# You Are Cordially Invited to Attend

# The 68th Annual Convention of the

# National Federation of the Blind of New York State

***“Stronger Together”***

The National Federation of the Blind of New York State will hold its sixty-eighth annual convention in Rochester, from Thursday September 19 through Sunday the 22nd, 2024. Please join us as we continue to build a network of expertise and encouragement among blind New Yorkers and work together to make a positive difference in the lives of blind people across New York State.

## Who Are We?

The NFB of NYS is an organization of blind and low vision New Yorkers who believe that, with the appropriate training, attitude, and opportunities, blind people can live the lives we want.  NFB of NYS brings blind people together to empower and learn from one another and to celebrate our achievements as we work together to improve the lives of the blind of New York.

## Our Convention Agenda

All in-person convention events will take place at the Holiday Inn – Downtown at 70 State Street in Rochester, NY. It is our pleasure to welcome Kevan Worley, who has previously served as first vice president of our Colorado affiliate and president of the NFB Blind Merchants Division.  We will be privileged to hear him share information about the ongoing work of the Federation nationwide.

The theme of this year’s convention will be *“Stronger Together”.* Our presenters and panel discussions will explore the importance of personal empowerment channeled into collective action. Our workshops and seminars will highlight ideas and tools that will allow us to raise our own expectations as individuals and strive collectively to raise the expectations of the blind in society.  We hope that everyone will come away from this year’s Convention motivated by our collective strength and excited to tackle the work of the Federation together in each of our communities.

From Sunday, September 15, through Wednesday, September 18, our divisions and committees will meet in the evenings via Zoom to discuss issues pertinent to parents of blind children, guide dog users, blind parents, seniors, diabetics, and more.  These meetings are interactive and open to all convention attendees, so please join us!

This year, we are excited to pilot a new convention format, designed to make each day of the convention as engaging and interactive as possible. Some agenda items will be familiar to returning attendees. However, the overall schedule has changed.

On Friday morning, we will continue our tradition of hosting a town-hall style meeting with Julie Hovey, Associate Commissioner of the New York State Commission for the Blind.  We will then host a town hall meeting with the Rochester Genesee Regional Transit Authority, pioneering a practice of empowering all blind New Yorkers with information about individual transit authorities in our convention’s host cities each year. We encourage all attendees to drop by the exhibit hall to shop at our affiliate table and meet our convention sponsors. Everyone is also welcome to attend our board meeting luncheon. Afterward, we will come together for the first general session of the convention, where we will hear reports from our affiliate president, our national rep, and other speakers expanding upon our convention theme. In the evening attendees are welcome to register for the hospitality dinner, and everyone is welcome later for our open hospitality event.

On Saturday morning, the second general session of the convention will provide us with the opportunity to hear presentations on topics that are important to blind people across New York State and the nation. Attendees can register for a plated lunch before attending any of the afternoon break-out sessions, which will include hands-on demonstrations and small-group discussions around topics of interest to blind New Yorkers. Later, in the afternoon, an open meeting of our appointed resolutions committee will be held at which they will review, edit, and finalize the draft resolutions. Those resolutions approved by the committee will be voted on by the entire convention on Sunday morning. All convention attendees are welcome to observe this open meeting, the business of which will be conducted by the committee members.

The excitement will continue during our Saturday Evening banquet, with an address by our keynote speaker, Kevan Worley of Colorado, along with door prize giveaways.  The banquet will come to a dramatic close with the presentation of affiliate awards.

On Sunday morning we will hold our annual business meeting to chart our course for the coming year. We will also consider the resolutions that the Convention deems vital for our future as we review and update our organization’s policy goals. We will hear Chapter, Division, and Committee reports from around the State.

We will go forth, secure in the knowledge that we are stronger together and collectively possess the power to raise expectations and change what it means to be blind in New York State.

## Registration, Room Reservations, and Refreshments

To register for our convention, please visit [nfbny.org/convention/](http://nfbny.org/convention/) and complete our online registration form. Hotel reservations must also be completed via the online registration form, rather than by contacting the hotel directly, so that registrants will receive the special convention room rate of $119.99 per night. Tickets for breakfasts, lunches, the hospitality dinner and banquet can also be purchased via the same online registration form.

This year, we are pleased to offer a special discounted meal plan which will include tickets for all 7 convention meals (3 breakfasts, 2 lunches, the hospitality dinner and the banquet), a $145 value, for only $130! You can select options for these hot, plated meals during the registration process. If desired, individual meals can be purchased for those not wishing to take advantage of the meal plan.

Registration will entitle you to chances for our door prizes, allow for timely announcement of convention updates, and will help offset the costs of the convention.  We also are offering a virtual component to our conference this year.  You may register online at the same link and select the virtual registration form.  You will be able to participate in discussions and be eligible for door prizes.

**Please call the office at 585-739-6473. with any questions regarding this year’s convention.**

Our convention is shaping up to be a tremendous event.  Join us to share in the excitement!  I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Aubrey Bird

President, NFB of New York State