

Texas Workforce Solutions-
Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Orientation and Mobility for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS
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Texas Workforce Solutions comprises the Texas Workforce Commission, 28 local workforce development boards and our service-providing partners. Together we provide workforce education, training and support services, including vocational rehabilitation assistance for the people of Texas.

“Changing What It Means To Be Blind”

There was a commercial that showed a woman in a martial arts class doing a tremendous job. At the end of the commercial she was shown using her white cane and walking independently down the walkway. It was empowering and motivating. The commercial encouraged one to say, “Hey, I want some of that. I want that attitude and a whole lot of that confidence.”

Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) staff work in partnership with Texans who are blind. The goal of our partnership is to assure that Texans who are blind compete for high quality jobs, live independently, and/or receive the training needed to be successful in school and beyond. TWS-VRS envisions a Texas where people who are blind enjoy the same opportunities as other Texans to pursue independence and employment.



One of the most difficult losses for a newly blinded person to deal with is the loss of travel independence – the ability to get around, to travel to work, to school, to the bank, and to the grocery store. You may find yourself asking these questions: Will I be able to get around? Will I be able to shop for groceries? Will I be able to cross streets?

The answer to all three questions is a resounding “Yes!” You will learn to use your other senses to get where you want to go. You will learn to use a long white cane, a symbol of independence and competence. The cane is a tool to assist you with notifying others that you might need assistance, with gaining auditory and tactile information, and with interacting safely in your environment. Use of the cane is a part of learning to build your confidence again, so that you will be able to go to work, to school and travel independently.

Training

Through our “Texas Confidence Builder” techniques, you will learn to use a long white cane. Training is likely to begin with indoor travel skills. You will learn how to move the cane and stay in step with the cane. Skills you will eventually be able to apply are: cardinal directions to maintain orientation; walk on sidewalks; cross driveways; cross at stop signs and stop light controlled intersections; travel in grocery stores; ride a bus; and complete errands. The combination of the skills you can acquire through this training will open new doors to confidence, independence, and employment.

Use of the blindfold will allow you to develop your other senses and problem solve using those senses, so that when your vision isn't adequate, you can use alternative techniques to reach your destination.



The use of the blindfold is a confidence building strategy to bridge from vision-based solutions to positive blindness-based solutions regardless of changes in your vision or environment.

Learning our “Texas Confidence Builder” techniques will take time, but afterwards you will be able to navigate through life by using non-visual skills and live independently! Due to the nature of this individualized service please visit a vocational rehabilitation services office in your local area to learn more about “Texas Confidence Builder.”



“It was a great challenge to use a cane and blindfold. I can go out now and find my way. Like Christopher Columbus going out searching...I feel confident I can live anywhere.”



**TEXAS WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS-VOCATIONAL
REHABILITATION SERVICES**

101 East 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78778-0001
800-628-5115

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Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Relay Texas:
800-735-2989 (TTY) and 711 (Voice)

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