

Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services

<https://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/bbvs/Pages/default.aspx>

The mission of the Bureau is to assist Pennsylvanians who are blind or visually impaired gain the skills necessary to live and work independently in their communities.

BBVS can assist people with visual impairments in several different ways:

Finding Employment

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program helps individuals prepare for or retain employment. Services offered can include but are not limited to:

- Counseling and guidance**
- Vocational evaluation**
- Blindness skills training**
- Mobility (travel) instruction**
- Instruction on performing daily living activities**
- Vocational and college training**
- Occupational tools and equipment**
- Job placement services**

Services are based on an individual's employment needs and choices, and some or all of these services may be needed. VR counselors work directly with the individual to determine an employment goal and what services are needed to reach that goal.

Setting up a Business

The Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (BEP) assists persons who are blind to operate their own food service businesses in commercial, industrial or governmental locations. Food services can range from a vending machine route to management of a large cafeteria.

BEP can also assist interested persons with entrepreneurial business ventures other than food service. These businesses might include:

- specialty product sales
- franchise operations
- gift shops
- kiosks

Independent Living Skills

BBVS can assist adults to become more self-sufficient and independent in their homes and communities. Available services include:

- Advocacy and counseling
- Information and referral
- Blindness skills training
- Mobility (travel) instruction
- Instruction on performing daily living activities
- Purchasing assistive equipment

Specialized Children Services

BBVS provides assistance to children with visual impairments to ensure they reach their maximum educational and vocational potential. Available services include:

- Advocacy for educational services
- Guidance and counseling for children and their families;
- Community orientation and mobility (travel) instruction
- Children's summer programs
- Adaptive equipment

BBVS services are provided throughout Pennsylvania by professional staff in District Offices located in the following cities

- Philadelphia
- Wilkes-Barre
- Harrisburg
- Altoona
- Pittsburgh
- Erie

BBVS Office Directory

***Toll free within Pennsylvania**

District Office	Counties Served
ALTOONA Blindness & Visual Services 1130 12th Ave., Suite 300 Altoona, PA 16601 814-946-7330 Voice 814-949-7956 TTY 866-695-7673 Voice* 866-320-7956 TTY*	Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, Somerset, Union
ERIE Blindness & Visual Services 4200 Lovell Place Erie, PA 16503 814-871-4401 Voice 866-521-5073 Voice* 814-871-4599 TTY 888-884-5513 TTY*	Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Forest, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren
HARRISBURG Blindness & Visual Services Forum Place 555 Walnut Street, 8th Floor Harrisburg PA 17101 717-787-7500 Voice 866-375-8264 Voice* 717-787-1733 TTY 888-575-9420 TTY*	Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, York

PHILADELPHIA Blindness & Visual Services 444 N. 3rd Street, 5th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19123 215-560-5700 Voice 866-631-3892 Voice* 215-560-5725 TTY 888-870-4473 TTY*	Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia
PITTSBURGH Blindness & Visual Services 531 Penn Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222 412-565-5240 Voice 866-412-4072 Voice* 412-565-3678 TTY 877-255-5082 TTY*	Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Washington, Westmoreland
WILKES-BARRE Blindness & Visual Services 300 G Laird Street Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702 570-826-2361 Voice 866-277-4163 Voice* 570-826-2023 TTY 888-651-6117 TTY*	Berks, Bradford, Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, Wyoming
BBVS CENTRAL OFFICE 1521 N. 6th Street Harrisburg, PA 17102 717-787-6176 Voice 800-622-2842 Voice* 717-787-4885 TTY 866-830-7327 TTY*	