2021

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Orientation Handbook

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To New Members of the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind:

Welcome! On behalf of the Division of Blind Services and myself, I extend to you our gratitude on your decision to become a member of this Council. We all have a common goal and that is advocating for the recognition of the needs, wants and desires of individuals with visual impairments and providing the means for their independence and social standing. Through the efforts of individuals like you, we will accomplish this endeavor.

As a new member, you probably have numerous questions. I hope that most, if not all, of the answers will be found in the FRCB Orientation Handbook. Some of the highlights are the History of DBS, Section 105 of the Rehab Act, Florida Statute 413.011, Bios of Council Members and the policies and procedures regarding state travel. If you have any question, please feel free to call the state office for any assistance.

Remember that the strength of the Council is in the collective knowledge of all its members. Your opinion, your ideas and your perspective are indeed very valuable to the Council. Your primary purpose as a Council member is to represent the Visually Impaired Community, who is not present to represent themselves.

Best Regards,

Robert L. Doyle, III

Director, Division of Blind Services

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# Rehab Act of 1973

Section 105

State Rehabilitation Council as Amended by the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act (WIOA)

## (a) Establishment.—

(1) In general.—

Except as provided in section 101(a) (21) (A) (i), to be eligible to receive financial assistance under this title a State shall establish a State Rehabilitation Council (referred to in this section as the ‘‘Council’’) in accordance with this section.

(2)Separate agency for individuals who are blind.—

A State that designates a State agency to administer the part of the State plan under which vocational rehabilitation services are provided for individuals who are blind under section 101(a)(2)(A)(i) may establish a separate Council in accordance with this section to perform the duties of such a Council with respect to such State agency.

## (b) Composition and Appointment. —

(1) Composition. —

### (A) In general.—

Except in the case of a separate Council established under subsection (a) (2), the Council shall be composed of—

(i) at least one representative of the Statewide Independent Living Council established under section705, which representative may be the chairperson or other designee of the Council;

(ii) at least one representative of a parent training and information center established pursuant to section 671 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

 (iii) at least one representative of the client assistance program established under section 112;

(iv) at least one qualified vocational rehabilitation counselor, with knowledge of and experience with vocational rehabilitation programs, who shall serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council if the counselor is an employee of the designated State agency;

(v) at least one representative of community rehabilitation program service providers;

(vi) four representatives of business, industry, and labor;

(vii) representatives of disability advocacy groups representing a cross section of—

(I) individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory, and mental disabilities; and

(II)individuals’ representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves;

(viii) current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services;

(ix) in a State in which one or more projects are funded under section 121, at least one representative of the directors of the projects located in such State;

(x)at least one representative of the State educational agency responsible for the public education of students with disabilities who are eligible to receive services under this title and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and

(xi) at least one representative of the State workforce development board.

### (B) Separate council.—

In the case of a separate Council established under subsection (a)(2), the Council shall be composed of—

(i) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(i);

(ii) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(ii);

(iii) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(iii);

(iv) at least one vocational rehabilitation counselor described in subparagraph (A)

(iv), who shall serve as described in such subparagraph;

(v) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(v);

(vi) four representatives described in subparagraph (A)(vi);

(vii) at least one representative of a disability advocacy group representing individuals who are blind;

(viii) at least one individual’s representative, of an individual who—

(I) is an individual who is blind and has multiple disabilities; and

(II) has difficulty in representing himself or herself or is unable due to disabilities to represent himself or herself;

(ix) applicants or recipients described in subparagraph (A)(viii);

(x) in a State described in subparagraph (A)(ix), at least one representative described in such subparagraph;

(xi) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(x); and

(xii) at least one representative described in subparagraph (A)(xi).

(C)Exception.—

In the case of a separate Council established under subsection (a)(2), any Council that is required by State law, as in effect on the date of enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992, to have fewer than 15 members shall be deemed to be in compliance with subparagraph (B) if the Council—

(i) meets the requirements of subparagraph (B), other than the requirements of clauses (vi) and (ix) of such subparagraph; and

(ii) includes at least—

(I) one representative described in subparagraph (B)(vi); and

(II) one applicant or recipient described in subparagraph (B)(ix).

(2) EX OFFICIO MEMBER.—

The Director of the designated State unit shall be an ex officio, nonvoting member of the Council.

(3) Appointment.—

Members of the Council shall be appointed by the Governor or, in the case of a State that, under State law, vests authority for the administration of the activities carried out under this Act in an entity other than the Governor (such as one or more houses of the State legislature or an independent board), the chief officer of that entity. The appointing authority shall select members after soliciting recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities. In selecting members, the appointing authority shall consider, to the greatest extent practicable, the extent to which minority populations are represented on the Council.

(4) Qualifications.—

(A) In General.—A Majority of Council members shall be persons who are—

(i) individuals with disabilities described in section 7(20)(B); and

(ii) not employed by the designated State unit.

(B) Separate council.—In the case of a separate Council established under subsection (a)(2), a majority of Council members shall be persons who are—

(i)blind; and

(ii)not employed by the designated State unit.

(5) Chairperson.—

(A) In general.—

Except as provided in subparagraph (B), the Council shall select a chairperson from among the membership of the Council.

(B) Designation by chief executive officer.—

In States in which the chief executive officer does not have veto power pursuant to State law, the appointing authority described in paragraph (3) shall designate a member of the Council to serve as the chairperson of the Council or shall require the Council to so designate such a member.

(6) Terms of appointment.—

(A) Length Of term.—Each member of the Council shall serve for a term of not more than 3 years, except that—

(i) a member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed for the remainder of such term; and

(ii) the terms of service of the members initially appointed shall be (as specified by the appointing authority described in paragraph (3)) for such fewer number of years as will provide for the expiration of terms on a staggered basis.

(B) Number of terms.—No member of the Council, other than a representative described in clause (iii) or (ix) of paragraph (1)(A), or clause (iii) or (x) of paragraph (1)(B), may serve more than two consecutive full terms.

(7) Vacancies.—

(A) In general.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), any vacancy occurring in the membership of the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The vacancy shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the duties of the Council.

(B) Delegation.—The appointing authority described in paragraph (3) may delegate the authority to fill such a vacancy to the remaining members of the Council after making the original appointment.

(c) Functions of council.—

**T**he Council shall, after consulting with the State workforce development board—

(1) review, analyze, and advise the designated State unit regarding the performance of the responsibilities of the unit under this title, particularly responsibilities relating to—

(A) eligibility (including order of selection);

(B) the extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and

(C) functions performed by State agencies that affect or that potentially affect the ability of individuals with disabilities in achieving employment outcomes under this title;

(2) in partnership with the designated State unit—

(A) develop, agree to, and review State goals and priorities in accordance with section 101(a)(15)(C); and

(B) evaluate the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and submit reports of progress to the Commissioner in accordance with section 101(a)(15)(E);

(3) advise the designated State agency and the designated State unit regarding activities authorized to be carried out under this title, and assist in the

preparation of the State plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by this title;

(4) to the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with—

(A) the functions performed by the designated State agency;

(B) vocational rehabilitation services provided by State agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under this Act; and

(C) employment outcomes achieved by eligible individuals receiving services under this title, including the availability of health and other employment benefits in connection with such employment outcomes;

(5) prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and the Commissioner on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and make the report available to the public;

(6) to avoid duplication of efforts and enhance the number of individuals served, coordinate activities with the activities of other councils within the State, including the Statewide Independent Living Council established under section 705, the advisory panel established under section 612(a)(20) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the State Council on Developmental Disabilities

established under section 125 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, the State mental health planning council established under

section 1914(a) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300x– 3(a)) and the State

workforce development board, and with the activities of entities carrying out programs under the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.);

(7) provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the designated State agency and the Statewide Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the State; and

(8) perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of this title, as the State Rehabilitation Council determines to be appropriate, that are comparable to the other functions performed by the Council.

(d) Resources.—

(1) Plan.—The Council shall prepare, in conjunction with the designated State unit, a plan for the provision of such resources, including such staff and other personnel, as may be necessary and sufficient to carry out the functions of the Council under this section. The resource plan shall, to the maximum extent possible, rely on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the plan.

(2) Resolution of disagreements.—To the extent that there is a disagreement between the Council and the designated State unit in regard to the resources necessary to carry out the functions of the Council as set forth in this section, the disagreement shall be resolved by the Governor consistent with paragraph (1).

(3) Supervision and evaluation.—Each Council shall, consistent with State law, supervise and evaluate such staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out its functions under this section.

(4) Personnel conflict of interest.—while assisting the Council in carrying out its duties, staff and other personnel shall not be assigned duties by the designated State unit or any other agency or office of the State, that would create a conflict of interest.

(e) Conflict of interest.—

No member of the Council shall cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under State law.

(f) Meetings.—

The Council shall convene at least four meetings a year in such places as it determines to be necessary to conduct Council business and

conduct such forums or hearings as the Council considers appropriate. The meetings, hearings, and forums shall be publicly announced. The meetings shall be open and accessible to the public unless there is a valid reason for an executive session.

(g) Compensation and expenses.—

The Council may use funds allocated to the Council by the designated State unit under this title (except for funds appropriated to carry out the client assistance program under section 112 and funds reserved pursuant to section 110(c) to carry out part C) to reimburse members of the Council for reasonable and necessary expenses of attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services), and to pay compensation to a member of the Council, if such member is not employed or must forfeit wages from other employment, for each day the member is engaged in performing the duties of the Council.

(h) Hearings and forums.—

The Council is authorized to hold such hearings and forums as the Council may determine to be necessary to carry out the duties of the Council.

{29 U.S.C. 725

# Florida Statutes

## Chapter 413.011

Division of Blind Services, legislative policy, intent; internal organizational structure and powers; Rehabilitation Council for the Blind.—

(8)  REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND*.--*There is created in the department the Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, which is an advisory council as defined in s. [20.03](http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch0020/Sec03.HTM), to assist the division in the planning and development of statewide vocational rehabilitation programs and services pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, to recommend improvements to such programs and services, and to perform the functions provided in this section.

Composition

(a)  The advisory council shall be composed of:

1.  At least one representative of the Independent Living Council, which representative may be the chair or other designee of the council;

2.  At least one representative of a parent training and information center established pursuant to s. 631(c)(9) of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. s. 1431(c)(9);

3.  At least one representative of the client assistance program established under the act;

4.  At least one vocational rehabilitation counselor who has knowledge of and experience in vocational rehabilitation services for the blind, who shall serve as an ex officio nonvoting member of the council if the counselor is an employee of the department;

5.  At least one representative of community rehabilitation program service providers;

6.  Four representatives of business, industry, and labor;

7.  At least one representative of a disability advocacy group representing individuals who are blind;

8.  At least one parent, family member, guardian, advocate, or authorized representative of an individual who is blind, has multiple disabilities, and either has difficulties representing himself or herself or is unable, due to disabilities, to represent himself or herself;

9.  Current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services; and

10.  The director of the division, who shall be an ex officio member of the council.

Appointments

(b)  Members of the council shall be appointed by the Governor, who shall select members after soliciting recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals who have disabilities, and organizations interested in those individuals.

(c)  A majority of council members shall be persons who are:

1.  Blind; and

2.  Not employed by the division.

(d)  The council shall select a chair from among its membership.

(e)  Each member of the council shall serve for a term of not more than 3 years, except that:

1.  A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which a predecessor was appointed shall be appointed for the remainder of such term; and

2.  The terms of service of the members initially appointed shall be, as specified by the Governor, for such fewer number of years as will provide for the expiration of terms on a staggered basis.

(f)  A member of the council may not serve more than two consecutive full terms.

(g)  Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A vacancy does not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the duties of the council.

(h)  In addition to the other functions specified in this section, the council shall:

1.  Review, analyze, and advise the division regarding the performance of the responsibilities of the division under Title I of the act, particularly responsibilities relating to:

a. Eligibility, including order of selection;

b. The extent, scope, and effectiveness of services provided; and

c. Functions performed by state agencies that affect or potentially affect the ability of individuals who are blind to achieve rehabilitation goals and objectives under Title I.

2.  Advise the department and the division, and, at the discretion of the department or division, assist in the preparation of applications, the state plan, the strategic plan, and amendments to the plans, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by Title I.

3.  To the extent feasible, conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with:

a. The functions performed by state agencies and other public and private entities responsible for performing functions for individuals who are blind.

b. Vocational rehabilitation services:

(I)  provided or paid for from funds made available under the act or through other public or private sources.

(II)  Provided by state agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind.

4.  Prepare and submit an annual report on the status of vocational rehabilitation services for the blind in the state to the Governor and the Commissioner of the Rehabilitative Services Administration, established under s. 702 of the act, and make the report available to the public.

5.  Coordinate with other councils within the state, including the Independent Living Council, the advisory panel established under s. 613(a)(12) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1413(a)(12), the State Planning Council described in s. 124 of the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. s. 6024, and the state mental health planning council established under s. 1916(e) of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 300X-4(e).

6.  Advise the department and division and provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships among the department, the division, the Independent Living Council, and centers for independent living in the state.

7.  Perform such other functions consistent with the purposes of the act as the council determines to be appropriate that are comparable to functions performed by the council.

(i)1.  The council shall prepare, in conjunction with the division, a plan for the provision of such resources, including such staff and other personnel, as may be necessary to carry out the functions of the council. The resource plan shall, to the maximum extent possible, rely on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the plan.

2.  If there is a disagreement between the council and the division in regard to the resources necessary to carry out the functions of the council as set forth in this section, the disagreement shall be resolved by the Governor.

3.  The council shall, consistent with law, supervise and evaluate such staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out its functions.

4.  While assisting the council in carrying out its duties, staff and other personnel shall not be assigned duties by the division or any other state agency or office that would create a conflict of interest.

(j)  A council member may not cast a vote on any matter that would provide direct financial benefit to the member or otherwise give the appearance of a conflict of interest under state law.

(k)  The council shall convene at least four meetings each year. These meetings shall occur in such places as the council deems necessary to conduct council business. The council may conduct such forums or hearings as the council considers appropriate. The meetings, hearings, and forums shall be publicly announced. The meetings shall be open and accessible to the public. The council shall make a report of each meeting which shall include a record of its discussions and recommendations, all of which reports shall be made available to the public.

## White Cane Law: 316.1301

Traffic regulations to assist blind persons

(1)  It is unlawful for any person, unless totally or partially blind or otherwise incapacitated, while on any public street or highway, to carry in a raised or extended position a cane or walking stick which is white in color or white tipped with red. A person who is convicted of a violation of this subsection is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(2)  Whenever a pedestrian is crossing, or attempting to cross, a public street or highway, guided by a dog guide or carrying in a raised or extended position a cane or walking stick which is white in color or white tipped with red, the driver of every vehicle approaching the intersection or place where the pedestrian is attempting to cross shall bring his or her vehicle to a full stop before arriving at such intersection or place of crossing and, before proceeding, shall take such precautions as may be necessary to avoid injuring such pedestrian. A person who is convicted of a violation of this subsection is guilty of a moving violation punishable as provided in chapter 318.

(3)  Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to deprive any totally or partially blind or otherwise incapacitated person not carrying such a cane or walking stick, or not being guided by a dog, of the rights and privileges conferred by law upon pedestrians crossing streets or highways. The failure of any such person to carry a cane or walking stick or to be guided by a dog shall not be considered comparative negligence, nor shall such failure be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action with regard to negligence.

**History.**--ss. 1, 2, 3, 4, ch. 25269, 1949; s. 10, ch. 26484, 1951; s. 360, ch. 71-136; s. 18, ch. 77-259; s. 1, ch. 89-32; s. 1, ch. 92-296; s. 307, ch. 95-148; s. 6, ch. 95-327; s. 16, ch. 96-350.

**Note.**--Former s. 413.0

# History of DBS

In 1941, the Florida Legislature established the Florida Council for the Blind as part of the State Welfare Board. The Council's first executive director was Tampa Attorney R. Henry Johnson. The initial focus of the Council was the provision of pre-vocational and vocational training for blind and visually impaired Floridians. With the assistance of the Lions Club, a training center was opened in the Holly Hill Farmer's Market in Daytona Beach.

In 1948, the Council acquired a U.S. Army convalescent center in Daytona Beach from the War Assistance Administration. The Holly Hill training facility transitioned to this property during the early 1950s, and currently operates as the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

On another front, the Florida Council for the Blind was designated by the Library of Congress as a distribution agency for Talking Book machines in Florida in 1941. At that time, Florida patrons received Talking Books records (hard discs) through the mail from the Kreigshaber Library in Atlanta, Ga. This led to the establishment of the Florida Talking Book Library in Daytona Beach in 1950.

Now known as the Bureau of Braille and Talking Books Library Services, the Library continues to provide reading materials in accessible formats to Floridians who are unable to read standard print due to visual impairment or other physical disability.

In 1961, the Florida Council for the Blind was removed from the Department of Public Welfare to operate under the Office of the Governor. In 1969, it was transferred again, as the Bureau of Blind Services, to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. Then, in 1976, it became known as the Office of Blind Services under the Florida Department of Education. With its elevation to Divisional status in 1977 under Director Donald H. Wedewer, DBS evolved into a strong unit.

Today, under the direction of Robert L. Doyle III, the Division serves thousands of Floridians through its plethora of programs and services. With the district and satellite offices across the state and Rehabilitation Center and Talking Book Library in Daytona, DBS has become a national model in education, employment d other services that foster independence for blind and visually impaired Floridians.

# DBS Mission

To ensure blind and visually impaired Floridians have the tools, support and opportunity to achieve success.

# DBS Vision Statement

In partnership with others, create a barrier free environment in the lives of Floridians with visual disabilities.

# DBS Programs and Services

## Blind Babies Program

* The Blind Babies Program provides community-based early-intervention education to children from birth through five years of age who are blind or visually impaired, and to their parents, families, and through community-based provider organizations.

## Children’s Program

* The Children’s Program serves children who are blind from five years of age through transition to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program. This program supplements services already offered by the school system to foster the child's learning and ability to function independently. The child's parents, guardian, and family members should be an integral part of the program in order to foster independence.
* The Florida Legislature established the Children’s Program in 2000 to facilitate blind and visually impaired children's fullest participation within the family, community and educational settings.
* The program supplements services already offered by the school system to foster the child's learning and ability to function independently. The student's parents, family, and caregivers are an integral part of the program to foster independence.
* Children's Program Specialists serve eligible children so that they may reach educational and independent living goals. Successful outcomes enable students to transition from school to Vocational Rehabilitation or other appropriate community programs.

## Transition Program

* Transition activities are coordinated among a team. The team consists of the student, you as parent(s) or caregiver(s), educators, service providers, and friends.
* The activities must be designed to produce an outcome.  This outcome should provide for maximum independence. The young person and his or her team select goals for adulthood, and the activities and services in the plan are designed to reach those goals.
* The transition must promote movement from school to post-school activities. The final goal is to ensure that your child can be an independent adult.
* The desired outcome can include any number of goals such as post-secondary education, vocational training, employment, supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation.
* The outcome must be based on the individual student’s needs, preferences, and interests.
* The activities in the process can include instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school, adult-living objectives, functional vocational evaluation, and, when needed, the acquisition of daily living skills.
* A well-managed transition gives young adults the chance to have the greatest possible independence, competence, enjoyment, and mastery of life.
* Ensuring success is possible through teamwork. The team consists of the student, family and friends, educators, and professionals from government and private agencies. You may invite team members yourself. However, ensure that you inform the team leader so their name can be added to the team list shown on the IEP forms.

## Independent Living Program

* The goal of the Independent Living - Adult Program is to enable blind and severely visually impaired adults to live more independently in their homes and communities with a maximum degree of self-direction. Successful outcomes enable individuals to live more independently in their community and/or transition to the working world.
* Services may include:
* Information and Referral
* Independent Living Skills Training
* Orientation and Mobility (Skills to Travel Independently)
* Adjustment to Blindness
* Advocacy Training
* Low Vision Services
* Public Education
* Prevention of Blindness

## Vocational Rehabilitation Program

* The goal of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is to assist an individual in achieving or maintaining an employment outcome that is consistent with his/her unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice.
* Vocational Rehabilitation Services are provided to assist blind and visually impaired individuals seeking employment.  Qualified individuals must have a bilateral visual impairment which constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and needs services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain gainful employment. Successful outcomes lead to achievement of employment goals.
* Types of services may include:
* Vocational Training
* Job Placement
* On-the-Job Training
* Orientation and Mobility Training
* Independent Living Skills Training
* Career Counseling and Guidance
* Low Vision Aids and Appliances
* Job Modification including Adaptive Technology

## Employer Services

* Information services are provided to employers who need to know how to make a job accessible to an employee with a visual impairment.  Employers seeking to hire a qualified employee can also contact us for this information as well.

## Business Enterprise Program

* The Business Enterprise Program provides entrepreneurial business opportunities in food and vending service for eligible blind persons under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

* The mission of the Florida Bureau of Business Enterprise (BBE) is to provide people who are legally blind with rewarding and profitable entrepreneurial ventures, broaden their economic opportunities, and invigorate all blind people to be self-supporting, while dispelling misconceptions about blind people by showcasing their abilities.
* Florida broadened the federal Randolph Sheppard Act with its own version. Blind licensees, under the Little Randolph Sheppard Act (FS 413.051) are given the first opportunity to participate in the operation of vending stands on all state properties acquired after July 1, 1979, when such facilities are operated under the supervision of the Florida Division of Blind Services of the Department of Education.

## Rehabilitation Center

* The Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a place where people who are blind can reside temporarily while they learn to lead productive, self-sufficient lives.
* The Rehabilitation Center program incorporates instruction in a variety of independence skills, as well as case management, including home management, cooking, cleaning, personal care, labeling, orientation and mobility, Braille, access computer technology, adaptive equipment and devices, college prep, job readiness, home repairs, adaptation to blindness and many other skills that contribute to independence and the confidence to seek the highest level of employment possible.

## Braille and Talking Book Library

* The Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Library Services provides information and reading materials needed by Florida residents who are unable to use standard print as the result of visual, physical, or reading disabilities. Since 1950, the bureau has been designated by the Library of Congress/National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) as the regional library for Florida, and loans braille and recorded books and magazines to all eligible residents of the state. In addition, the bureau has established nine sub-regional libraries to provide local talking book services to residents of metropolitan areas. Reading materials are sent to and from customers via postage-free mail, and all services are provided at no charge.
* As one of the largest libraries of its kind, the bureau currently has nearly 2 million books in braille and recorded formats available for loan to individuals with print disabilities.

## School-To-Work Transition Programs

* This program consist of a group of services that are provided by the Division of Blind Services and local partners on an individualized basis for students eligible to receive services under an individual education plan. Services are determined based on each individual client’s needs.
* Types of services that may be provided are:
* Assessment - Includes a comprehensive evaluation in orientation and mobility, adaptive daily living skills, assistive technology, low vision needs, functional assessments, vocational evaluation and job readiness
* Information and Referral - Provides specific information to an individual or group which aids them in securing assistance and collateral services which they are entitled to and from which they may benefit.
* Assistive Technology - Trains an individual or group to use adaptive devices and technology for communications, daily living needs including computer, keyboarding, access software, screen readers, note takers, closed circuit televisions, accessible cell phones and other devices.
* Counseling Services - Provides counseling to address psychological and social issues related to vision loss.
* Job Readiness - Includes resume preparation, interview training, appropriate hygiene and grooming training, accessing transportation and time management training. Services also include simulated job tasks to enable the individual to adjust to work or provide a work experience.
* Job Coaching - Provides on-site instruction to enable a participant to perform the assigned job related activities.
* Additional Training - Training not listed elsewhere such as, home and personal management

# DBS District Office Map



# DBS District Office Locations

## District (1) – Pensacola

**Counties Served:** Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton

**District Administrator** –Deborah Carty

600 University Office Boulevard

Building 4

Pensacola, FL 32504

Tel: 850-595-5282

FAX: 850-595-5286

### (S-1) SATELLITE-Panama City

**Counties Served:** Bay, Gulf, Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Washington

**District Administrator** –Deborah Carty

2505 West 15th St. Ste. B

Panama City, FL 32401

Tel: (850) 872-4181

Fax: 850-747-5399

## District (2) – Tallahassee

**Counties Served**: Franklin, Gadsden, Leon, Hamilton, Taylor, Jefferson, Wakulla, Lafayette, Liberty, Madison, Suwannee

**District Administrator** – Wayne Jennings

1311 Executive Center Dr.

 Ellis Bldg. 100-D

Tallahassee, FL 32399

Tel: (850) 245-0370

Toll Free: (800) 672-7038

Fax: (850) 245-0386

## District (3) – Jacksonville

**Counties Served**: Baker, Duval, Nassau, Clay, St. John

**District Administrator** – Dan O’Conner

1809 Art Museum Drive,

Suite 201

Jacksonville, FL 32207

Tel: (904) 348-2730

Toll Free: (800) 226-6356, FAX: (904) 348-2737

### (S-3)SATELLITE- Gainesville

**Counties Served**: Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Levy, Marion, Union

**District Administrator**- Ted Pobst– District Administrator

3620 N.W. 43rd Street,

Suite C

Gainesville, FL 32606

Tel: (352) 955-2075

Toll Free: (800) 443-0908

Fax: (352) 955-2382

## District (5) – Daytona Beach

**Counties Served**: Flagler, Putnam, Volusia

**District Administrator**- Ted Pobst

1185 Dunn Avenue

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Tel: (386) 254-3800

Toll Free: (800) 329-3801

 Fax: (386) 239-6107

### (S-5) SATELLITE - Cocoa

**Counties Served:** Brevard

**District Administrator**- Ted Pobst

1970 Michigan Avenue,

Building A-2

Cocoa, FL 32922

Tel: (321) 634-3680

Toll Free: (877) 506-2729

FAX: (321) 634-3683

## District (6) – Orlando

**Counties Served**: Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, The Villages

**District Administrator** – Ed James

400 W. Robinson Street,

Suite S-1026

Orlando, FL 32801

Tel: (407) 245-0700,

Fax: (407) 245-0706

## District (7) - Tampa

**Counties Served**: Hillsborough, Pinellas

**District Administrator** – Nancy Brown

1313 N. Tampa Street,

Suite 712

Tampa, FL 33602

Tel: (813) 871-7190

Toll Free: (800) 757-7190

Fax: (813) 871-7161

### (S-7-1) SATELLITE - Lakeland

**Counties Served:** Citrus, Hardee, Polk, Hernando, Pasco

402 S. Kentucky Avenue

Room 310

Lakeland, FL 33801

Tel: (863) 499-2385

Fax :( 863) 499-2698

## District (9) – Ft. Myers

**Counties Served**: Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Charlotte

**District Administrator** - Leigh Ann Bellamy

2830 Winkler Avenue

Suite 207

Ft. Myers, FL 33916

Tel: (239) 278-7130

Toll Free: (800) 219-0180

Fax: (239) 278-7351

### (S-9)SATELLITE- Palmetto

**Counties Served**: Desoto, Highlands, Manatee, Sarasota

**District Administrator** – Leigh Ann Bellamy

600 8th Avenue West

Suite 302

Palmetto, FL 34221

Tel: (941) 721-2914

Toll Free: (800) 500-6412, Fax (941) 721-2918

## District (10) – West Palm Beach

**Counties Served:** Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee, Palm Beach, St. Lucie

**District Administrator** - Cesar Vigo

2000 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

Suite 300

West Palm Beach, FL 33409

Tel: (561) 681-2548

Toll Free: (866) 225-0794

Fax: (561) 681-2554

## District (11) - Sunrise

**County Served**: Broward County

**District Administrator** - Michelle Levy

7771 W. Oakland Park Blvd.,

Suite 185

Sunrise, FL 3335

Tel: (954) 746-1770

Fax :( 954) 746-1777

## District (12) – Miami

**Counties Served**: **Dade and Monroe**

**District Administrator** - Pamela Ortiz

401 N.W. 2nd Avenue

Room S-712

Miami, FL 33128

Tel: (305) 377-5339

Toll Free: (888) 529-1830

Fax: (305) 377-5691

## Rehabilitation Center

Edward Hudson-Bureau Chief

408 White Street

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Tel: (386) 258-4444

Toll Free: (800) 741-3826

Fax: (386) 239-6108

## Bureau of Braille and Talking Book Library

James Woolyhand, Bureau Chief

421 Platt Street

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Toll Free: (800) 226-6075

Tel:  (386) 239-6000

## DBS State Office

Robert L. Doyle, III- Director

325 West Gaines St.

Rm 1114, Turlington Bldg.

Tallahassee, FL 32399

Tel: (850) 245-0300

Tel: (800) 342-1828

Fax: (850) 245-0363

# Service Providers

## Community Rehabilitation Programs By District

Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) provide services to DBS consumers. A CRP is defined as a private, non-profit program that provides rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

**District 1** (Pensacola), **S-1**(Panama City) – Independence for the Blind of West Florida

**District 2** (Tallahassee) – Lighthouse of the Big Bend

**District 3** (Jacksonville) – Florida State College at Jacksonville and Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

 **S-3** (Gainesville) – Elder Care of Alachua County, Florida Center for the Blind

**District 5** (Daytona Beach), **S-5**(Cocoa) – Center for the Visually Impaired

**District 6** (Orlando) – Lighthouse Central Florida, New Vision for Independence

**District 7** (Tampa) – Lighthouse of Pinellas, Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

**S7-1** (Lakeland) – Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind

**District 9** (Ft. Myers), **S-9** (Palmetto) – Lighthouse Vision Loss Education Center, Lighthouse of Southwest Florida, Inc., Lighthouse of Collier

**District 10** (West Palm Beach) – Florida Outreach Center for the Blind, Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches

**District 11** (Sunrise) – Lighthouse of Broward County

**District 12** (Miami) – Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

## Community Rehabilitation Programs Locations

Independence for the Blind of West Florida

3107 N. Davis Highway

Pensacola, FL 32503

Phone Numbers:

Main: (850) 477-2663

FAX: (850) 479-4025

Executive Director: Raven Holloway

Website: [Independence for the Blind of West Florida](http://www.ibwest.org/)

Lighthouse of the Big Bend, Inc.

3071 Highland Oaks Terrace

Tallahassee, FL 32301

Phone Numbers:

Main: (850) 942-3658

Toll Free: (888) 827-6033

FAX: (850) 942-4518

Executive Director: Kim Galban-Countryman

Website: [Lighthouse of the Big Bend](http://www.lighthousebigbend.org/)

Florida State College at Jacksonville

101 West State Street, Room A-2140

Jacksonville, FL 32202

Phone Numbers:

Main: (904) 633-8297

FAX: (904) 632-3222

Executive Director: John Avendano

Website: [Florida State College at Jacksonville](http://www.fscj.edu/community-engagement/vision-education-rehabilitation-center/)

Florida Center for the Blind

1411 NE 22nd Avenue

Ocala, FL 34470

Phone Numbers:

Main: (352) 873-4700

FAX: (352) 873-4751

Executive Director: Anissa Pieriboni

Website: [Florida Center for the Blind](http://www.flblind.org/)

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Elder Care of Alachua County, Inc.

5701 NW 34th Street

Gainesville, FL 32653

Phone Numbers:

Main: (352) 873-4700

FAX: (352) 873-4751

Executive Director: Kacy Ealy

Website: [Elder Care of Alachua County, Inc.](http://www.eldercare.ufhealth.org/)

Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind

Parent Infant Program

207 North San Marco Avenue

St. Augustine, FL 32084

Phone Numbers:

Main: (904) 827-2221

Toll Free: (800) 827-2234

Executive Director: Cindy Day

Website: [Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind](http://www.fsdb.k12.fl.us/)

Center for the Visually Impaired

1187 Dunn Avenue

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

Phone Numbers:

Main: (386) 253-8879

Toll Free: (800) 227-1284

FAX: (386) 253-9178

Executive Director: Ronee David

Website: [Center for the Visually Impaired](http://www.vcicentralflorida.org/)

Lighthouse of Central Florida, Inc.

215 East New Hampshire Street

Orlando, FL 32804

Phone Numbers:

Main: (407) 898-2483

FAX: (407) 895-5255

Executive Director: Kyle Johnson

Website: [Lighthouse Central Florida, Inc.](http://www.lcf-fl.org/)

New Vision for Independence, Inc.

Lake-Sumter Community College, Lake Hall, RM 140

9501 US Hwy 441

Leesburg, FL 34788

Phone Numbers:

Main: (352) 435-5040

Executive Director: Chantel Buck

Website: [New Vision for Independence, Inc.](http://www.newvisionfl.org/)

Lighthouse of Pinellas, Inc.

6925 112th Circle North Suite 103

Largo, FL 33773

Phone Numbers:

Main: (727) 544-4433

FAX: (727) 544-55511

President/CEO: Kimberly Church

Website: [Lighthouse of Pinellas, Inc.](http://www.lhpfl.org/)

Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind

9130 Ridge Road,

New Port Richey, Florida 34654

Phone Numbers:

Main: (727) 815-0303

FAX: (727) 815-0203

Chief Executive Officer: Stefanie Pontlitz

Website: [Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind](http://www.lvib.org/)

Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind

1106 West Platt Street

Tampa, FL 33606

Phone Numbers:

Main: (813) 251-2407

FAX: (813) 254-4305

Executive Director: Sheryl Brown

Website: [Tampa Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc.](http://www.tampalighthouse.org/)

Lighthouse of Southwest Florida, Inc.

35 West Mariana Avenue

North Ft. Myers, FL 33903

Phone Numbers:

Main: (239) 997-7797

FAX: (239) 997-8462

Chief Executive Officer: Dotty St. Amand

Website: [Lighthouse of Southwest Florida, Inc.](http://www.lighthousewfl.org/)

Lighthouse Vision Loss Education

7318 North Tamiami Trail

Sarasota, FL 34243

Phone Numbers:

Main: (941) 359-1404

FAX: (941) 359-2373

Chief Executive Officer: Lisa Howard

Website: [Lighthouse of Manasota](http://www.lighthouseofmanasota.org/)

Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches

1710 Tiffany Drive East

West Palm Beach, FL 33407

Phone Numbers:

Main: (561) 586-5600

FAX: (561) 845-8022

Executive Director: Mary Allen

Website: [Lighthouse for the Blind of the Palm Beaches](http://www.lighthousepalmbeaches.org/)

Lighthouse of Collier, Inc.

2685 Horseshoe Drive South, Suite 211

Naples, FL 34104

Phone Numbers:

Main: (239) 430-3934

FAX: (239) 430-9213

Executive Director: Scott Flagel

Website: [Lighthouse of Collier, Inc.](http://www.lighthouseofcollier.org/)

The Florida Outreach Center for the Blind, Inc.

2315 South Congress Avenue

Palm Springs, FL 33406

Phone Numbers:

Main: (561) 642-0005

FAX: (561) 968-6268

Executive Director: Carolyn Lapp

Website: [Florida Outreach Center for the Blind, Inc.](http://www.blindfocb.org/)

Lighthouse of Broward County, Inc.

650 N. Andrews Avenue

Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33311

Phone Numbers:

Main: (954) 463-4217

FAX: (954) 764-3825

Executive Director: Ellyn Drotzer

Website: [Lighthouse of Broward County](http://www.lhob.org/)

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

601 S. W. 8th Avenue

Miami, FL 33130

Phone Numbers:

Main: (305) 856-4176

FAX: (305) 285-6967

President and CEO: Virginia Jacko

Website: [Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc.](http://www.miamilighthouse.org/)

# Vision Awareness

## Federal Definition of Legal Blindness:

* Visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of corrective lens OR visual field limitation such that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees.
* Social Security does allow visual acuities between 20/100 and 20/200 to be considered as legally blind if more sophisticated methods (other than the Snellen chart) are being used to measure acuity as the Snellen chart does not measure between 20/100 and 20/200. Charts such as Bailey-Lovie or the Early Treatment Diabetic Retinopathy study can measure acuity between 20/100 and 20/200. Therefore, an acuity of 20/125 or 20/160 on one of these charts would be considered as legally blind.

## Visual Status at Closure

* Total Blindness: Light Perception or LP and No Light Perception or NLP
* Legally Blind 20/200 or less in better eye or field loss of 20 degrees or more
* Other Visual Impairment: not legally blind but client has an eye condition such as glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, keratoconus, etc.
* Restoration: condition eliminated and vision restored to normal limits (primarily cataracts)
* No Visual Impairment: typically used when closing a case after application when client does not have an eye medical condition that requires treatment. Example, client may have a refractive error that can be corrected with standard glasses.

## Common Eye Diseases

### Cataracts

* Cataracts is a clouding of the eye's natural lens, which lies behind the iris and the pupil. It is the most common cause of vision loss in people over age 40 and is the principal cause of blindness in the world. Cataracts affect over 22 million people in America.
* Types Of Cataracts
* A sub capsular cataract occurs at the back of the lens. People with diabetes or those taking high doses of steroid medications have a greater risk of developing a Sub capsular cataract.
* A nuclear cataract forms deep in the central zone (nucleus) of the lens. Nuclear cataracts usually are associated with aging
* A cortical cataract is characterized by white, wedge-like opacities that start in the periphery of the lens and work their way to the center in a spoke-like fashion. This type of cataract occurs in the lens cortex, which is the part of the lens that surrounds the central nucleus.
* Causes of Cataracts
* The lens is mostly made of water and protein. The protein is arranged in a precise way that keeps the lens clear and lets light pass through it. However, as we age, some of the protein may clump together and start to cloud a small area of the lens. This is a cataract, and over time, it may grow larger and cloud more of the lens, making it harder to see.

### Glaucoma

* Glaucoma refers to a group of eye disorders that usually have few or no initial symptoms and eventually cause harm to the optic nerve that carries information from the eye to the brain.
* In most cases, glaucoma is associated with higher-than-normal pressure inside the eye (ocular hypertension). If untreated or uncontrolled, glaucoma first causes peripheral vision loss and eventually can lead to blindness
* Glaucoma often is called the "silent thief of sight," because most types typically cause no pain and produce no symptoms until noticeable vision loss occurs.
* Primary open-angle glaucoma is a common type of glaucoma that gradually reduces your peripheral vision without other symptoms. By the time you notice it, permanent damage already has occurred
* Angle-closure glaucoma - Angle-closure or narrow-angle glaucoma produces sudden symptoms such as eye pain, headaches, halos around lights, dilated pupils, vision loss, red eyes, nausea and vomiting.
* The most common type of glaucoma called primary open angle glaucoma affects an estimated 2.2 million people in the United States, and that number is expected to increase to 3.3 million by 2020 as the U.S. population ages. Open-angle glaucoma is three times more likely to affect African-Americans, compared with non-Hispanic whites in the United States, and blindness from glaucoma is at least six times more prevalent among African-Americans than non-Hispanic whites.
* Normal-tension glaucoma is a type of open-angle glaucoma that can cause visual field loss due to optic nerve damage. However, in normal-tension glaucoma, the eye's IOP remains in the normal range.
* Pigmentary glaucoma is a rare form of glaucoma is caused by clogging of the drainage angle of the eye by pigment that has broken loose from the iris, reducing the rate of aqueous outflow from the eye
* Secondary glaucoma. Symptoms of chronic glaucoma following an eye injury could indicate secondary glaucoma, which also may develop with presence of eye infection, inflammation, a tumor or enlargement of the lens due to a cataract.
* Congenital glaucoma. This inherited form of glaucoma is present at birth, with 80 percent of cases diagnosed by age one. These children are born with narrow angles or some other defect in the drainage system of the eye.

### Age-Related Macular Degeneration

* AMD is degeneration of the macula, which is the part of the retina responsible for the sharp, central vision needed to read or drive. Because the macula primarily is affected in AMD, central vision loss may occur. Age-related macular degeneration, often called AMD or ARMD, is the leading cause of vision loss and blindness among Americans who are age 65 and older. About 1.75 million U.S. residents currently have advanced age-related macular degeneration with associated vision loss, with that number expected to grow to almost 3 million by 2020.\*

### Wet and Dry Macular Degeneration

* Macular degeneration is diagnosed as either dry (non-neovascular) or wet (neovascular). Neovascular refers to growth of new blood vessels in an area, such as the macula, where they are not supposed to be. The dry form is more common than the wet form, with about 85 to 90 percent of AMD patients diagnosed with dry AMD
* Dry Macular Degeneration (non-neovascular). Dry AMD is an early stage of the disease and may result from the aging and thinning of macular tissues, depositing of pigment in the macula or a combination of the two processes. Gradual central vision loss may occur with dry macular degeneration but usually is not nearly as severe as wet AMD symptoms
* Wet Macular Degeneration (neovascular). In about 10 percent of cases, dry AMD progresses to the more advanced and damaging form of the eye disease. With wet macular degeneration, new blood vessels grow beneath the retina and leak blood and fluid. This leakage causes permanent damage to light-sensitive retinal cells, which die off and create blind spots in central vision.
* Wet macular degeneration falls into two categories. Occult occurs when new blood vessel growth beneath the retina, and is not as pronounced. Leakage is less evident in the occult CNV form of wet macular degeneration, which typically produces less severe vision loss. Classic occurs when blood vessel growth and scarring have very clear, delineated outlines observed beneath the retina. This type of wet AMD is known as classic CNV, usually producing more severe vision loss.

### Diabetic Retinopathy

* Causes damage to the blood vessels in the retina, and is the most common diabetic eye disease and a leading cause of blindness in American adults. Blood vessels may swell and leak fluid. In other people, abnormal new blood vessels grow on the surface of the retina. The retina is the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. A healthy retina is necessary for good vision.
* Stages of Retinopathy
* Mild Non-proliferative Retinopathy. At this earliest stage, micro aneurysms occur. They are small areas of balloon-like swelling in the retina's tiny blood vessels
* Moderate Non-proliferative Retinopathy. As the disease progresses, some blood vessels that nourish the retina are blocked.
* Severe Non-proliferative Retinopathy occurs when many more blood vessels are blocked, depriving several areas of the retina with their blood supply. These areas of the retina send signals to the body to grow new blood vessels for nourishment.
* Proliferative Retinopathy. At this advanced stage, the signals sent by the retina for nourishment trigger the growth of new blood vessels. This condition is called proliferative retinopathy. These new blood vessels are abnormal and fragile. They grow along the retina and along the surface of the clear, vitreous gel that fills the inside of the eye. By themselves, these blood vessels do not cause symptoms or vision loss. However, they have thin, fragile walls. If they leak blood, severe vision loss and even blindness can result. Fluid can leak into the center of the macula, the part of the eye where sharp, straight-ahead vision occurs. The fluid makes the macula swell, blurring vision. This condition is called macular edema. It can occur at any stage of diabetic retinopathy, although it is more likely to occur as the disease progresses. About half of the people with proliferative retinopathy also have macular edema

### Resources

* National Eye Institute

 [National Eye Institute Website](http://www.nei.nih.gov/index.asp)

* American Foundation for the Blind

 [American Foundation for the Blind Website](file:///%5C%5Cfldbs.net%5Cdbsnas%5Cprogram%5CRehab_Council_for_the_Blind%5CORIENTATION%20HANDBOOK%5C2017%20Handbook%5CAmerican)

* All About Vision

 [All- About Vision Website](http://www.allaboutvision.com/)

* Diabetes Eye Check

 [Diabetes Eye Check Website](http://www.diabeteseyecheck.org/)

* Glaucoma Research Foundation

 [Glaucoma Research Foundation Website](http://glaucoma.org/)

* National Keratoconus Foundation

 [National Keratoconus Foundation Website](http://www.nkcf.org/)

* Foundation Fighting Blindness

 [Foundation Fighting Blindness Website](http://www.blindness.org/)

* General Eye Medical Information
* [Mayo Clinic Website Address](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health-information/)
* [Web MD Website Address](http://www.webmd.com/eye-health/default.htm)

## General Rules of Courtesy to the Blind

* Say who you are when you come in contact with a blind person.
* Touch for attention if necessary.
* Talk directly to the person, using normal terms as well as normal tones: “It’s good to see you again, John.”
* Speak slowly and clearly.
* Offer to read the menu and prices, or cut up or serve food. They will let you know if it is necessary. If eating with a blind person, explain the position of each portion by relating its position on the plate to the numbers on a clock.
* Let them take your arm. That way, they will follow your lead. Walk at a normal pace; hesitate slightly before stepping up or down.
* When giving directions, do not point. Say: “Second hallway on your left, turn left; the receptionist will be on your right.”
* Say when you are leaving. He/she may think you are still there and end up talking to themselves … very embarrassing! Also, if you leave the person alone, make sure he/she is near something they can touch to maintain contact with their environment.
* Identify each denomination of a bill separately as you hand it to him. This is not necessary with coins; he/she knows them by touch.
* Above all, do not pity him/her. Many blind men and women are successful and self-supporting.
* Conversation Checklist
* Face the person you are speaking to them.
* Maintain an appropriate distance.
* Use a greeting. Ask about the other person.
* Acknowledge what the other person is saying.
* Give the other person time to introduce topics.
* Use gestures and other body language normally used to communicate.
* Purposefully end the conversation politely.

# Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind Mission Statement

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind reviews analyzes and advises on the policy decisions and evaluates the effectiveness of the Florida Division of Blind Services to ensure meaningful access to and use of vocational rehabilitation and independent living programs for Floridians who are blind or visually impaired.

# Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind Vision Statement

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind functions to create a positive impact on the fairness, efficiency, and accessibility of services through the evaluation of consumer feedback and the Florida Division of Blind Services’ performance.

# FRCB Council Members 2020-2021

Nancy Bateh

8437 Daryton Park Dr.

Jacksonville, FL. 32216

(O) (904) 348 -2730

Nancy.Bateh@dbs.fldoe.org

Representing: Voc. Rehab Counselor

Term Expires: 2023

Howard Bell

1000 North Ashley Drive,

Ste. 640,

Tampa, FL 33602

(O) (850) 488-9071 ext. 9761

howardb@DisabilityRightsFlorida.orgRepresenting: Client Asst. Program

Term Expires: 2023

Kim Carr

207 N San Marco Avenue

St. Augustine, Florida 32084

(O) 904-827-2232

carrk@fsdb.k12.fl.us

Representing: Business/ Industry / Labor

Term Expires: 2021

Jennifer Coburn

325 W Gaines Street

Tallahassee, Florida 32399

(O) (850) 245-0066

jennifer.coburn@fldoe.org

Representing: BEES

Term Expires: 2023

Robert L. Doyle, III, Director

FDBS Rm 1114, Turlington Bldg.

325 W. Gaines St.

Tallahassee, FL 32399

(O) 850/245-0300

Robert.doyle@dbs.fldoe.org

Division of Blind Services Director, Ex-Officio

Term Expires: N/A

Paul Edwards, Council Chair

20330 NE 20th Court

Miami, FL 33179

(H) 305-692-9206

Edwards.paul955@gmail.com

Representing: Business/Industry/Labor

Term Expires: 2021

Jorge Hernandez

9363 Fontainebleau Blvd.

Miami, FL 33172

(O) (786) 362-7547

jhernandez@miamilighthouse.org

Representing: Comm. Rehab Program

Term Expires: 2023

Douglas Ingram

4060 Deer Lane Drive

Tallahassee, FL. 32312

(C) (850) 567-8123

Dingram59@comcast.net

Representing: Adv. Group-BVA

Term Expires: 2023

Robert Kelly

1110 Loomis Avenue

Daytona Beach Fl.

(C) (386)295-4416

Kellyrob2@aol.com

Representing: Business/Industry/Labor

Term Expires: 2023

Patricia Lipovsky

1129 Bradenton Rd.

Daytona Beach, FL 32114

(H) (386) 255-0288

plipovsky@cfl.rr.com

Representing: Former Client

Term Expires: 2023

Donte Mickens

4635 Danson Way
Delray Beach, FL 33445
(H) (561) 450-6149
Donte.Mickens@yahoo.com

Representing: Curr/Former Client

Term Expires: 2023

Bruce Miles

590 Hammock Court

Marco Island, FL 34145

(H) (239) 394-1020

Brokerbruc@aol.com

Representing: Adv. Group- FCB

Term Expires: 2023

Misty Porter

207 N San Marco Avenue

St. Augustine, Florida 32084

(O) 904-827-2988

porterm@fsdbk12.org

Representing: Parent Training

Term Expires: 2021

# FRCB Bio’s

## Kim Carr

**Jacksonville**

Kim Carr is a Business/Industry representative on the Florida Rehabilitation for the Blind.

Kim, Director of Early Intervention for the Blind and Visually Impaired at FSDB has worked in the education field as an Early Childhood Educator since 2001 and in the field of Early Intervention for children with visual impairments since 2006. She has over 17 years of experience working with young children and their families in the classroom and in the home environment.

Kim has her Bachelors of Arts in Early Childhood Education, Masters of Arts in Educational Leadership and a certificate in Visual Disabilities, Early Intervention.

## Robert L. Doyle, III

**Tallahassee**

Robert Lee Doyle, III was appointed Director of the Division of Blind Services on June 20, 2013.

Robert has served for four years as director of the Division for the Visually Impaired within the Department of Human Services in Delaware.  He has 15 years of experience in human services and education and holds a bachelor’s degree in political studies and a master’s degree in public administration, both from the University of Illinois. Among other achievements, he has implemented initiatives that resulted in increased successful employment outcomes through the VR program and has worked to expand food service and vending business opportunities through Delaware’s Business Enterprise program.

Robert places a high priority on customer service, accountability, and positive relations with consumer groups and other stakeholders.

## Paul Edwards

**Miami**

Paul Edwards is one of the Business/Industry representatives on the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind.

I was born in San Francisco California and was one of the early users of an incubator after being very premature. I was left with a little light perception, which soon went away. At the age of seven, I moved to Calgary Alberta Canada and went to school in Vancouver, British Columbia. At thirteen, my mother decided we were moving to Jamaica and I stayed there until I was 21. I graduated from high school sort of and completed my Bachelor's SPECIAL Honors degree in History at the Mona Jamaica campus of the University of the West Indies. I was the first blind student to go there and ended up in Trinidad because I wanted to do a graduate degree in international relations, which I successfully completed. I taught at a small school in the rural area of Trinidad partly because there was no other job and partly because I was not sure if I could really teach. After one year, I became the senior history master at Trinity College, the leading Anglican School for Boys in Trinidad and Tobago. Near the end of my teaching career, I got a graduate degree in Education from the University of the West Indies in St. Augustine, Trinidad.

When I left Trinidad ten years later, I had three children: two girls and a boy. I moved to Florida where I went to work for the Division of Blind Services as a rehabilitation teacher. In this job, I went to people's homes and taught them skills that would enable them to adjust to visual impairment. After three years of this, I became a Rehabilitation Counselor and worked mostly with high school and college students. In 1983, I moved to Jacksonville to take over as Executive Director of an agency serving blind people there. In 1986, I moved to Miami as Director of Services to Students with Disabilities on the North Campus of Miami Dade College, the largest two year college in the United States. On my campus, we served over seven hundred disabled students a year. I retired from that job in May of 2012.

While I certainly regard my working life as rich and varied, I have derived much more pleasure from the work I have done as a volunteer and advocate. I have worked at the local level, at the state level and at the national level to try to make things better for people who are blind. I currently serve on the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind, the National Accreditation Council Board and

hold several positions within the American Council and its Florida Affiliate. I have worked particularly on library issues, promoting braille and changing laws.

I absolutely believe that I have been given as much by the people I have tried to help as I have given them. Until I became associated with ACB, I saw myself as an inferior creature desperately trying to compete in a world where I could never do quite enough to be accepted. What the blindness movement taught me is that the only person I have to satisfy is I. That may sound arrogant and overbearing but that is not how it is intended. I set high standards for myself and if I can meet them, I am likely to meet the standards of others. I no longer worry about being accepted by society. I have rights and I will fight to see they are protected. Society does not need to accept me but they do need to include me. I am proud to be a person who is blind. I am proud of what I accomplish every day in spite of the barriers that are there. More than that, I am proud of what every blind person everywhere accomplishes every day. It is not easy to be blind and anybody who says it is or who suggests that it's a walk in the park does not live in the same world I do!

I enjoy modern folk music, fantasy and science fiction and hope that, in due course, I will find some time to write. The one thing you can be sure I will not write is an autobiography. My three children are now grown up and I have ten grandchildren which is quite enough to keep me occupied and young. I still have a lot to do and many places where I think I can help. I have had a good life and only wish I had not been quite so busy. When you do not make time to smell the roses, they have often faded before you can enjoy them!

Misty Porter

**St. Augustine**

Misty Porter serves as Parent Liaison for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) in St. Augustine, Florida. She relocated her family in 2009 after determining Florida to be the best state in the nation to raise her young child with vision loss.

Through her employment at FSDB, Misty is able to support her passion for working with families of children with sensory loss. Ms. Porter works with a variety of stakeholders to assure that families are aware of and have access to the necessary information, supports, and resources to promote the achievement of student academic goals and lifelong learning.

Ms. Porter has more than a decade of experience working with families of young children with exceptional needs and has a passion for supporting early intervention and early learning programs. Before joining the team of experts at FSDB, Ms. Porter was employed as a service coordinator through the Early Steps Program. She currently services on the Florida Coordinating Council for Infants and Toddlers, an advisory council for the Florida Early Steps Program. Ms. Porter serves on the Child and Family Outcomes workgroup for Children’s Medical Services and as a stakeholder provides strategic programmatic recommendations to support positive outcomes for Florida families.

Ms. Porter is a State Certified trainer for INSITE and VIISA curriculums and provides training and information to professionals in early intervention working with families of children with sensory loss. She is a Parent Advisor with the Parent-Infant Program at FSDB and often provides additional training for her peers and coworkers.

Her degree in Sociology from Valdosta State University prepared Ms. Porter to understand how social-based organizations work and to apply that knowledge to support the families and communities that she serves. Ms. Porter partners with education and resource-based programs throughout the state. She often presents at conferences and workshops such as Florida’s Family Café and EHDI (Early Hearing Detection & Intervention). As a mother of three children, two of whom have vision loss, Ms. Porter understands firsthand the positive impact a strong community, rich with quality programs, and accomplished mentors can have on the success of the upcoming youth in the blind community.

# FLORIDA REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND

**BY-LAWS**

**(Amended February 6, 2019**)

## ARTICLE I - NAME

**SECTION 1. NAME**

This Council will be known as the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (Council).

**SECTION 2. SERVICE AREA**

The service area will be the State of Florida.

**SECTION 3. MAILING ADDRESS**

The Council's mailing address shall be:

Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Division of Blind Services

325 West Gaines St., Room 1114, Turlington Bldg.

Tallahassee, FL 32399

## ARTICLE II - STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The Council is authorized by section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended ("the Act") and section 413.011, Florida Statutes.

## ARTICLE III - PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY

**SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

The role of the Council is:

A. To act as a voice of consumers and other stakeholders in the public vocational rehabilitation system.

B. To work as an advisory council in partnership with the Division of Blind Services (DBS) to assist toward a common goal to maximize employment and independent living for people who are blind or have low vision.

C. To include the planning and development of statewide vocational rehabilitation programs and services pursuant to the Act.

 D. To recommend improvements in such programs and services, and to perform such other functions as provided in section 413.011(8)(h), Florida Statutes.

E. To receive and/or provide input to DBS on policies relating to other programs.

**SECTION 2. COUNCIL FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. In accordance with section 101(a) 15(E) (ii), of the Act, the Council, in partnership with DBS, will submit an annual report to the Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (Commissioner) that includes the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness from the previous year.

B. The Council will conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of consumer satisfaction with functions performed by DBS and vocational rehabilitation services provided by state agencies and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

C. The Council will prepare and submit, by November 30, an annual report to the Governor of the State of Florida (Governor) and the Commissioner (RSA), on the status of vocational rehabilitation programs operated within the State, and make the report available to the public, as required under section 413.011(8) (h) 4, Florida Statutes.

D. The Council will coordinate a working relationship with other mandated Councils within the State as required under Sec 105 (c) (6) of the Act.

E. To strengthen its working relationship with the Florida Rehabilitation Council, the Council will receive a representative of the Florida Rehabilitation Council at Council meetings and will designate one of its members as its representative to be in attendance at meetings of the Florida Rehabilitation Council. Such representations will not constitute membership in the counterpart council.

F. The Council shall perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of this title, as the Council determines to be appropriate.

 G. The Division of Blind Services (DBS) will provide sufficient funding and staff to support the Council.

## ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

**SECTION 1. SELECTION**

A. The Governor will make appointments after having solicited recommendations from representatives of organizations representing a broad range of individuals with visual impairments and organizations interested in individuals with visual impairments.

B. In selecting members, the Governor shall consider, to the greatest extent practicable, the extent to which minority populations are represented on the Council.

C. If the Governor request recommendations, the Executive Committee (see Article IV, Section 6 below) will be responsible to review applications and make such recommendations.

**SECTION 2. COUNCIL COMPOSITION**

The Council shall meet the membership requirements established under section 105(b) of the Act and section 413.011(8) (a), Florida Statutes.

**SECTION 3. LENGTH OF TERMS**

A. State and federal law establish the Council's lengths of terms.

B. Appointment to fill unexpired vacancies will be made in the same manner as regular appointments but only for the remainder of the unexpired term.

C. Appointment to fill unexpired vacancies shall not restrict the member's appointment to two full terms thereafter.

 **SECTION 4. OFFICERS**

A. Officers will be elected at the first quarterly meeting of the calendar year.

B. Officers shall serve for a one year term and may be elected for a second term, but may not serve more than two full consecutive terms in that position. The term of any officer shall, however, automatically end upon such officer no longer being a voting member of the Council.

C. The Council shall elect a Chairperson, First Vice Chairperson and Second Vice Chairperson.

**SECTION 5. DUTIES**

A. Chairperson duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Shall represent the council on all issues with DBS

2. Shall act as mediator for the council

3. Shall conduct meetings

4. Shall appoint committee chairs and members of all standing committees, ad hoc committees and task forces as deemed necessary.

B. First Vice Chair duties include, but are not limited to, the following: Shall conduct meetings in the absence of the chair.

C. Second Vice Chair duties include, but are not limited to, the following: Shall conduct meetings in the absence of the chair and first vice chair.

**SECTION 6. COMMITTEES**

The Director of DBS shall be an ex officio member of the Council. The Director may attend committee meetings to provide input and staff support.

A. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, First Vice Chair, Second Vice Chair and the Chairs of each standing committee.

1. The Executive Committee shall meet as deemed necessary. It shall act as an advisor to the Chairperson and shall conduct the affairs of the Council between full Council meetings as directed by the Council.

2. The Executive Committee shall serve as a forum for concerns regarding compliance with the Federal and State Plans and make recommendations to the Council to resolve conflicts and issues, and shall develop Council policies for adoption by the Council.

B. Standing Committees

There shall be two standing committees, Planning and Evaluation. The standing committees shall meet at the call of their Chairperson or at the request of a majority of the members of the Committee.

 Planning Committee

1. The Planning Committee will report to the full council regarding activities authorized to be carried out under section 105 of the Act, and assist in the preparation of the State plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, and needs assessments required by section 105 of the Act and other programs.

 2. The Planning Committee will also provide for coordination and the establishment of working relationships between the designated State agency and the Statewide Independent Living Council and centers for independent living within the State.

Evaluation Committee

1. The Evaluation Committee will review, analyze, and report to the full council regarding the performance of the responsibilities of DBS as required under section 105 of the Act.

 2. The Evaluation Committee will conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of and consumer satisfaction with DBS.

C. Ad Hoc Committees and Task Forces

1. The Chairperson of the Council shall appoint such ad hoc committees or task forces as deemed necessary to address short-term issues coming before the Council.

2. Membership of such task forces of the Council may include but need not be limited to members of the Council.

 3. The members of such task forces shall not be compensated for their services, but may be reimbursed for their travel expenses under prevailing applicable state travel regulations.

**SECTION 7. REMOVAL/RESIGNATION**

A. Any member wishing to resign from the Council before the expiration of "his/her term shall present a letter of resignation to the Governor, with a copy to the Chairperson of the Council.

B. The Chairperson will notify the Governor in writing of any member failing to attend, in person, two (2) quarterly meetings per calendar year without an excuse acceptable to the Executive Committee. After the Executive Committee reports to the Council, a letter will be sent to the Governor and to the member in question. The notification will include the request to have the member removed from the Council.

## ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

**SECTION 1. ANNUAL NUMBER**

A. The Council is required to meet no less than four times a year.

B. Quarterly meetings will be face to face, and scheduled approximately three (3) months apart.

 C. The Council shall establish meetings at least nine (9) months in advance.

D. The quarterly meetings, and public forums, shall be publicly noticed as required by section 286.011, Florida Statutes.

E. Council members are requested to notify Council staff of an anticipated absence from a scheduled meeting at least two (2) weeks in advance of the meeting.

F. The Chair has the authority, under special circumstances, to authorize telephonic attendance at a regular meeting of the Council.

G. All members of the Council, except those on the Council in ex-officio capacity, shall be entitled to vote, in person only or by telephone as specially authorized by the Chair at Council meetings.

H. Council member travel expenses for attendance at official meetings will be reimbursed under prevailing state travel regulations and rates.

I. Other expenses necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of membership on this Council in compliance with section 105 of the Act may be approved by the Director of the Division of Blind Services in advance.

J. Meetings shall be conducted in Green lodging hotels (as designated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection) that are publicly accessible locations, meeting all standards of accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Adequate public notice provided as to time and place shall be provided.

K. The meeting agenda shall be provided in accessible format to Council members two weeks in advance.

L. The quarterly meetings will be held in different areas of the state to allow for equal participation of interested parties.

M. Transcribed minutes of the meetings will consist of action items only. All meetings will be recorded and kept on file in accordance with state and federal law.

N. A Council member may send a designee to represent their position at no more than two (2) quarterly meetings per year. The designee will not participate in voting on Council issues. The designee's expenses will be reimbursed under prevailing state travel regulations and rates.

**SECTION 2. PUBLIC FORUMS**

A. The Council will conduct at least two (2) public forums per year.

B. The decision to hold a public forum in conjunction with a quarterly meeting will be made by majority vote of members in attendance when the meeting location has been decided.

C. The public forum will be advertised as no less than a 1 hour meeting with the date and time decided by the Council during the preceding meeting.

D. Persons wishing to comment at the public forum will have up to 5 minutes to speak.

**SECTION 4. QUORUM**

Fifty percent (50 plus one (1) of the voting membership of the Council or Committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting a meeting.

## ARTICLE VI - AMENDMENTS

A. These by-laws may be amended at any quarterly meeting of the Council by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the voting members present provided that said proposed amendment shall have been presented in fully accessible format at least two (2) weeks prior to that quarterly meeting.

B. Amendments to the by-laws must not be in conflict with appropriate state and federal regulations.

**ARTICLE VII - PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

A. The latest version available in accessible format of Robert's Rules of Order, when not in conflict with these by-laws, shall govern the procedures of this Council.

B. Following Robert's Rules of Order, proxy voting will not be utilized in Council voting activities.

Approved February 6, 2019

# Cooperative Agreement

Is entered into by and between the Florida Department of Education's Division of Blind Services ("DBS") and the Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (the "Council") created under 413.011, Florida Statutes and the Rehab Act of 1973, as amended (Act). Its intent is to:

1. Provide the Council with maximum latitude regarding performance of

its statutory functions and Staff-Related Decisions, consistent with applicable law, rules and regulations.

2. Assure the Council's deliberations result in optimal contribution to the

DBS in support of its efforts to serve the blind citizens of Florida.

3. Minimize differences over the hiring, assignment, termination,

supervision and evaluation of staff.

4. Result in the efficient and effective development of the State Plan,

Resource Plan and Annual Report as required by statute.

5. Establish a procedure to handle any disagreements related to the

development of the Resource Plan.

It is established through this Cooperative Agreement that each member of the Florida Rehabilitation Council of the Blind and the Division of Blind Services, its Director and members of his/her staff that each party to this agreement will at all times demonstrate mutual respect and consideration of each person both personally and professionally. Both the Council and DBS acknowledge and recognize the strengths and diversities of each member and agree to maintain professional, respectful and courteous communications. Additionally, the FRCB and DBS agree to work cohesively in a manner that fosters trust and fairness. Finally, each party agrees to remain committed to improving access to services to meet the needs of Floridians who are blind and Visually Impaired.

## The Council's Statutory Functions Include:

Advise DBS regarding activities authorized to be carried out under Title I, and assist in the preparation of the State plan and amendments to the plan, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations required by the Act.

 Work collaboratively with DBS to ensure that a comprehensive statewide assessment describing the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the State (with a particular focus on the vocational rehabilitation services) is conducted every 3 years.

Conduct a review and analysis of the effectiveness of, and consumer satisfaction with the functions performed by DBS and other public and private entities responsible for providing vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities under the Act.

 Developing and submitting an Annual Report of the Council's deliberations to the Governor and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the United States Department of Education.

Preparing, in cooperation with DBS, a Resource Plan that addresses funding and staffing necessary to carry out the Council's functions. Toward this end, the Council shall, consistent with law and applicable rules and regulations, supervise and evaluate its staff; and DBS shall not assign Council staff any responsibilities that would create a conflict of interest between DBS and the Council.

## The Council's Primary Functions Include:

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

The council shall conduct such public hearings and other activities, as it deems necessary and prudent, to meet its obligations under the Statutes. DBS shall, in so far as possible, furnish such available information and assistance as requested by the Council.

DEVELOPMENT OF STATE PLAN

The Council shall develop and deliver to DBS those sections of the State Plan for which it has been given responsibility by RSA at least ninety days prior to the time the State Plan is required to be submitted for review to RSA. DBS shall review those sections within thirty days after

submission and shall provide written notice to the Council of any substantive changes and provide public notice of a teleconference within fifteen days to meet and discuss the proposed changes and resolve differences if required.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE PLAN

The Council shall prepare and deliver to DBS a proposed Resource Plan one hundred twenty days prior to implementation, or earlier if required by DBS for state budget purposes. DBS shall review the proposed plan within thirty days and shall provide written notice to the Council of any proposed substantive changes and provide public notice of a teleconference within fifteen days to meet and discuss the proposed changes, and resolve differences if required. Both the Council Chair and the Director of DBS shall sign two copies of the agreed upon Resource Plan, and each party shall retain a signed copy.

DEVELOPMENT OF CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

The Council shall conduct a Client Satisfaction Survey annually with resources provided by DBS. The Council and DBS will provide timely reviews of all draft survey reports. DBS will provide review comments to the Council for consideration prior to Council approval for publication of any interim or final survey report.

DEVELOPMENT OF ANNUAL REPORT

The Council shall prepare and submit an annual report to the Governor and RSA on its deliberations throughout the year and provide its views of the status of vocational rehabilitation programs for the blind operated within the State. This report will be available to the public.

STAFF RELATED DECISIONS

The Council shall have significant input into the hiring and assignment of the staff member assigned to the Council's Executive Committee. In addition to screening resumes and interviewing applicants for Council assignments, the Committee shall make recommendations to the Director of DBS pertaining to all Council related hiring and assignments.

The staff person for the Council shall be supervised by and report directly to the DBS Director.

To assure the integrity of the Council's activities, DBS shall not assign Council staff any responsibilities that would create a conflict of interest or interfere with a staff person's ability to fulfill his or her responsibilities to the Council. Perceived or potential staffing problems should be a matter of prompt discussion between the Council Chair and the DBS Director. The spirit under which this Cooperative Agreement is entered into highlights a determination on the part of both parties to achieve optimal opportunities and services for all the blind citizens of Florida. Our commitment is to work diligently to resolve any problems or disagreements that might arise in carrying out our mutual statutory mission and functions but if that should happen we would both look to the Governor for prompt resolution.

TERM OF AGREEMENT

The term of this Agreement shall be for a period of one year from the date it is executed. The Agreement shall be automatically renewed unless either party notifies the other party in writing of its intent not to renew at least one month prior to any expiration of the original or any renewal term.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have signed this Agreement on the dates stated.

FLORIDA DIVISION OF

BLIND SERVICES

BY: Robert L. Doyle, III, and Director

Date: 7-29-16

FLORIDA REHABILITATION COUNCIL

FOR THE BLIND

By: Robert Kelly, Council Chair

Date: 7-29-16

# State Travel

## General Rules

Travel expenses incurred by council member attendance at official meetings will be reimbursed under prevailing state travel regulations and rates.

**ALL TRAVEL MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE OF THE START OF THE TRAVEL**. **A TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM** shall be completed for all travel. Travel expenses will be reimbursed through a state voucher after your travel is complete and upon receipt of the **TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT REQUEST FORM**.

If you live **50 miles** or less from the meeting location, you can only be reimbursed travel and/or mileage for travel to and from the meeting location. The traveler cannot be reimbursed for lodging.

In order to claim per diem or actual expenses for travel reimbursement purposes, you must travel over **50 miles**, one-way, between your home and the meeting location. **However**, if you live less than **50 miles** from the meeting city and **have a disability** which makes it difficult for you to travel back and forth to the meeting location for meetings lasting more than one day, you may be able to request travel authorization, in advance, for reimbursement and per diem**.**

If you require a personal care assistant (PCA) in order to travel to/from a meeting, the attendant will be reimbursed for all travel expenses plus meals and lodging if they are in a separate room. If the attendant shares your hotel room, they will only be reimbursed for meals at the state rate, and if applicable, reimbursement for airfare. If they provide your transportation, they may receive mileage (state rate). If you pay for their expenses, you must provide receipts to receive reimbursement.

Spouses or other persons related to you by blood who ordinarily provide your personal attendant care, cannot claim an attendant’s fee. They are treated in every other respect as a “non-State” employee for travel purposes, when acting as your attendant and must furnish their name, relationship to you, and Social Security number for reimbursement of meals and transportation.

A W-9 form is required to be filled out for you and/or your attendant to receive reimbursement from the State of Florida.

 **TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM**

 A Travel Authorization Request Form shall be completed for all travel, in advance. The forms must be signed by the traveler and returned to Selena Sickler for approval from the agency head and budget officer. Once all the necessary signatures are obtained, Selena will notify you to make your transportation reservations. Council members are responsible for making your own transportation reservations. The FRCB Staff Assistant will book the hotel and secure a block of rooms. Lodging for the FRCB Council Members is paid through direct billing. A credit card will be required upon check-in at the hotel for incidentals.

## Transportation

Use of private vehicle requires Privately Owned Vehicle Versus Rental Car Worksheet to support that cost is not more than the cost of using a rental vehicle

If the traveler elects to use a privately owned vehicle instead of a rental vehicle or air transportation, then the Privately Owned Vehicle Versus Rental Car Worksheet must be completed and attached to the Travel Authorization Request form. If the worksheet indicates that the cost of renting a vehicle is less than using a privately owned vehicle for the authorized trip, then the traveler shall only be reimbursed up to the estimated amount of a rental vehicle.

If approved in advance, the State will reimburse you **44.5 cents** per mile when you use your vehicle for State business. When this involves travel between cities, Google Maps is used in computing mileage, from point of origin to destination.

The State has a contract with Avis Car Rental, and therefore any traveler must use Avis when renting a vehicle. You will need to make arrangements in advance to utilize the AVIS contracted rate. When renting a vehicle, the state mandates using a compact vehicle at a rate of $25.00 per day. You must use a **Compact** rental car or justify the reason needing a larger one (i.e., wheelchair user, more than one passenger, business materials, etc.) If you choose to use a larger car with no justification, you must absorb the difference. To receive reimbursement for gas, you must turn in your gas receipts.

If you fly, you must use the most economical rate if available, and you must fly coach, tourist, or at an available lower fare. If you choose to fly first class, you must absorb the difference between the cost of a first-class and coach ticket. The only exception is if you have a disability making it impossible for you to be accommodated in coach or tourist class. If this is the case, you must furnish a statement signed by your physician explaining why you must fly first-class.

## Rental Car Reservations

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind staff assistant will assist in making rental car reservations. **Please contact the staff assistant if you will need to rent a vehicle for travel.**

When you return the car to the rental company, please make sure you keep all receipts and send them to FRCB staff assistant immediately for processing. Also, please keep your gas receipts for reimbursement.

## The Travel Day

The State of Florida divides a “travel day” into four, six-hour quarters, or 24 hours of continuous travel time. You are considered to be on travel status from the time you leave your residence until the time you return to your residence

The travel quarters are:

 First Quarter - Begins at 12:01 a.m., Ends at 6:00 a.m.

 Second Quarter - Begins at 6:01 a.m., Ends at 12:00 Noon

 Third Quarter - Begins at 12:01 p.m., Ends at 6:00 p.m.

 Fourth Quarter - Begins at 6:01 p.m., Ends at 12:00 Midnight

## State Per Diem

The Florida Legislature allows employees and individuals assigned to travel on State business a total of **$80** per diem, **payable by the travel quarter**. Thus, for each quarter of travel performed during a 24-hour travel day, you will be reimbursed at the rate of **$20.00** per travel quarter. You do not have to be in travel status for an entire quarter in order to receive **$20.00** for that quarter.

## Claiming Lodging and Meals

State per diem **($80** per day) allows you to recover a “reasonable” amount of the cost of your hotel room and meals for each travel day. You may however, choose to request **LODGING AND MEALS** instead. A paid hotel receipt, showing a zero balance, must be attached to your travel voucher to document your lodging expense. You are not allowed to use the per diem rate and lodging/meals expenses in the same day.

**WE DO NOT ACCEPT RECEIPTS FOR MEALS**. The State allows the following rates for meals:

**Breakfast** ($6.00) Travel must begin before 6:00 a.m. and extend past 8:00 a.m.

**Lunch** ($11.00) Travel must begin before 12:00 Noon and extend past 2p.m.

**Dinner** ($19.00) Travel must begin before 6:00 p.m. and extend beyond 8:00 p.m.

If a meal is included in the registration, this amount will be deducted from your meal allowance or per diem.**ORIGINAL RECEIPTS ARE REQUIRED AS INDICATED. (ALL RECEIPTS MUST BE SINGED BY THE** **TRAVELER)**

* Taxi fares in excess of $25.00 on a fare basis.
* Storage, parking fees or tolls in excess of $25.00.
* Communication expenses, such as, telephone calls, fax, postage and mailing fees. A statement that these expenses being claimed were for “State business” must appear on the reimbursement form.
* Actual amount paid for mandatory valet parking.
* Receipts or cancelled checks for conference registration fees paid by the traveler.
* Laundry, dry cleaning and pressing expenses can be reimbursed when official travel extends beyond seven (7) days and such expenses are necessarily incurred to complete the official business portion of the trip.
* Passport and visa fees required for official travel.
* Actual and necessary fees charged to purchase traveler’s checks.
* Currency exchange fees necessary to pay official travel expenses.
* Actual cost of maps necessary to conduct official business.
* Actual cost of fuel for rental cars.

**RECEIPTS ARE NOT REQUIRED AS INDICATED:**

* Actual tips paid to taxi drivers, this amount shall not exceed 15% of the taxi fare.
* Actual tips paid for valet parking. This amount shall not exceed $1.00 per occasion that was incurred in the performance of State business.
* Portage charges shall be reimbursed at $1.00 per bag or box and shall not exceed $5.00 per occurrence. If portage expenses exceed $5.00, then the number of bags and/or boxes must be listed on the reimbursement form.

## Important Reminders

* Required Forms-**Travel Authorization Request & Reimbursement Expense.**
* Travel Authorization form must be approved before transportation reservations are made.
* All receipts must be signed in order to be reimbursed.
* After completion of travel, (SIGNED) receipts must be returned in order for the TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORM to be prepared.

# Acronyms

## Acronyms A-C

* AADB-American Association of the Deaf-Blind
* ABE-Adult Basic Education
* AP-Adult Program (DBS – clients under 55)
* AER/Association for Education and
* AERBVI-Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Inc.
* AFB-American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
* AHEAD-At-Home and At Day Care (program)
* AHCA-Agency for Health Care Administration (Florida)
* ALL-Affiliated Leadership League of and for the Blind of America
* APD-Agency for Persons with Disabilities
* APH-American Printing House for the Blind
* ARC-Association of Retarded Citizens
* ASHA-American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
* AT-Assistive Technology
* ATEN-Assistive Technology Education Network
* AWARE-Accessible Web-based Activity Reporting Environment
* BBE-Bureau of Business Enterprises
* BEES-Bureau of Education for Exceptional Students - DOE
* BTR-Building Trust Relationships
* BEP-Business Enterprises Program
* BVA-Blinded Veterans Association
* BV’s-Blinded Veterans
* CAP-Client Assistance Program
* CARD-Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities
* CAST-Center for Applied Special Technology
* CEC/DVH Council for Exceptional Children/Division for the Visual Handicapped
* CFP-Children and Families Program (DBS)
* CIL-Center for Independent Living
* CCTV-Closed Circuit Television
* CMS-Children's Medical Services
* CPD-Center for Professional Development
* CPR-Client Progress Record
* CPT-Current Procedural Terminology
* CRP-Community Rehabilitation Program
* O & M-Orientation and Mobility
* CSAVR- Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
* CSPD-Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
* CVI-Center for the Visually Impaired (Daytona Beach Facility)

## Acronyms D-F

* DA-District Administrator
* DB-LINK The National Clearinghouse for Deaf-Blind Information
* DBS-Division of Blind Services
* DD-Developmental Disabilities
* DDPC-Developmental Disabilities Planning Council
* DEI-Developmental Evaluation and Intervention (a Part C office)
* D/HH-Deaf/Hard of Hearing
* DMS-Department Of Management Services
* DOE-Department Of Education
* DOH-Department Of Health
* DSI-Dual Sensory Impairment
* DVACE-Division of Vocational, Adult & Community Education
* DVR-Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
* EIP-Early Intervention Program
* EDGAR- Education Department General Administrative Regulations
* EMAC -Eye Medical Advisory Council or Eye Medical Advisory Consultant
* ENA-Economic Need Application
* ESE-Exceptional Student Education
* EUA-Evaluation Under Anesthesia
* FAASB-Florida Association of Agencies Serving the Blind, Inc.
* FADB-Florida Association for the Deaf-Blind
* FACIL-Florida Association of Centers for Independent Living
* FADB-Florida Deaf-Blind Association
* FAER- Florida Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired
* FAPE-Free Appropriate Public Education
* FCAT-Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test
* FCB-Florida Center for the Blind, Inc. (Ocala Facility)
* FCB-Florida Council of the Blind, Inc.
* FCRR-Florida Center for Reading Research
* FDLRS-Florida Diagnostic Learning Resources System
* FDOE-Florida Department of Education
* FEC-Florida Education Center
* FEHI-Florida Educators of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals
* FFCVI -Florida Families of Children with Visual Impairment (a state Chapter of NAPVI)
* FILC-Florida Independent Living Council
* FIMC-Florida Instructional Materials Center
* FIN-Florida Inclusion Network
* FLAIR-Florida Accounting Information Resource
* FND-Family Network on Disabilities
* FNDB- Florida Network on Deaf-Blindness (a network of state agencies)
* FOP- Florida Outreach Project for Children and Young Adults Who Are

Deaf-Blind

* FRA-Florida Rehabilitation Association
* FRC-Florida Rehabilitation Council
* FRCB-Florida Rehabilitation Council f/t Blind
* FRG-Florida Regional Group
* FSDB-Florida School for the Deaf and Blind
* FSU-Florida State University
* FTE-Full Time Equivalent
* FVA-Functional Vision Assessment

## Acronyms G-L

* GEPA-General Education Provisions Act
* GME-General Medical Exam
* GPRA-Government Performance and Results Act
* GWI-Goodwill Industries
* HKNC Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults
* HI-Hearing Impaired
* HRD-Human Resource Development
* IB West Independence for the Blind of West FL (Pensacola Facility)
* IDEA-Individuals w/ Disabilities Education Act
* IEP- Individualized Educational Plan or Individualized Education Program
* IFSP-Individual Family Support Plan
* IL-Independent Living
* ILAB- Independent Living for the Adult Blind (FL State College of Jacksonville Facility)
* ILC-Independent Living Council
* ILP-Independent Living Plan or Independent Living Program
* INSITE-In-home Sensory Impaired Training and Education
* IOL-Intraocular Lens Implant
* IPE-Individual Plan for Employment
* I&R-Information and referral
* ISRD-Institute for Small and Rural Districts
* IWDP-Individual Written Development Plan
* IWG-Interagency Work Group
* IWRP- Individualized Written Rehabilitation Plan or Individualized Written Rehabilitation Program
* JTPA-Job Training Partnership Act
* JVIB-Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness
* LES-Labor & Employment Security - Dept. of Labor
* LBR-Legislative Budget Request
* LRE-Least Restrictive Environment
* LCF-Lighthouse Central Florida
* LVIB Lighthouse for the Visually Impaired and Blind (Port Richey Facility)
* LBB-Lighthouse of Big Bend, Inc. (Tallahassee Facility)
* LBC-Lighthouse of Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale Facility)
* LSF-Lighthouse of Southwest Florida (Ft. Myers Facility)
* LEA-Local Education Agency (Florida school districts)
* LV-Low Vision

## Acronyms M-W

* MIS-Management Information System
* MIT-Miscellaneous Invoice Transmittal
* NAC-National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind & Visually Impaired, Inc.
* NAPVI-National Association for Parents of the Visually Impaired
* NASDSE-National Association of State Directors of Special Education
* NBA-National Braille Association
* NCLB-No Child Left Behind
* NCLID-National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities
* NCPABVI-National Council of Private Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired
* NCSAB-National Council of State Agencies Serving the Blind
* NFAD-National Family Association for Deaf-Blind
* NFB-National Federation of the Blind, Inc.
* NIB-National Industries for the Blind
* NIDRR-National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research
* NLS-National Library Service for the Blind & Physically Handicapped
* NRA-National Rehabilitation Association
* NVRA-National Vision Rehabilitation Association
* NWRDC-Northwest Regional Data Center
* OILB-Occupational Information Library for the Blind
* OD-Oculus Dexter or Right Eye
* OB-Older Blind (DBS – Client 55 and older)
* OJT-On-the-Job Training
* OS-Oculus Sinister or Left Eye
* OSEP- Office of Special Education Programs
* OSERS-Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (Federal)
* OTE-Other Than Eye Consultant
* OU-Oculi Uterque or Both Eyes
* PECO-Public Education Capital Outlay
* PCO-Pennsylvania College of Optometry
* PDR-Physician's Desk Reference
* PDS-Preliminary Diagnostic Study
* PIC-Private Industry Council
* PL-Public Law (Federal)
* PPSC-Pharmacy Provider Services Corporation
* PUR-Program Utilization Report
* QA-Quality Assurance
* RAC-Rehabilitation Advisory Council
* RRCEP-Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program
* RRTC-Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
* RSA-Rehabilitation Services Administration
* RT-Rehabilitation Technologist
* RI Rehabilitation Instructor
* RTC Research and Training Center
* RVS Relative Value Studies
* SAMAS Statewide Automated Management and Accounting System
* SE Supported Employment
* SEAC Supported Employment Advisory Council
* SEDA Supported Employment Data System
* SOMA Southeastern Orientation and Mobility Association
* SSDI Social Security Disability Income
* SSI Supplemental Security Income (Federal)
* TA Technical Assistance
* TC Technology Center
* TDD Telephone Device for the Deaf
* TS Thorough Diagnostic Study
* UCP United Cerebral Palsy
* USABA United States Association of Blind Athletes
* VA Veterans Administration
* VR Vocational Rehabilitation
* VRC Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
* WBU World Blind