholar employment; and

(10) Maintain accurate financial information on, while safeguarding the privacy of, current and former scholars from the time they are enrolled in the program until they successfully meet their service obligation;

(d) Describe a plan for developing and maintaining partnerships with State VR agencies, community-based rehabilitation service providers, and LEAs that includes--

(1) Coordination between the grantee and the State VR agencies and community-based rehabilitation service providers that will promote qualifying employment opportunities for RSA scholars and formalized on-boarding and induction experiences for new hires;

(2) Formal opportunities for RSA scholars to obtain work experiences through internships, practicum agreements, job shadowing, and mentoring opportunities;

(3) Formal opportunities for RSA scholars to obtain work experiences in LEAs to develop practical knowledge on

effective special education teacher-VR counselor collaborations that foster increased awareness in LEAs of pre-employment transition services and vocational rehabilitation transition services, and the successful planning and provision of these services; and

(4) A scholar internship assessment tool that is developed to ensure a consistent approach to the evaluation of scholars in a particular program. Applicants must describe how—

(i) The tool will reflect the specific responsibilities of the scholar during the internship;

(ii) Grantees and worksite supervisors will work together to develop the assessment tool. Supervisors at the internship site will complete the assessment detailing the scholar's strengths and areas for improvement that must be addressed and provide the results of the assessment to the grantee; and

(iii) The grantee will ensure that (A) RSA scholars are provided with a copy of the assessment and all relevant rubrics prior to beginning their internship, (B) supervisors have sufficient technical support to accurately complete the assessment, and (C) scholars receive a copy of the results of the assessment within 90 days of the end of their internship;

(e) Describe how RSA scholars will be evaluated throughout the program to ensure that they are proficient

in meeting the needs and demands of consumers and employers, including the steps that will be taken to provide assistance to an RSA scholar who is not meeting academic standards or who is performing poorly in a practicum or internship setting;

(f) Describe how the program will be evaluated, including how--

(1) The program will determine its effectiveness over time in filling vacancies in the State VR agency with qualified counselors or rehabilitation professionals capable of providing quality services to consumers;

(2) Input from State VR agencies and community-based rehabilitation service providers will be included in the evaluation;

(3) Feedback from consumers of VR services and employers (including the assessments described in paragraph (d)(4)) will be included in the evaluation;

(4) Data on the State VR program from other sources, such as the Department, will be included in the evaluation; and

(5) The data and results from the evaluation will be used to make necessary adjustments and improvements to the program.

This notice does not preclude us from proposing additional priorities, requirements, definitions, or selection criteria, subject to meeting applicable

rulemaking requirements.

Note: This document does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use these priorities and requirements, we invite applications through a notice in the *Federal Register*.

Executive Orders 12866, 13563, and 14192

Regulatory Impact Analysis

Under Executive Order 12866, it must be determined whether this regulatory action is "significant" and, therefore, subject to the requirements of the Executive order and subject to review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866 defines a "significant regulatory action" as an action likely to result in a rule that may--

(1) Have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more or adversely affect in a material way the economy, a sector of the economy, productivity, competition, jobs, the environment, public health or safety, or State, local, or Tribal governments or communities;

(2) Create a serious inconsistency or otherwise interfere with an action taken or planned by another agency;

(3) Materially alter the budgetary impacts of entitlements, grants, user fees, or loan programs or the rights and obligations of recipients thereof; or

(4) Raise novel legal or policy issues arising out of legal mandates, the President's priorities, or the principles set forth in the Executive order.

This final regulatory action is not a significant regulatory action subject to review by OMB under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866.

Since this regulatory action is not a significant regulatory action under section 3(f) of Executive Order 12866, it is not considered an "Executive Order 14192 regulatory action."

We have also reviewed this final regulatory action under Executive Order 13563, which supplements and explicitly reaffirms the principles, structures, and definitions governing regulatory review established in Executive Order 12866. To the extent permitted by law, Executive Order 13563 requires that an agency--

(1) Propose or adopt regulations only upon a reasoned determination that their benefits justify their costs (recognizing that some benefits and costs are difficult to quantify);

(2) Tailor its regulations to impose the least burden on society, consistent with obtaining regulatory objectives and taking into account--among other things and to the extent practicable--the costs of cumulative regulations;

(3) In choosing among alternative regulatory approaches, select those approaches that maximize net benefits;

(4) To the extent feasible, specify performance objectives, rather than the behavior or manner of compliance a regulated entity must adopt; and

(5) Identify and assess available alternatives to direct regulation, including economic incentives--such as user fees or marketable permits--to encourage the desired behavior, or provide information that enables the public to make choices.

Executive Order 13563 also requires an agency "to use the best available techniques to quantify anticipated present and future benefits and costs as accurately as possible." OIRA has emphasized that these techniques may include "identifying changing future compliance costs that might result from technological innovation or anticipated behavioral changes."

We are issuing these final priorities and requirements only on a reasoned determination that their benefits would justify their costs. In choosing among alternative regulatory approaches, we selected those approaches that would maximize net benefits. Based on the analysis that follows, the Department believes that this regulatory action is consistent with the principles in Executive Order 13563.

We also have determined that this regulatory action would not unduly interfere with State, local, and Tribal governments in the exercise of their governmental functions.

In accordance with these Executive orders, the Department has assessed the potential costs and benefits, both quantitative and qualitative, of this regulatory action. The potential costs are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering the Department's programs and activities.

In addition, we have considered the potential benefits of this regulatory action and have noted these benefits in the background section of the NPP.

Regulatory Flexibility Act Certification

The Secretary certifies that this regulatory action would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

The small entities that this regulatory action would affect are institutions of higher education (IHEs) that meet the eligibility requirements in section 241(1) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, and public and private nonprofit organizations and agencies that partner with IHEs. The Secretary believes that the costs imposed on applicants by the final priorities and requirements would be limited to paperwork burden related to preparing

an application and that the benefits would outweigh any costs incurred by applicants.

Participation in this program is voluntary. For this reason, the final priorities and requirements would impose no burden on small entities unless they applied for funding under the program. We expect that in determining whether to apply for any project under the Rehabilitation Training (RT) program funds, an eligible applicant would evaluate the requirements of preparing an application and any associated costs and weigh them against the benefits likely to be achieved by receiving a RT grant. Eligible applicants most likely would apply only if they determine that the likely benefits exceed the costs of preparing an application. The likely benefits include the potential receipt of a grant as well as other benefits that may accrue to an entity through its development of an application.

This regulatory action would not have a significant economic impact on a small entity once it receives a grant because it would be able to meet the costs of compliance using the funds provided under this program.

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF)

or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other Department documents published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access Department documents published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Diana Diaz,

Deputy Assistant Secretary and Acting Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 2025-11117 Filed: 6/16/2025 8:45 am; Publication Date: 6/17/2025]