

Texas Workforce Solutions- Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired



Serving people 55 years of age or older who are blind/visually impaired and interested in continuing their independent living lifestyle

Helpline 512-936-3388



TEXAS
WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

A proud partner of the American **JobCenter**® network



"I can do these things at home again."

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.

Living Independently

Living independently allows one to maintain his or her freedom, confidence and activities of daily life. Vision loss happens frequently as we age and can affect the independent living of older individuals. Some individuals may need minor assistance or guidance to maintain their lifestyle while others may need more services. Our goal is to provide information and training needed

to help individuals who are older regain their confidence and live independently.

Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind Program

Techniques taught via our Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILS-OIB) ILS-OIB program include:

- Using resource information to obtain adaptive items (for example, a talking clock)
- Preparing your own meals
- Managing your medications
- Living on your own and maintaining your household, finances, etc.

How Our Program Can Help You

Contact your local Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services office to speak with a representative for our Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILS-OIB) program. Or simply call our OIB Helpline 512-936-3388. The program representative will ask you a few questions to learn how your vision loss is affecting the things you want to do.

ILS-OIB program services include:

Counseling and Evaluations

You will receive counseling about your vision problems. You also may receive vision-related tests and assistive devices, such as magnifiers or markers that can allow for identification of oven settings.

Information and Referral

You will be given a detailed guide titled “Guide to Independent Living for Older Individuals Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired.” The guide provides important information on the following:

- Adjustment to blindness and low vision
- Tips for performing everyday activities (meal preparation, cleaning, identifying money, safe travel, recording and dialing phone numbers, identifying medications and use of apps for smart phones)
- Community services such as transportation, Meals on Wheels®, housing, etc.
- Special resources (referrals to eye specialist and low-vision services support groups)

Training

You may receive training to learn new ways to do everyday tasks. Training within a group can be very helpful as members can learn from one another. Classes on use of Braille, cooking, mobility, and diabetes education management offer opportunities to learn introductory new skills in a supportive setting.

In some situations, more in-depth training will be needed to achieve independence. This training is specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual. Examples might include extensive mobility training, medication management, organization techniques in the home, advanced Braille or use of low vision aids.

Are You Eligible for Program Services?

The following three criteria must apply to receive services provided by the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILS-OIB) program:

- **Criterion 1** —The individual is 55 years of age or older.
- **Criterion 2** —The individual has a visual impairment that is a substantial limitation to living independently.

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- **Criterion 3** —The delivery of ILS-OIB services will improve the individual's ability to function, continue functioning, or move toward functioning independently.

Mary Ann's Success Story



As a teacher, Mary Ann assisted children with overcoming obstacles and challenges in the classroom so that they could achieve their educational

goals.

After retirement, Mary Ann faced her own challenges. She was diagnosed with the dry form of macular degeneration. Mary Ann noticed that she could no longer see to set her clock, stove setting and other appliances in her home. She also could not read as well as she could in the past.

Mary Ann was aware of the vision challenges she faced and took a proactive approach to find solutions. She contacted her local Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational

Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) office and was connected with a representative for the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind (ILS-OIB) program and a TWS-VRS teacher.

The program representative and teacher met with Mary Ann and created a plan of actions. As a result, Mary Ann now uses a large display clock, a closed-circuit TV, a magnifier and tactile bump dots that have been placed on her oven and other appliances to assist her.

Mary Ann states that without these items and the assistance provided by TWS-VRS she would have had difficulty remaining independent within her home and community.

Your TWS-VRS Office

To locate your Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) office, visit:
www.twc.texas.gov/VRNearMe



TEXAS WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS- VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

101 East 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78778-0001
512-936-6400

Call or Email Our Helpline
512/936-3388
Oib.info@twc.texas.gov

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

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For purposes of the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind program, Federal funds paid 90 percent of the total costs incurred under the program.

In Federal fiscal year 2020, the agency received \$2,159,283 in Federal grant funds for this program. Funds appropriated by the State paid 10 percent (\$239,920) of the total costs incurred under the Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind program.