

**New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) Service Contractors:
Comprehensive Services and Placement/ Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation
Contracts**

The New York State Commission for the Blind (Commission), a division within the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), is the designated state unit (DSU) under the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, for the administration of vocational services to legally blind residents of New York State. It was established by law in 1913 to maintain a "census of the blind" in New York State and to help individuals who are legally blind or deaf blind find suitable employment. The Commission was also charged with researching the causes of blindness and advancing blindness prevention.

Today, the Commission for the Blind works with people who are legally blind to help them live independent lives by providing counseling, rehabilitation training and employment services to New Yorkers of all ages. These services are provided in conformance with federal regulations. One of the Commission's primary objectives is to assist consumers in achieving economic self-sufficiency and full integration into society. The Commission provides these services through seven district offices and contracts with private, not-for-profit provider agencies. NYSCB provides two types of contracts: comprehensive services contracts and placement/diagnostic vocational evaluation service contracts.

Comprehensive Services Contracts: The Commission for the Blind awarded outcome-based comprehensive services contracts (CSC) to 17 private, not-for-profit agencies for the blind in the State to provide consumers with comprehensive and integrated training in basic life skills essential to live independent lives and successfully seek and maintain a job. The contractors provide assessment and training in the three core contract services: vision rehabilitation therapy, orientation and mobility, and social casework. In order to be eligible as a private agency for the blind, an agency must state in its Articles of Incorporation that one of its organizational purposes is to provide rehabilitation services to people who are blind.

Job Placement Service/ Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation Contracts: Competitive employment is the optimal outcome in vocational rehabilitation. As of January 1, 2015 Commission will have 33 job placement and 12 diagnostic vocational evaluation service contracts. These are contracts with private agencies and providers and include some of

the CSC agencies, Independent Living Centers, organizations serving people with all disabilities, and private (individual) vendors.

All contracts awarded by the NYSCB are outcome based and reconciliation of the goals and actual outcomes of each contract are calculated annually. As a result, this data set is updated annually.

Additional information on Commission for the Blind partnerships may be found at our website www.visionloss.ny.gov

Services

Assisted Living Program (ALP) is a comprehensive package of rehabilitation services available to individuals who are legally blind, over the age of 55, and not seeking paid employment. The ALP Program includes the evaluation of an individual's service needs within the framework of their personal goals, abilities, and resources, and the provision of appropriate types and amounts of services to promote individual achievement of rehabilitation goals.

ALP 1 - Assessment, eligibility recommendation, and service plan development

ALP 2 - Rehabilitation services provided to an older individual to assist him/her to achieve a greater level of safety and confidence in the living environment.

ALP 2E - Rehabilitation services provided to an older individual who requires services in excess of the typical ALP-2 program in order to achieve his/her goals.

ALP 3 - Rehabilitation services provided to an older individual who has significant needs AND primary responsibility for managing the home

Vision Rehabilitation Therapy is a comprehensive service that involves the provision of training to assist the individual in achieving his/her maximum level of functioning in the areas of manual dexterity, communication, orientation to home or work environment, home management,; personal management, and use of low vision aids and other adaptive devices.

Orientation and Mobility is the teaching of concepts, skills and techniques necessary for a person who is blind to travel safely, efficiently, and confidently through any environmental conditions and situations.

Social Casework Level 1 focuses on issues related to vision loss and result in the consumer resolving personal issues (including adjustment to vision loss). These services are specifically related to assisting the consumer's move toward the world of work. Services provided are adjustment to vision loss, budgeting and finances,

accessing community resources, support systems, emergency planning, health management, self-advocacy and workplace behavior.

Social Casework Level 2 provides immediate, short-term therapeutic intervention to address behaviors or conditions that significantly impede the consumer's progress toward an educational or vocational goal. Intervention may address mental, social, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, conditions and disabilities. SW level 2 services may only be provided by a NYS Licensed Master Social Worker or Clinical Social Worker.

Pre-Vocational Skills Training for Young Adults are those specific skills necessary for vocational clarification, job seeking, on-the-job behavior and skills, and life-related activities which support the person in job retention.

Academic Instruction may include educational programs adapted for individuals who are legally blind in the areas of Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, High School Equivalency, College Preparatory and Academic Tutoring to improve, enhance or supplement their academic or educational achievement levels in a selected or anticipated vocational goal.

Vocational Skills Training is hands-on, experiential learning for service, clerical, industrial or technology related occupations. This training is provided to individuals to prepare them for a specific occupational goal for entry or re-entry into gainful employment consistent with the individual's interests and capabilities

Work Readiness Training focuses on creating positive work-related behaviors which impact on the individual's ability to successfully function on a job, including but not limited to time management skills, communication skills, organization skills, ability to follow directions, and ability to work collaboratively.

Work Experience Training is a time-limited experience which provides the consumer with an understanding of the work environment, work-related behaviors, work skills and work experience.

Comprehensive Diagnostic Vocational Evaluation (DVE) services enable the NYSCB counselors and consumers to obtain information, through comprehensive DVE testing and/or community-based situational assessment. These are to assist in the determination of eligibility or development of a vocational goal, which will in turn enable the consumer to make informed choices in selecting a vocational goal and the means to achieve that goal. DVE services also clarify issues which may be impeding vocational rehabilitation services. To the extent possible, evaluation instruments normed specifically for people who are blind should be used.

Job Placement Services enable the individual to obtain community-based, non-subsidized employment following participation in placement activities. The main activities of placement services are concentrated in the areas of development of consumer skills and employer contacts to enable the individual to successfully access and participate in paid employment.

Job Placement Services may include the following:

- Placement Assessment determines the readiness of the consumer for a job search and job placement.
- Job Seeking and Job Development prepare consumers to participate in the job search process. These services must include workplace behavior skills training, resume development instruction, job application training, job-seeking skills training, interviewing skills training, and/or job retention skills training.
- Job Placement 6 Days and Job Placement 90 Days assist consumers who have begun working to habituate to their new position. Consumers may receive assistance with both hard and soft skills adjustment, equipment malfunctions, and other challenges that arise during their first months of work.

Commission for the Blind Regions

<u>Region</u>	<u>Counties Served</u>
1 <u>Western NY</u>	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genessee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates
Outstations:	Rochester, Jamestown
3 <u>Syracuse</u>	Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, Schuyler, Seneca, Tioga, Tompkins
Outstation:	Binghamton
4 <u>Albany</u>	Albany, Clinton, Columbia, Delaware, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Hamilton, Montgomery, Otsego, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Schoharie, St. Lawrence, Warren, Washington

Outstation: Saranac Lake

5 White Plains Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster,
Westchester

Outstation: New Windsor

6 NYC Manhattan Brooklyn, Staten Island, Manhattan (up to and including 23rd Street)

7 Hempstead Nassau, Suffolk, Queens (Central and Eastern)

8 Harlem Bronx, Queens (Western), Manhattan (North of 23rd Street)

Outstation: Jamaica