OVR will not discriminate against a customer or applicant based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex or religion. Any applicant or customer of OVR who believes he or she is being discriminated against may contact OVR Central Office. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program.
WHAT IS BBVS?
The mission of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) is to assist Pennsylvanians with disabilities to secure and maintain employment and independence. OVR’s Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (BBVS) provides services to assist Pennsylvanians who are blind or visually impaired to work and maintain independent lives. BBVS has six district offices that provide a wide range of services throughout Pennsylvania.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program assists eligible individuals who need services to prepare for or retain employment. Services may include employment evaluation, counseling and guidance, training, job placement, assistive technology, adjustment to blindness, occupational tools and equipment, orientation and mobility training, and vision rehabilitation therapy. Services are based on the individual’s needs and choices that are necessary for the person to enter or retain employment.

A VR counselor will determine eligibility for services after gaining a thorough understanding of the individual’s abilities, limitations, interests and aptitudes.

Together, the customer and counselor develop an employment goal and plan to identify the steps needed to achieve it. The plan states what services will be provided and what is expected of both the customer and BBVS, including responsibilities and costs.

VISION REHABILITATION THERAPY

Vision Rehabilitation Therapy helps individuals safely and efficiently carry out their daily activities at home, on the job and in the community. Each customer is evaluated to determine what activities they need help with, and then a plan of instruction is developed. Services may include Braille instruction, home management, in-home orientation and personal management.

ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY TRAINING

Orientation and Mobility Training teaches individuals how to travel independently and safely within their homes, workplaces and communities. After an evaluation is completed, a training plan is developed to meet the individual’s specific needs.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM

BEP can assist qualified, interested persons in developing creative business ventures ranging from a vending machine route to a full cafeteria that involves direct and frequent public contact.

SPECIALIZED SERVICES PROGRAM

Specialized Services assists adults and children in achieving safety and independence within their homes and communities. Specialized Services for adults and children may include vision enhancement services, advocacy, counseling, information and referral, vision rehabilitation therapy, and orientation and mobility services.

Specialized Services for children may also include advocacy for educational services, transition to employment and assistive technology.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

The Independent Living Program helps people aged 55 and older become more self-sufficient and independent in their homes and communities. Available services are similar to those provided under the Specialized Services program.

The Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Programs receive 78.7 percent of their funding through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. For Federal fiscal year 2018, the total amount of grant funds awarded was $126,920,624. The remaining 21.3 percent, including additional matching fund costs ($34,350,816.91), was funded by State appropriations and other non-Federal allowable sources.