

OVR 101

An Overview and Specialty Services

Presented for the HELIX Conference – November 18,
2019

Agenda & Presenter Line-Up



- Welcome and Introductions – Russ Goddard, BVRs Central Office
- OVR 101 – Russ Goddard
- BBVS Social Work Services – Martha Futhey, Altoona BBVS
- BBVS VR Services – Kiley Foley, Altoona BBVS
- BBVS Vision Rehabilitation Teaching Services – Shelley Haupt, Altoona BBVS
- Orientation and Mobility Services – Michael Vore, Altoona BBVS
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services – Russ Goddard
- Q&A

Goals for this Presentation



Goals:

- To learn about the overall structure of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- To learn about specialty services for the deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind, and blind, especially transition services

OVR 101

Russ Goddard, MRC, CRC

Statewide Coordinator of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind Services
BVRS Central Office

To assist Pennsylvanians with **disabilities** to secure and maintain **employment** and independence.

Authority and Funding

OVR operates under the authority of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 2014 as part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

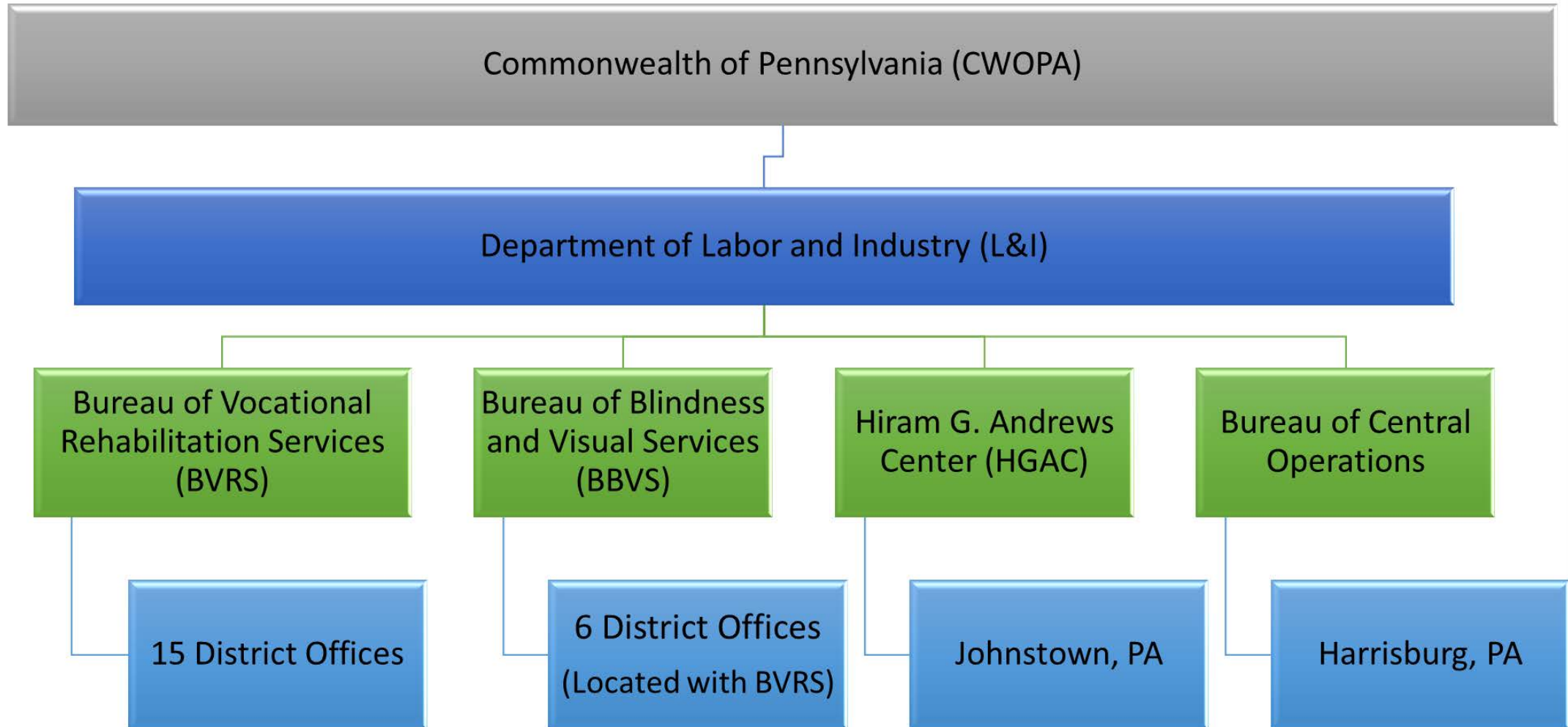


OVR is regulated at the Federal Level by the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

OVR's funding is derived through approximately 80% federal dollars and a 20% state match.

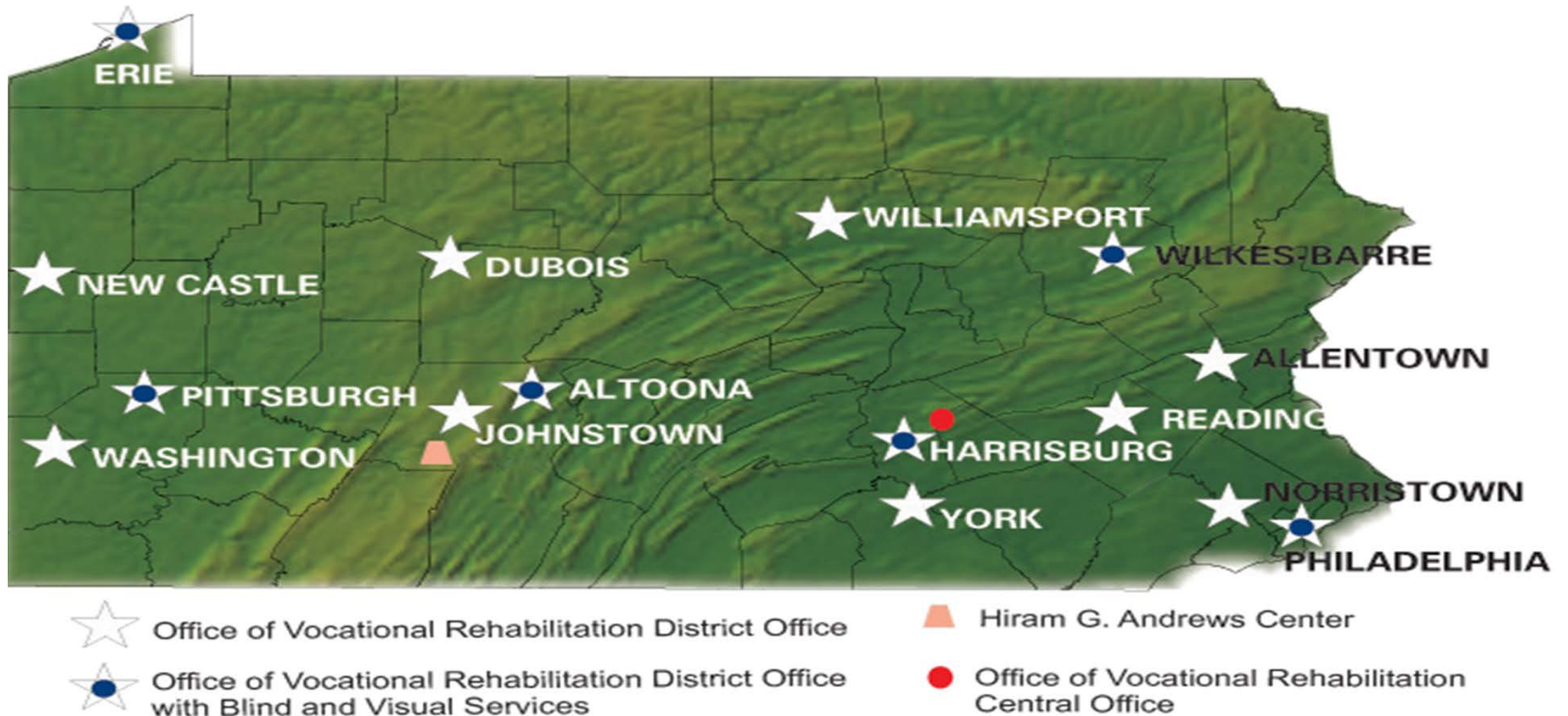


OVR's Organizational Structure



- **15** Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (**BVRS**) district offices; and
- **6** co-located Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services (**BBVS**) district offices.
- The Hiram G. Andrews Center (**HGAC**) in Johnstown offers individualized services including counseling, evaluation, physical restoration, and on-site education at the Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI).
- OVR's **Central Office** in Harrisburg coordinates the policies, funding, and resources that make it possible to serve the thousands of Pennsylvanians with disabilities.

OVR Locations (Map)



OVR provides a wide range of services to eligible individuals.

- OVR provides both cost services and non-cost services.
- Depending on the type of service and the individual's combined Adjusted Gross Income, the individual may have a financial contribution towards services.

Generally speaking, OVR services are:

- Provided on a case by case basis, as every individual presents unique goals, skills, barriers, resources, etc.
- Focused on obtaining and maintaining employment
- Time-limited

For customers who are placed on a waiting list:

- Individuals will be provided information and referral services to other appropriate federal and state programs, including programs carried out by other components of the Statewide Workforce Development System, that are suited to address the specific employment needs of the individual.
- No IPE will be written to provide individualized services until such time that the OOS category opens and notification is provided to the individual of available services.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- *Early Reach Initiative*
- *Pre-Employment Transition Services*
- Diagnostic Services
- Vocational Evaluation
- Counseling and Guidance
- Transition Services
- Restoration Services
- Training Services
- Vehicle/Home Modifications
- Placement Services

Additional Blindness and Visual Services

- Blindness Skills Training
- Instruction: Mobility
- Instruction: Daily Living
- Independent Living Skills
- Specialized Children's Services
- Randolph-Sheppard Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Martha Futhey, MSW
Social Worker – Altoona BBVS Office

Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services
Children's Program

- Arrange/fund functional vision evaluation – evaluations which use accepted alternative testing techniques to obtain a more complete picture of visual functioning.
- Arrange/fund low vision evaluations to assess appropriate use of magnification.
- Provision of low vision aids recommended by specialist subject to household income limits of 300% of federal poverty guidelines.
- Arrange rehabilitation teaching evaluations and training as children's needs change.
- Attend IEP, IFSP, and transition team meetings to be an advocate for client services and equipment and provide continuity of services between school and home.
- Provide developmental equipment for the purpose of development of visual functioning as recommended by vision specialist.
- Provide supportive counseling and discuss and identify appropriate resources.
- Provide equipment/adaptive materials to private school students in districts where this is not otherwise available.
- **ALL exams and evaluations, glasses, low vision aids, equipment, etc., are subject to financial eligibility based on 300% of poverty level.**
- **ALL services are subject to visual eligibility.**

Martha Futhey, MSW
Social Worker II
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Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling



Kiley P. Foley M.Ed., CRC
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling

Goal:

To assist individuals with disabilities to gain or maintain competitive, integrated employment.

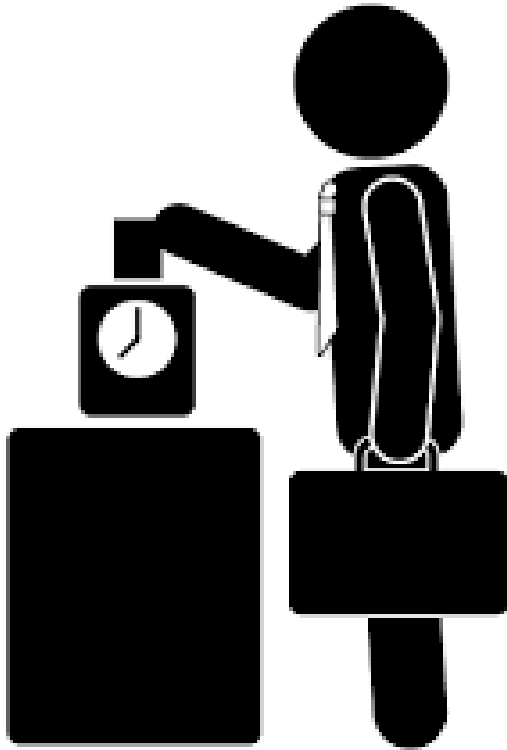
Eligibility requirements for individuals who are visually impaired:

- The individual has a visual acuity which is no greater than 20/70 in the better eye with best correction and/or a restricted visual field, i.e. less than a 20° field of vision in the better eye.

OR

- A visual acuity which is no greater than 20/70 in the better eye with best correction and/or a significant visual field restriction, with a prognosis for future vision loss.

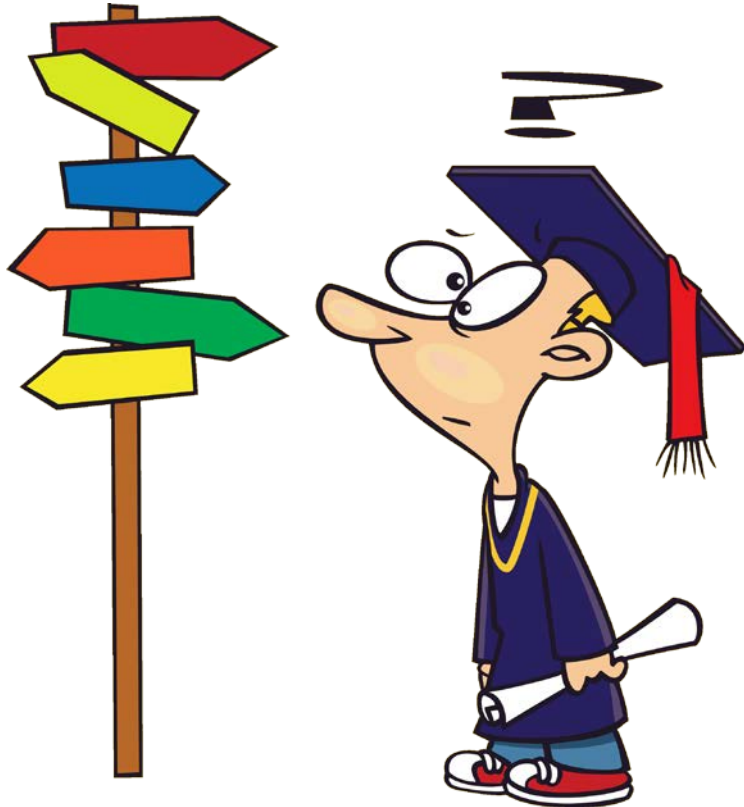
E	1	20/200
F P	2	20/100
T O Z	3	20/70
L P E D	4	20/50
P E C F D	5	20/40
E D F C Z P	6	20/30
D E F P O T E C	7	20/20



- Clear **Presence of an Impairment(s)**.
- The impairment(s) creates a **substantial impediment** to employment.
- The individual requests vocational rehabilitation **services** to achieve an employment outcome.
- The individual is **able to benefit** from vocational rehabilitation services in the form of an employment outcome.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services

- Counseling and guidance
- Adjustment to blindness- (BVRSP, CBVI)
- Vocational Evaluation
- Vocational and college training
- Access Technology
- Vision Rehabilitation Therapy
- Orientation and Mobility Instruction
- Occupational tools and equipment
- Job placement services



- Paid Work Experiences (40 Hour Experience)
- College Training/Vocational Training
- Supportive Employment (Upon Graduation)
- Job Shadowing (15 Hour Experience)
- Community Based Work Assessment (CBWA)
- Evaluations (Psych, Vision etc.)
- Accommodations for College
- Workplace Accommodations
- Vocational Evaluations (HGAC)
- On the Job Training (3 Months)
- Driver's Training/Evaluations
- Summer Academy For the Blind and Visually Impaired

Assistive Technology

- ✓ Jaws
- ✓ ZoomText
- ✓ OpenBook
- ✓ OCR Technology
- ✓ Braille Writers
- ✓ Computers for College
- ✓ iPads/Apps
- ✓ Digital Desktop Magnifiers

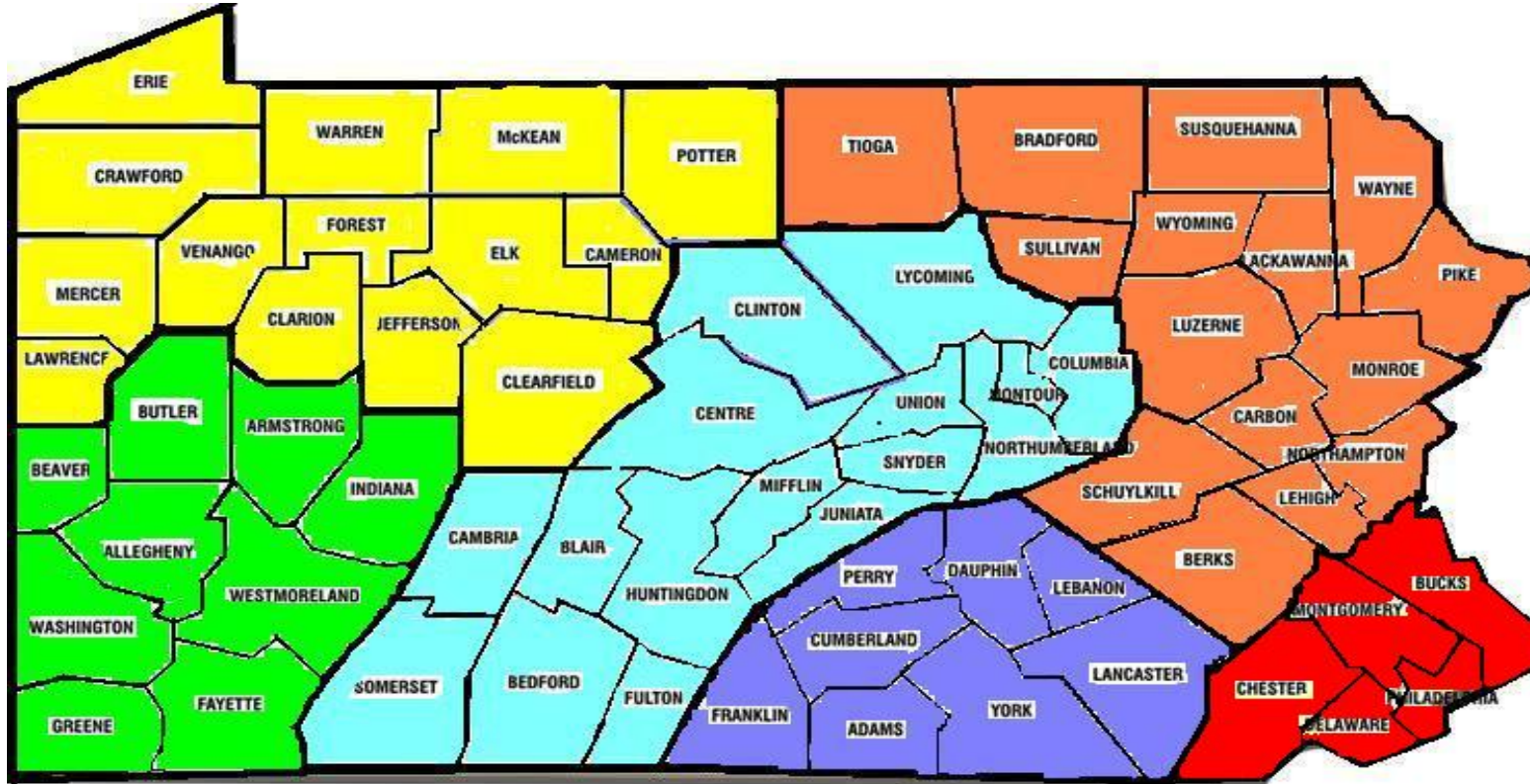


How Much Will it Cost?

No cost services:

- Application
 - Diagnostics and vocational evaluation
 - Rehabilitative Teaching and Orientation & Mobility
 - Counseling and guidance
 - Job placement
-
- Depending on income, the customer may have a contribution towards services

Which office do I apply to?



Contact Information for BBVS Offices

- Red– Philadelphia District Office– 1-866-631-3892
- Orange – Wilkes-Barre District Office – 1-866-227-4163
- Purple – Harrisburg District Office – 1-866-375-8264
- Blue – Altoona District Office – 1-866-695-7673
- Green – Pittsburgh District Office – 1-866-412-4072
- Yellow – Erie District Office – 1-866-521-5073

Questions?



Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT)

Shelley L. Haupt, VRT, M.Ed.

Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT)

Goal:

Create instructional goals for each client that will increase their independent living skills in their home.

What does that look like?

VRTs deliver instruction on techniques and we make recommendations for adaptive equipment that will increase independent living skills in the home.

Full Spectrum Lighting

The closest light to our natural sunlight.

Reduces glare.

Enhances contrasting.

Sun Lens Evaluation

Glare reduction for inside the home.

Glare reduction for outside the home.

Receiving Information

Braille

Audio

Tactile

Magnification

Sometimes a mix of all

Tactile Markings

Marking frequently used buttons
on household appliances with bump dots.

Time Management

Low Vision Watches/Wall Clock

Talking Clocks/Watches

Braille Watches

Large Print Planners

Money Management

iBill: Money Identifier
Money Folding
Large Print Checkbooks
Talking Calculator
Check Writing Guides

Food Prep & Cooking

Teaching Safety techniques in the kitchen.

Safely cutting, peeling, slicing, chopping, pouring,
Baking, turning, centering pots, timing/doneness.

Laundry

Stain detection, sorting,
using the washer and dryer,
pouring detergent

Telephone

Adding bump dots to telephone keys.

Assisting client with Temple University Phone program:
Phones for the blind and/or hard of hearing.

Cellphones: Voice activated features.

Writing

Boldline Notebooks

Boldwriter Marker Pens

Writing Guides

Large Print Checkbooks, Diabetes Chart, Address Books.

Braille

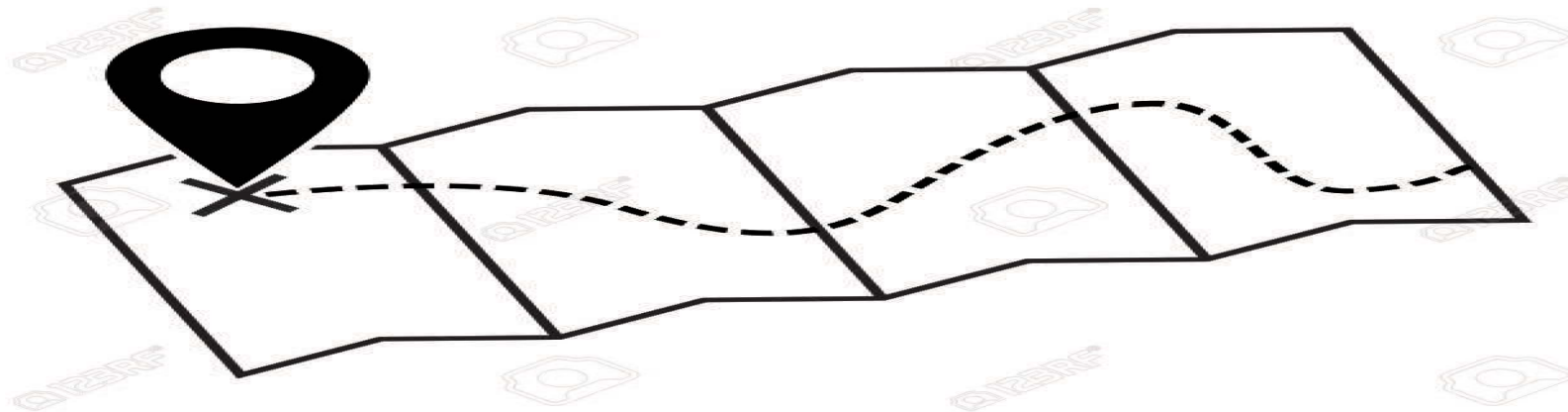
Recorder/Recording Devices

Orientation & Mobility

Michael Vore, M.S. OMS

What Is O&M?

- Orientation and mobility instruction is a sequential process during which visually impaired individuals are taught to utilize their remaining senses to determine their position within their environment and to negotiate safe movement from one place to another



“Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS).” *ACVREP*, ACVREP, 2019, www.acvrep.org/certifications/coms.

School/Intermediate Unit

- Training – full O&M curriculum
- Setting – School, Home, and Community
- IEP Goals

BBVS

- Training – Needs-based services
- Setting – Home and Community
- Supplemental to services provided by School or IU

1. Assessment

- **Visual Information**

- Diagnosis, Acuity, Visual Field

- **Functional Vision**

- Scanning, Fixation, Tracking, Contrast, Color, Depth
- Functional Visual Field
- Illumination/lighting (indoors/outdoors)
- Use of low-vision devices

- **Medical History**

- **Hearing**

- **Demonstrates/Requests need for training:**
 - **Pre-mobility** – spatial orientation, cardinal directions, human guide, upper/lower body protective technique, trailing, use of other senses
 - **In & around home** – orientation, stairs, elevator, yard/property
 - **Neighborhood** – rural, suburban, urban, block travel, familiar vs. unfamiliar areas
 - **Intersections** – locating crosswalks, identifying curbs/ramps, intersection analysis, detecting change in traffic signals
 - **Business** – doctors' offices, banks, restaurants, grocery stores, post offices, small/medium/large business districts, malls, other

- **Transportation**

- bus, taxi, subway, train, para transit, other

- **Assistive technology**

- Tablet, smartphone, GPS, headphone/speakers, apps

- **Mobility Aids**

- Cane, Support Cane, Dog Guide, Walker, Wheelchair, Mobility Light, Rollator, other

2. Goals

- Needs-based
- Derived from assessment
- Measurable

3. Curriculum/Instruction

- Foundational skills techniques needed to achieve goals
- Continual assessment
- Progress notes

4. Results/outcome

- Were goals achieved?
 - Re-assess if needed → make new goals

- Long Cane
- ID Cane
- Support Cane
- Alternative Mobility Device (AMD)
- Sun Filters
- Ice Cleats
- Tactile MAPS
- Apps



OVR Services for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind

Russ Goddard, MRC, CRC

Statewide Coordinator of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind Services
BVRS Central Office

- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services:
 - Early Reach Coordinators
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors
- Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services:
 - Social Workers
 - Vision Rehabilitation Therapists
 - Orientation and Mobility Specialists
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors

- Sighted Deaf and Hard of Hearing Applicants and Customers:
 - Hard of hearing: Usually referred to BVRs VRCDHHs, sometimes to general VRCs
 - Deaf: Almost always referred to BVRs VRCDHHs
- Applicants and Customers who are Blind or Visually Impaired:
 - Always referred to BBVS staff
- Applicants and Customers who are Deafblind:
 - Always referred to BBVS non-VR staff
 - Mostly handled by BBVS VR staff, with consultation with BVRs VRCDHHs

Eligibility for VR Services



- To be eligible for VR services:
 - Individual has a physical or mental impairment
 - The impairment (s) results in a substantial impediment to employment
 - The individual requires vocational rehabilitation services to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain employment that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interest, and informed choice
 - The individual intends to achieve an employment outcome that is consistent with their unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice

- Hearing loss is documented by:
 - Audiograms from a licensed audiologist
 - Audiograms from hearing aid fitters or hearing instrument specialists CANNOT be used for eligibility purposes
 - Audiologists are identified with a “MS, CCC-A” or “Au.D., CCC-A” at the end of their names
 - Evaluation from a medical doctor or an ENT doctor
 - Audiograms are still necessary if one of the expected VR services is hearing aids
 - IEPs or Re-evaluation Reports
- Unlike blindness or deafblindness, there is no “legal” definition for deafness or hearing loss
 - VR eligibility relies on analysis of functional limitations from a documented impairment

- Early Reach Coordinators/Early Reach Initiative
- Local District Office transition services
 - emPOWERment event at Pittsburgh DO
- DHH Summer Academy – July 12-22, 2020 at Penn State Main Campus
- Partnerships with TODs and other educational staff

Other DHH-related OVR Svcs



- Sign language interpreting services
- Hearing aids
- Assistive Listening Devices
- Alerting devices
- Counseling and Guidance specifically on DHH issues
- Signing supported employment staff
- Referral to the PA Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH)

Questions?

Thanks!

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