

## WHAT IS THE IOWA DEPARTMENT FOR THE BLIND?

The Iowa Department for the Blind is the means for persons who are blind to obtain for themselves universal accessibility and full participation as citizens in whatever roles they may choose.

## WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS OF THE IOWA DEPARTMENT FOR THE BLIND?

**Vocational Rehabilitation** is the program designed to help the blind achieve self-support. Vocational rehabilitation counselors work in partnership with blind Iowans to obtain employment and the training necessary for that employment. Blind individuals served through this program develop a positive philosophy of blindness and the skills that make them competitive in the job market. One of our major efforts is to educate the public about successful blind persons who are working every day as marketing managers, scientists, secretaries, cosmetologists, farmers, factory workers, electricians, computer programmers, financial consultants, and lawyers, to name only a few professions. With proper training and opportunity, a blind person can be a successful school teacher, food service worker, carpenter, customer service representative, or almost anything else.

**Independent Living Rehabilitation** helps elderly or multiply-disabled Iowans who are blind to learn the skills they need to live independently and participate actively in family and community life. By learning the alternative techniques of blindness, they can choose the privacy and independence of living in their own homes over moving into expensive care centers. Rehabilitation teachers travel throughout the state to provide training and other services aimed at bolstering the independence of the individual. Training is offered in a variety of forums including small-group sessions held in communities throughout Iowa and in the home on a one-on-one basis.

**Library** services are available to Iowans who cannot read standard print because of blindness, visual impairment, physical or reading disabilities. Services include books and magazines in Braille, large print, and recorded formats as well as descriptive video. Items are sent through the mail postage free. The Library lends playback machines which play the recorded books and magazines. There are reference and reading rooms available at the Department library.

**The Adult Orientation and Adjustment Center** provides training in the specific skills and techniques of blindness and introduces blind persons to new attitudes about blindness. From all parts of Iowa blind adults come to the Center in Des Moines to learn the positive attitudes and alternative techniques that enable a blind person to carry on a normal, independent, and competitive life.

**The Business Enterprises** program works to enhance business opportunities for blind Iowans in the food service industry by finding and developing new and varied business locations both within and outside of Iowa.

**Special Tools, Aids, and Devices** are sold by the Department for the Blind. The items vary from Braille watches, talking clocks, and calculators to white canes and magnifiers.

**ARE THERE PRIVATE GROUPS OR ORGANIZATIONS IN IOWA ENGAGED IN WORK FOR THE BLIND?**

Yes. The Friends of the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped conducts various programs in support of the Department's library. Lions clubs throughout the state carry on a variety of projects to assist the blind. The Iowa Telephone Pioneers of America is working with the Department to repair playback machines. Also, the blind themselves have formed organizations with membership throughout Iowa which carry on programs of public awareness and otherwise work to find solutions to the problems which face the blind. These statewide organizations include the Iowa Council of the United Blind and the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa.

**WHAT IS THE COST OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR THE BLIND?**

No fees are charged for Department services which are supported by state and federal funds. For further information, contact the Department at: 524 Fourth Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2364. Telephone: 515-281-1333, toll free: 800-362-2587, TTY: 515-281-1355, facsimile: 515-281-1263, web site: www.blind.state.ia.us.

In the provision of services and in employment practices, the Department for the Blind does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, age, or disability.



**BLIND PERSONS ARE SIMPLY PEOPLE WHO CANNOT SEE. THEY CAN LEAD FULL LIVES IN SOCIETY IF THEY ARE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.**

**BRaille ALPHABET AND NUMBERS USED BY THE BLIND**

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	Comma	Question Mark
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	Period	Number Sign
k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	Capital Sign	Number Sign
u	v	w	x	y	z						

The Braille System is comprised of signs formed by the use of all the possible combinations of 6 dots numbered and arranged thus: 1 4 2 5 3 6  
 Letters are capitalized by prefixing dot 6. The first ten letters preceded by the number sign represent numbers. Punctuation marks are formed in the lower part of the cell. In addition to ordinary print the Braille System provides for the writing of foreign languages, musical scores, mathematical and scientific notations, and other technical matter.  
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