



The New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) provides services to individuals who are legally blind or deaf/blind to help them live independent, productive lives by offering vocational counseling, advocacy, rehabilitation training and employment services.

**Eligibility Requirements:** All services are available to New York State residents who are legally blind. Legal blindness is defined as having a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better or stronger eye with best correction, or a restricted field of vision of 20 degrees or less in the better or stronger eye.

**PROGRAMS OFFERED BY NYSCB TO LEGALLY BLIND INDIVIDUALS INCLUDE:**

**Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR)** – A vocational rehabilitation counselor helps the participants develop a plan and receive the training they need to reach their employment goal.

**Job Save Program** - If an employed individual has a diagnosis of a progressive eye condition leading to legal blindness within one year, they may qualify for Job Save services. A vocational rehabilitation counselor can arrange vision and job services that may help the individual retain employment and continue working in their position, as well as help the individual adapt to their vision loss.

**Business Enterprise Program (BEP)** – BEP staff assist U.S. citizens who are interested in managing their own newsstand, snack bar, cafeteria or vending route. BEP staff provides these individuals with training to help them get licensed and up and running, along with ongoing support.

**In FFY 22-23, BEP supported 62 NYSCB-licensed managers.**

**Independent Living/Older Adult Programs (ILOB/ALP)** – NYSCB counselors and private agency staff assist adults who want to live as independently as possible, but who are not interested in employment. NYSCB may provide services to teach these individuals the skills to maintain their home, travel safely and keep in touch with family and friends.

**In FFY 22-23, NYSCB served 3031 older adults.**

**Children’s Program** – Children can receive services in their home, community and at rehabilitation agencies. Children’s consultants provide educational consultation and supplemental services, vocational coordination, advocacy services and guidance to the child and their family.

**In FFY 22-23, NYSCB served 3468 VR participants, and 368 VR participants obtained employment.**

***VR and ILOB programming are funded, in part, with federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Education under VR Supported Employment Services and the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind (OIB) programs. For purposes of the VR program, the federal VR grant paid 78.7% of the total costs of the program. In federal fiscal year (FFY) 2022, the VR agency received \$23M in federal VR funds. These funds were matched at 21.3% from non-federal sources.***

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