

IS A CAREER AS AN ORIENTATION & MOBILITY SPECIALIST RIGHT FOR YOU?



WHAT IS AN ORIENTATION & MOBILITY SPECIALIST (O&M)?

An O&M Specialist is a trained expert who specializes in working with individuals who are blind, have low vision, or who have visual limitations. An O&M Specialist assists individuals in achieving their life goals for education, employment, hobbies, and independence.

IF YOU HAD A CAREER AS AN O&M SPECIALIST, WHERE COULD YOU WORK?

You might work in a school, a home, or in the community.



IN A SCHOOL, you would:

- Teach students to travel safely and independently using strategies such as tactile map and long cane skills.
- Collaborate with professionals (for example, occupational and physical therapists) and family members to structure the environment to promote safe and independent travel.
- Assist students with recreational and physical education activities to promote inclusion with peers.



IN A HOME, you would:

- Motivate students to engage in purposeful movement to explore their environment.
- Help a family create routines that promote safe and independent exploration of a student's home environment.
- Co-create plans with families for independent travel across the home, school, and community.



IN THE COMMUNITY, you would:

- Assist a student in exploring a variety of modes of transportation, such as a bus or a train.
- Show a student how to use a smart phone, magnifier, telescope, or other technology to navigate public places, such as restaurants and grocery stores.
- Teach a student to cross busy streets to get to an after-school job or a friend's house.
- Help a student locate places and things in their environment, such as the bus stop or the coffee shop.

YOU MIGHT ENJOY THIS WORK IF YOU LIKE TO:

- Connect with others
- Explore new environments
- Build confidence in others
- Solve problems creatively
- Teach people to be as independent as possible
- Stay physically active. O&M Specialists are always on the move!

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: MEET A CERTIFIED O&M SPECIALIST (COMS)

“Every day, I get to engage in creative problem-solving in constantly changing environments. This ultimately leads to student independence.”

Autumn Booths, COMS
Capital Area IU 15

Scan the QR code to
watch the interview.



HOW TO BECOME AN ORIENTATION & MOBILITY (O&M) SPECIALIST IN PENNSYLVANIA:

1. Complete a bachelor's degree.
2. Enroll in a university program for three to four additional semesters, which includes a practicum/internship.
3. Take a test to earn a credential.
4. Apply for certification as a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist through the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP).

Higher education opportunities in Pennsylvania for Orientation & Mobility Certification:

- Salus University, Blindness and Low Vision Studies Programs
Elkins Park, PA 19027
tinyurl.com/mrx88ujb
- University of Pittsburgh, Visual Impairment and Blindness Studies Programs
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
tinyurl.com/225epx84



Pennsylvania programs typically offer distance education classes, with in-person components, and offer grants and/or stipends for tuition.



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