Photo : Woman learning to navigate city sidewalks with cane

Photo: BEP vendor standing in her business

Photo: BEP trained vendor working in her Subway franchise

Visual Services

DRS Logo

Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services

Photo: Oklahoma School for the Blind students and staff at Oklahoma Closeup

Photo: DRS Client on his job at McAlester Hospital

Photo: OSB students walking through school hallways

Photo: man teaching woman how to navigate city sidewalks and streets using a cane.

We help you pursue a life of independence

Help for Oklahomans who are blind or visually impaired is available through the Visual Services Division of the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services.

The agency’s mission is to open doors to employment.

Visual Services staff meet this mission through a wide array of rehabilitation programs for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Major components of the programs include:

Rehabilitation counseling

New skills and techniques to address the challenges of blindness or visual impairment

Confidence development

Employment

Independent living assistance

Business enterprise operations

Library services

Information access via telephone

Specialists help clients develop self-confidence in their abilities to live and work independently.

Photo: Woman recording a story for patrons of the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

Rehabilitation Counseling and Employment

The Visual Services Division offers vocational counseling and employment assistance to thousands of Oklahomans each year. Many clients retain their current employment, return to work or enter the workforce for the first time as a result of these services.

Clients and counselors work together to develop a rehabilitation plan to meet individual needs.

Together they identify areas where assistance is needed for the client to retain or gain a successful career.

Through DRS, clients have access to services that might include, but are not limited to:

DRS Logo

Counseling and guidance

Intensive training in ways to deal with vision loss

Adaptive technology education and training

Job analysis and modification

Job placement and follow-up

Clients may be required to participate in the cost of some services, depending on their income levels and resources.

Independent Living Assistance

Rehabilitation Teachers provide instruction and counseling services through a home

Photo: OSB students walking through the school’s hallways

visitation program, which helps individuals adjust to the loss of sight. Instructional services offered may include:

Adjustment counseling

Personal and home management

Braille, keyboarding skills, low vision technology and adaptive techniques

Preparation to return to work

Orientation and Mobility Specialists provide instruction to blind individuals in using white canes and other techniques for traveling independently in their communities.

Photo: DRS staff member oversees a client’s skills test.

Programs for People who are Blind and age 55 or Older

We welcome and encourage persons of all ages to consider pursuing employment after training in blindness and visual impairment is completed. We recognize some who are 55 or older may desire independence training. The Older Blind Program provides independent living services to people who are 55 years old or older, legally blind and seeking greater independence. This program emphasizes advocacy, self-expression, freedom of travel and full participation in community life.

If you are 55 years or older, legally blind and want to maintain or regain greater independence, the Older Blind Program is the right choice for you.

Graphic: 55+

Photo: Older woman using assistive technology

Some people think the term “blind” means that a person can see nothing at all — total blindness. Actually, the majority of people who are blind have some vision. Some people may see shapes, shadows or motion, or they are able to determine that there is some kind of light source. The key to success is having a variety of available solutions, visual and nonvisual.

What we can do for you?

Teach you how to travel efficiently in your home and community.

Teach you how to accomplish tasks of daily living, using the phone, signing your name, cooking, identifying money, time telling and

matching your clothing.

A rehabilitation teacher will work with you in learning how to perform these tasks efficiently and independently.

The rehabilitation teachers will help you maintain or regain independence by coming to your home and teaching you how to perform various skills by a combination of approaches. You may be able to use your remaining vision, use your sense of touch, or a combination of both. Instruction is geared to meet your goals.

Offer you a five-day training session with the rehabilitation teachers and Orientation and Mobility Specialists at the Visual Services Center that gives you a jump start on learning independent living skills.

Photo: Line of vending machines

Business Enterprise Program

Visual Services trains and assists entrepreneurs who are blind in

Graphic: DRS Business Enterprise Program logo

establishing and operating food service businesses in public facilities across the state.

The division secures and equips locations, provides initial inventory and offers on-going business counseling

Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped offers services for people whose disabilities prevent them from using print materials.

Thousands of books, textbooks and periodicals in recorded and Braille formats, are available to eligible library patrons at no charge.

The library also houses a collection of books written by Oklahomans. Contact the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at 800-523-0288.

Telephone Information Service

Visual Services sponsors a telephone access service to local and national newspapers for those who have disabilities that make using print materials difficult. The service also includes community and job information.

Services for People Who Are Deaf-Blind

Assistance offered includes information and referral, interpreting and advocacy. Visual Services provides tactile, vibratory and other equipment, which assists clients in communicating and receiving environmental information. We also assist Deaf-Blind persons to find employment.

Photo: Woman recording a grocery ad

How to Reach Us

To locate the nearest Visual Services office, call 800-487-4042 toll free in Oklahoma or visit www.okdrs.gov/office\_locator.

Those who are deaf or hard of hearing may call 1-800-845-8476 toll free. A map of all VS offices is accessible from the Department of Rehabilitation Services web site, [www.okdrs.gov](http://www.okdrs.gov).

Graphic: DRS logo

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Visual Services Division
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VISUAL SERVICES

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OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION SERVICES

DRS Publication 17-02, Date: May 2017

This publication is authorized by the Oklahoma Commission for Rehabilitation Services in accordance with state and federal regulations and printed by the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services at a cost of $1,575 for 5,000 copies.

This publication is available on the DRS website. DRS offices may request copies via iDRS. For additional copies, contact DRS Central Departmental Services at 405-951-3400 or 800-845-8476 toll free.

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