



INDEPENDENCE

Believe and Achieve!

**An Introduction to
The New Jersey**

Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired

Mission Statement

- The mission of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to promote and provide services in the areas of education, employment, independence and eye health through informed choice and partnership with persons who are blind, deaf-blind or visually impaired, their families and the community.

Who We Are and What We Do

- The NJ Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired helps people who are blind, visually impaired and deaf blind go to work and function independently at school, in their homes and in the community.
- Most people call us “The Commission” or “CBVI”

Did You Know?

That the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired may be able to assist with:

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services** to help individuals become employable and obtain employment
- **Education Services**, for children when approved by the school district, to help them succeed in their local public school program
- **Rehabilitation Teaching** to enable people to manage their household and perform tasks of daily living
- **Orientation and Mobility Instruction** to enable people to travel safely and independently with confidence
- **Eye Health Education, Screenings and Services** as well as instruction in self-care for people with Diabetes

Did You Know?

That the Commission may also be able to:

- **Refer people to community resources** for housing, financial assistance, food insecurity and other supportive services.
- Provide **information on aids and appliances** adapted for people who are visually impaired.
- Provide **information on peer support groups that meet in person or virtually.** and
- Did you know most CBVI services are provided **free of charge?**

Eligibility

- A person may be eligible for services if they are experiencing a vision impairment that is affecting their ability to perform normal daily life activities.



Images: A student doing homework; A woman doing housework; and three people reading newspapers.

Definitions

- **VISUALLY IMPAIRED** means that with the best correction an individual's vision is 20/70 or less in the better eye or has a visual field restriction of 40 degrees.
- **LEGALLY BLIND** means that with the best correction an individual's vision is 20/200 or less in the better eye. Also, an individual is considered legally blind if they have a restricted visual field limitation of 20 degrees or less.

Visually Impaired and Legally Blind

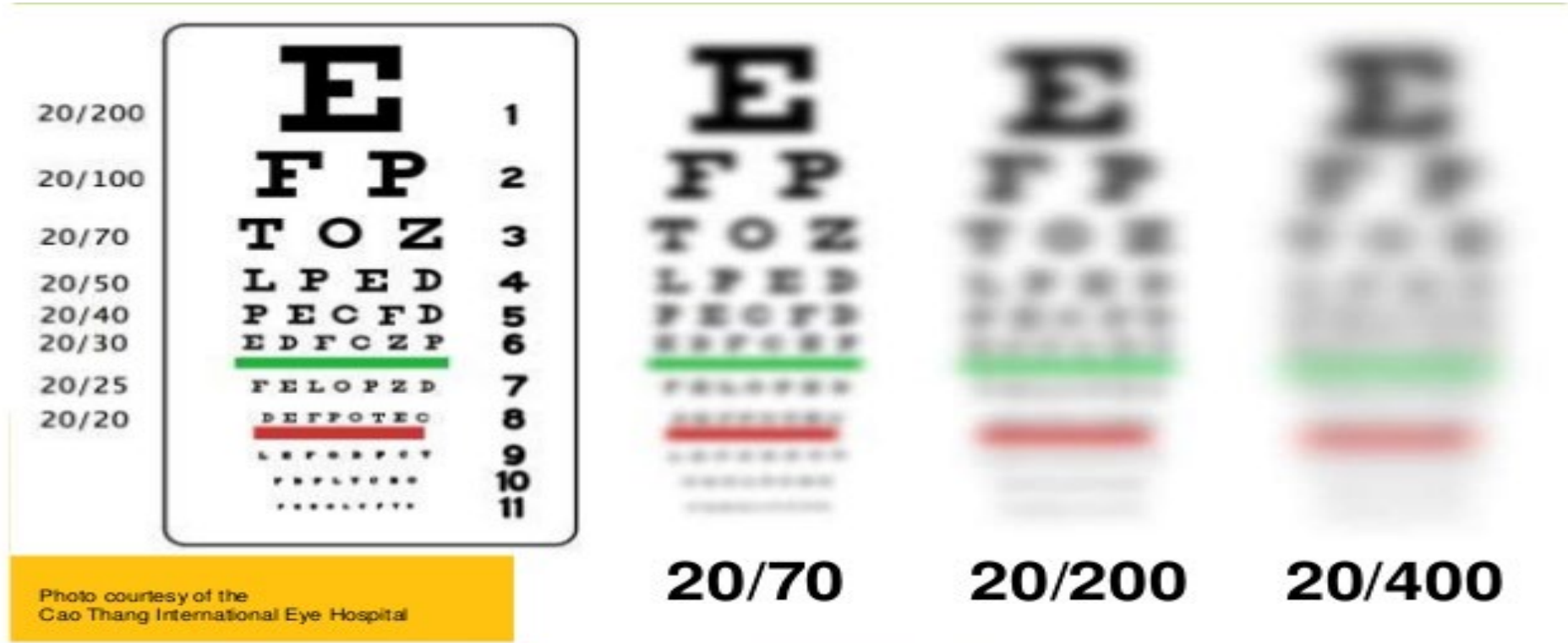


Image: Four eye charts depicting how people with 20/20, 20/70, 20/200 and 20/400 view them.

Visual Field Restriction



40 Degrees

20 Degrees

10 Degrees

Image: Three “Do Not Enter” street signs depicting how people with visual field restrictions would see them.

Application / Referral Procedure



To Apply or Refer Someone for Services Call:

877-685-8878 or 973-648-3333



And you will be referred to your local CBVI Regional Office

Please be prepared to provide:

- Applicant's name, telephone number and Social Security number
- Applicant's address, including county of residence and zip code

It would also be helpful to provide:

- The name and contact information for the applicant's eye care professional (if any)

Regional Offices

- Northern Region

- 153 Halsey Street 5th fl. Newark, NJ 07101
- Phone: 973-648-2111

- **Serving: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Warren counties**

- Central Region

- 100 Daniels Way, Freehold, NJ 07728
- Phone: 732-308-4001

- **Serving: Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, Somerset and Union counties**

- Southern Region

- 2201 Rt. 38 East, Suite 600, Cherry Hill, NJ 08002
- Phone: 856-482-3700

- **Serving: Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer and Salem counties**

Administrative Offices



**Executive Director
Bernice Davis, PsyD**

**153 Halsey Street
6th floor**

P.O. Box 47017

Newark, NJ 07101

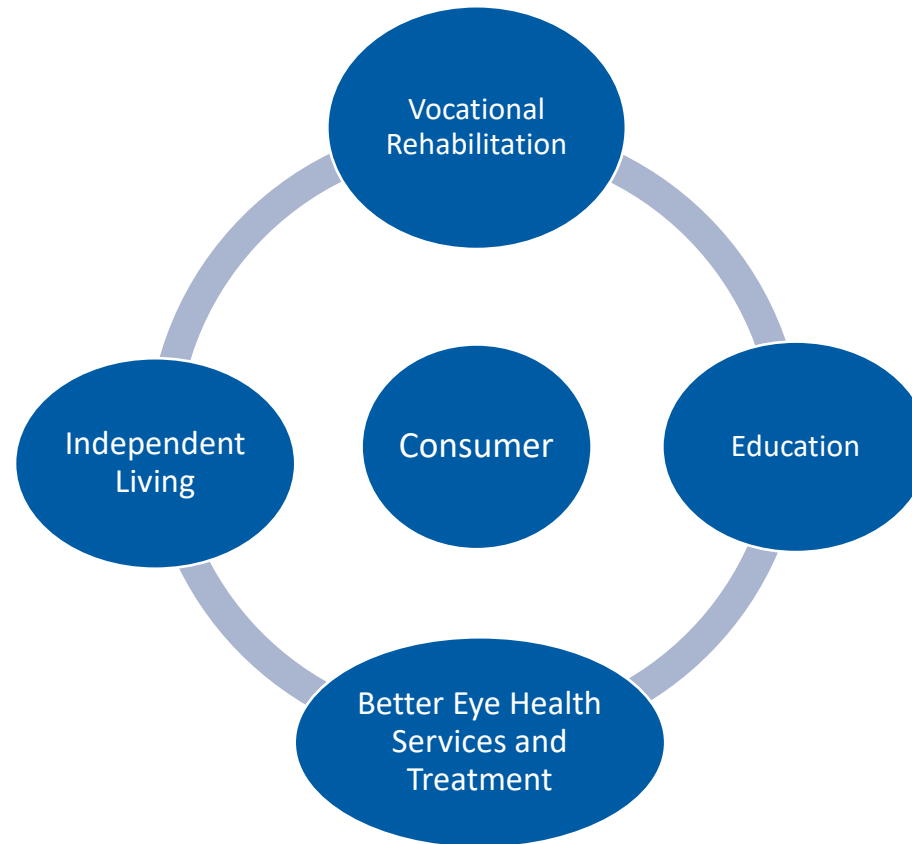
Main Number: 973-648-3333

Toll Free: 877-685-8878

E-Mail: askcbvi@dhs.nj.gov

Web Site: www.cbvi.nj.gov

CBVI's Consumer Centered Service Programs



Project B.E.S.T. (Better Eye-health Services and Treatment)

- CBVI's Project BEST program works to save sight and restore vision whenever it is medically possible.
- Community-based eye health education program that aims to prevent vision loss by promoting early detection and timely treatment of eye diseases like glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.
- Unfortunately, in historically underserved communities, many people do not receive necessary medical services and care, including eye glasses for a variety of reasons.
- With trained vision screeners and medical eye care professionals, this program addresses the problem by bringing eye health services directly to residents in their local neighborhood.

Project BEST Services

- Services include: mobile eye examination unit; vision screening for preschool and school-age children; monthly or semi-monthly eye screenings at more than 28 fixed sites all over the state; on-site screening at institutions and in communities; special diabetic detection and awareness programs; and other specialized eye screening programs which target historically underserved populations (i.e. people with low incomes, minorities, the elderly, migrant farm workers, etc.)

Eye Health Nurses

- Nutritional Advice
- Monitor Health Care
- Diabetes Management Education
- Instruction on Adaptive Equipment/Devices (insulin syringes, talking glucose monitors)



Image: Hands holding fruits and vegetables, a stethoscope, glucometer, syringes and an insulin pen.

Independent Living Services

- Provides training designed to help people of any age who are blind, deaf-blind or visually impaired to adjust to their vision loss and gain the skills in the activities of daily living that they will need to lead a productive and independent life.

Independent Living Services

- In Home Instruction in Daily Living Skills
- Instruction for Safe Independent Travel
- Child Care Skills
- Instruction in Communication Methods
- Referral to Community Resources

Image: A man receiving instruction on white cane travel in a shopping mall.



ASPIRE

Assistive Support Program for Independence Renewal and Education

- ASPIRE is a statewide network of peer support groups that provide individuals who are living with vision loss the opportunity to gain the necessary coping skills, information, and education needed to thrive.
- ASPIRE is administered by the Independent Living Unit of CBVI, and is geared towards people with vision loss 55 years or older, but is also available to all adults interested in attending
- ASPIRE offers individuals with vision loss the opportunity to connect with others who share similar challenges and life experiences
- There are 68 peer led groups throughout all 21 NJ Counties, including groups specifically for veterans and people who are deaf-blind.



Image: Group of people, sitting in a circle talking.

LEAP

Library Equal Access Program

- Free assistive technology training program for people age 55 and older.
- Participants learn how to use computers and iPads with assistive technology features, such as magnification and speech.



Image: Woman wearing glasses holding an iPad

Education Program

- Provides instruction, resources, and other services to eligible children who are blind, deaf-blind or visually impaired, from birth through 12th grade, and their families to ensure equal access and classroom participation.



Image: Cartoon of a young child wearing sunglasses, smiling, waving and holding a white cane.

Education Services

- Collaboration with Local School Districts
- Comprehensive Itinerant Services Provided by Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI)
- Focus on Inclusion, Integration and Mainstreaming (Known nationally as “The New Jersey Plan”)



Image: TVI working with child in the classroom.

Infant thru Toddler Services (Birth thru age 3)

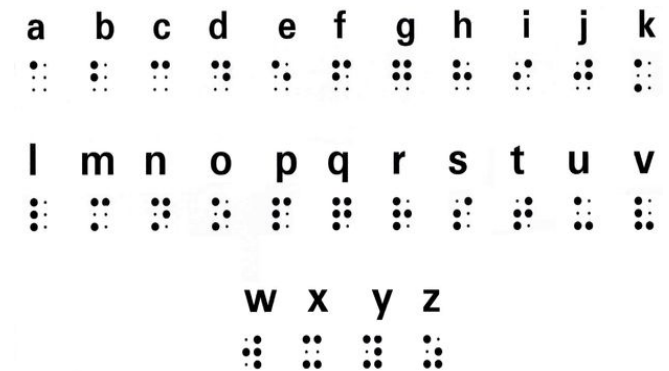
- CBVI provides statewide itinerant education for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3), who are blind, visually impaired, deaf-blind, or multi-disabled with a significant vision impairment and their families. Disability-specific services are provided in the child's natural environment.



Image: Baby wearing glasses holding a tactile toy.

George F. Meyer Instructional Resource Center

- Provides Adaptive Teaching Aids
- Large Print and Braille Textbooks
- Education Materials and Technical Equipment
- Enriching Toys and Developmental Devices
- Assistive Technology



Images: Shapes sorting blocks toy and the Braille/Print alphabet.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR)

- Provides training, counseling and other supportive services that enable people who are blind, deaf-blind and visually impaired to develop, acquire or update skills that can enable them to enter the workforce, maintain employment or become self-employed.



Image: Woman seated at workstation, using assistive technology, with her white cane propped against the desk.

VR Services

- Evaluation
- Counseling and Guidance
- Training
- Job Placement
- Post-Employment
- Supported Employment
- College Counseling/Support
- High School Transition
- Business Enterprises
- Entrepreneurial Program
- Joseph Kohn Training Center



Image: VR Consumer with Jobs Coach in the workplace.

High School Transitional Services

- Provides student centered services that focus on the strengths and abilities of each young person.
- Serves high school students (14 – 21).
- Career assessment, planning and training.
- Includes summer career exploration and college preparatory programs.



Image: Young man holding a certificate of achievement, standing next to his Mother who is smiling.

Pre-ETS Programs

- **Pre-Employment Transition Services** are available to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities, ages 14 to 21, and includes job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, workplace readiness training, instruction in self-advocacy, and counseling on post-secondary enrollment opportunities.



Image: Group of teens at the Trenton Thunder baseball game.

Pre-ETS Services

- CBVI has a long history of providing services dedicated preparing high school students for life after high school.
- These recurring transition programs include Life 101, EDGE (Employment, Development, Guidance, and Engagement) 1.0 and 2.0, Work Skills Preparation, College Prep Experience and the ACE Academy, a program designed to help students gain confidence in identifying as a person with a visual impairment, speaking with others about their disability, and how to communicate accommodation needs in a variety of educational, vocational, and community settings.

College Services

CBVI may assist college students with:

- Funding Resources
- Counseling
- Guidance
- Advocacy
- Job Placement



Image: Man wearing sunglasses in college graduation attire.

Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC)

Instruction Areas Include:

- Activities of Daily Living Skills Instruction
- Orientation and Mobility Instruction
- Kitchen Skills
- Communication Skills
- Braille
- Assistive Technology Skills



Image: Photo of the front exterior of the JKTC

Joseph Kohn Training Center (JKTC)

Program also includes:

- Vocational Counseling
- Career Assessment
- Adjustment to Vision Loss Counseling
- Psychological Services
- Social Services
- Community-based work experience



Image: Man sitting with his guide dog.

Business Enterprises of NJ (BENJ)

- CBVI administers the federal Randolph-Sheppard Program.
- NJ currently has 54 locations managed by individuals who are legally blind.
- Locations include: Snack Bars, Cafes/cafeterias, and vending machine locations.



Image: Man making a purchase from a snack bar run by a blind business manager

Assistive Technology Services (AT)

CBVI AT offers:

- Recommendations for assistive technology for people who are blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind
- Solutions and tips for daily living
- In-depth training to help people get the optimum return from using technology
- Equipment demonstrations in our Regional Assistive Technology Centers (R-TACs)
- Workplace, classroom or other location visits to assess lighting and equipment placement
- The opportunity for individuals to test different AT options and solutions



Image: A person using a refreshable Braille device.

Deaf-Blind Services

Assists Individuals who are Deaf Blind or both hearing and visually impaired, their parents, counselors, educators, employers and the community through various services:

- Provision of Functional Vision Assessments;
- Participation in Educational Planning;
- Employment Counseling and Training;
- Assessments and Provision of Specialized Adaptive Equipment;
- Community Integration Support; and
- In-Service Presentations.



Image: A man and a woman communicating via tactile sign language.



Please Don't Hesitate to Contact Us If You Have Additional Questions

By Phone:

877-685-8878 or 973-648-3333

By E-Mail:

askcbvi@dhs.nj.gov

On the Web:

www.cbvi.nj.gov