RESOURCE GUIDE FOR PEOPLE WITH VISION LOSS



Updated January 2021

This resource guide is provided by the Oregon Commission for the Blind. Please contact us if you have additional ideas, information, or corrections at 888-202-5463 or ocb.mail@state.or.us. The most current copy of this resource guide can always be found at: [www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Brochures\_Resources.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Brochures_Resources.aspx)

Please note that this guide is not intended to be all-encompassing but is designed to make you aware of at least some of the resources available. We are not endorsing any specific resources listed in this guide but invite you to research them and determine if any will meet your needs.

We update the guide once a year, so please note that information may have changed since the last update; always double-check!

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# About Oregon Commission for the Blind

Oregon Commission for the Blind (OCB)’s mission statement is: “Empower Oregonians Who are Blind to Fully Engage in Life.”

Services are provided statewide, with counselors and teachers meeting with individuals in their home communities throughout the state.

OCB assists eligible Oregonians with vision loss in making informed choices to achieve full inclusion in society through employment, independent living, and social self-sufficiency.

We do this by providing:

* A continuum of services from youth transition to older blind services, including skills training that enables people to remain independent in their homes and communities.
* Individual and group counseling addressing adjustment to blindness.
* Employment counseling, training, and job placement.
* Resources for employers interested in hiring or retaining employees with vision loss.
* Training in adaptive skills for reading, computer use, traveling, job seeking, and other skills, which increase independence and employment for persons experiencing vision loss.
* Public education on the abilities of people who are blind or visually impaired.
* Supported employment programs for people who experience vision loss along with other disabilities.
* A registry of Oregonians who are legally blind, and a clearinghouse for Oregonians seeking information and referral regarding blindness and visual impairment.

The Commission for the Blind’s customers are:

* Oregonians who experience legal blindness and/or visual impairments and require rehabilitation services in order to be employed or to live independently in their community. The majority of these individuals experience vision loss as adults due to a variety of conditions; such as diabetes, macular degeneration, retinitis pigmentosa, or injury.
* Businesses in Oregon who have or are considering hiring employees who are legally blind.
* The taxpayers of Oregon who benefit from persons with vision loss being fully integrated into their communities. Taxpayers also benefit from individuals who experience blindness entering employment and paying taxes while decreasing or eliminating their dependence on public assistance, including but not limited to premature nursing home care.

## Office Locations

**Portland – Main Office**

535 SE 12 Avenue

Portland, OR 97214

971-673-1588

TTY: 971-673-1577

Toll-free in Oregon: 888-202-5463

Fax: 503-234-7468

[www.oregon.gov/Blind/](http://www.oregon.gov/Blind/)

**Salem**

780 Commercial Street SE

Number 200

Salem, OR 97301

503-378-8479

Fax: 503-566-8550

**Eugene**

541 Willamette Street

Room 408

Eugene, OR 97401

541-686-7990

FAX: 541-485-7107

**Central/Eastern OR**

813 SW Highland Avenue

Suite 102

Redmond, OR 97756

541-699-5090

Fax: 541-699-5097

**Medford**

724 South Central Street

Room 110

Medford OR, 97501

541-776-6047

Fax: 541-772-0970

Oregonians may call the toll-free 888-202-5463 line for referral to their nearest office.

## Board of Directors

The Oregon Commission for the Blind Board consists of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. To insure the commission is consumer driven, it is required that four members are persons with vision loss that meets the legal definition of blindness. Three members are appointed from the areas of business, labor, optometry, ophthalmology, or education (with a focus on low/no vision).

If you would like to know the current members of the Commission Board, please contact the main office at: 971-673-1588 or toll-free in Oregon 888-202-5463 or visit: [www.oregon.gov/blind/whoweare/Pages/boardmembers.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/blind/whoweare/Pages/boardmembers.aspx).

# Oregon Revised Statutes and Laws

**Structure of Government Body**

ORS 346.110 to 346.570

Under these statutes the OCB is responsible for the administration of programs and services for the blind.

**White Cane Law**

ORS 811.03514, 811.110, and 814.120

These laws grant and enforce the rights of pedestrians who are blind or blind and deaf.

Under these laws a person may carry and use a white cane on the highways and other public places for the purposes of identification and mobility. All drivers must yield to pedestrians using a white cane.

**Dog Guide Law**

ORS 346.610 and 236.621

These laws give persons with vision loss the right to have their guide dogs with them in any place of public accommodation or on any mode of transportation as long as the person with vision impairment controls the behavior of the dog.

**Signature Stamps**

Under Oregon law a person who is blind may use a signature stamp when witnessed by a notary public. The notary types "stamped before me by….” Most businesses including banks accept documents signed with a signature stamp. A statement of responsibility may need to be supplied to a bank before they will accept checks signed with a signature stamp. Signature stamps are available from stamp and stationary stores.

# Aids and Appliances

Companies with products for people who are blind or visually impaired such as watches, canes, writing guides, and household, personal, and recreational aids:

**Independent Living Aids**

Has a large selection of talking watches, magnifiers and other low vision aids.

Toll-free: 800-537-2118

[www.independentliving.com/](http://www.independentliving.com/)

**LS&S Group**

Has a selection of helpful items from talking health aids such as weighing scales and blood pressure meters to electronic/talking daily aids as well as items for children.

Toll-free: 800-468-4789

TTY: 866-317-8533

[www.lssproducts.com/](http://www.lssproducts.com/)

**MaxiAids**

Has a selection of computer, household, medical, and mobility items for sale.

Toll-free: 800-522-6294

TTY: 631-752-0738

[www.maxiaids.com/](http://www.maxiaids.com/)

**Science Products**

Call to inquire about selection of aids such as talking calculators, talking coin and cash register products.

Toll-free: 800-888-7401

[www.captek.net/](http://www.captek.net/)

# Banking and Financial Services

## Banking

Many banks and credit unions (some of which are listed below) now offer the following services:

* + iPhone and/or Android apps
	+ Extra-large checks with boldface print and raised lines
	+ Bank statements in braille or large print
	+ Braille ATMs
	+ Headsets for ATMs
	+ Braille debit cards
	+ Online banking

## Bank of America

Offers iPhone apps, Braille and large print statements, reader and interpreter services.

Toll-free: 800-432-1000

[www.bankofamerica.com/accessiblebanking/state-select.go](http://www.bankofamerica.com/accessiblebanking/state-select.go)

## Chase Bank

Offers iPhone apps, reader services, information reformatting (braille, large print or audio), talking ATMs and guideline/raised lined checks.

Toll-free: 800-935-9935

[www.chase.com/resources/web-accessibility](http://www.chase.com/resources/web-accessibility)

## US Bank

Offers iPhone apps, online and mobile banking accessibility, talking ATMs in accessible locations, large print and raised guideline checks.

Toll-free: 800-872-2657

accessibilitybanking@usbank.com

[www.usbank.com/accessibility-banking/index.html](http://www.usbank.com/accessibility-banking/index.html)

## Wells Fargo

Offers iPhone apps, talking ATMs, audio recording of printed material, material in large print or braille, and accessible website.

Toll-free: 800-869-3557

[www.wellsfargo.com/about/diversity/accessibility/](http://www.wellsfargo.com/about/diversity/accessibility/)

# Bills and Statements in Braille and Large Print

A growing number of companies are supplying bills in braille and large print upon request. The following are just a few of them:

* + City of Portland Water Bureau
	+ Century Link
	+ Sears, Roebuck and Company
	+ Chase
	+ Horizons for the Blind [www.horizons-blind.org](http://www.horizons-blind.org)

Companies with whom you do business will not know that you need information in accessible format unless you tell them!

# Braille/Large Print/Cassette/Talking Books and Periodicals

## American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults

Provides blind children a free braille book every month from a popular children's reading series.

410-659-9315, ext. 2287

<https://actionfund.org/free-braille-books>

## American Printing House for the Blind

Manufactures textbooks and magazines in braille, large print, recorded, and digital formats. APH also manufactures hundreds of educational, recreational and daily living products.

American Printing House for the Blind

PO Box 6085

Louisville, KY 40206-0085

502-895-2405

Toll-free: 800-223-1839

[www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

## Bookshare

Bookshare allows people with dyslexia, blindness, cerebral palsy, and other reading barriers to customize their experience to suit their learning style and find virtually any book they need for school, work, or the joy of reading. Bookshare offers ebooks in audio, audio + highlighted text, braille, large font, and other formats. U.S. students and schools get free unlimited access, adults pay less than $1/week, and people in over 70 countries can access it as well.

[www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)

## Braille Circulating Library

A circulating library of religious materials available in braille, large print, and on cassette, for eight-week loan. Includes special resources for children.

804-359-3743

braillecirculatinglibrary@gmail.com

[www.braillecirculatinglibrary.org/contact/](http://www.braillecirculatinglibrary.org/contact/)

## Choice Magazine Listening

A free audio anthology, CML offers the best of contemporary magazine writing to adults who are unable to read standard print. The magazine is recorded on four-track cassette tapes.

Choice Magazine Listening
85 Channel Drive
Port Washington, NY 11050
516-883-8280
Toll-free: 1-888-724-6423
Fax: 516-944-6849

[www.choicemagazinelistening.org](http://www.choicemagazinelistening.org)

## Doubleday Large Print Book Club

Offers a vast selection of bestsellers, romance, self-help, health, mysteries, and more in easy to read large print at up to 30% off publisher’s edition prices.

Doubleday Large Print Book Club

Membership Services Center

PO Box 916400

Rantoul, IL 61866-6400

[www.doubledaylargeprint.com](http://www.doubledaylargeprint.com)

## General Mills

Offers braille and large print recipes using their products.

General Mills, Inc.

PO Box 9452

Minneapolis, MN 55440

Toll-free: 800-248-7310

For additional cookbook titles and resources, contact Talking Book and Braille Services.

## Global Islamic Foundation for the Blind

Offers resources for visually-impaired Muslims, including online and braille Qurans.

+91-9847974646
mgifblind@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fromblindness/>

## Horizons for the Blind

Horizons offers products and services for blind and visually impaired people around the world. Their online catalog offers over 400 items including braille and large print cookbooks, books on plants and gardening, books and kits on crafts, knitting and crochet patterns, and seasonal baking items.

815-444-8800

mail@horizons-blind.org

[www.horizons-blind.org](http://www.horizons-blind.org)

## Learning Ally

This national nonprofit service library has thousands of titles in a broad variety of subjects, from literature and history to math and the sciences, at all academic levels through post-graduate and professional. Anyone with a documented disability — including a visual impairment, learning disability, or other physical disability which makes reading standard print difficult or impossible — is eligible to become a member and use Learning Ally’s audio textbooks. There is a one-time registration fee and an annual membership fee. Applications can be obtained from Learning Ally’s website or by calling or writing:

20 Roszel Road

Princeton, NJ 08540

800-221-4792

[www.learningally.org](http://www.learningally.org/)

## Lighthouse Guild

Provides information on large-print books, textbooks, and educational tools. Maintains a free by-mail library of 18-point size large print titles. Publishes booklets related to coping with low vision issues. Carries a selection of low vision aids.

Toll-free: 800-284-4422 / TTY 711

250 West 64 Street
New York, NY 10023

[www.lighthouseguild.org/](http://www.lighthouseguild.org/)

## Matilda Ziegler Magazine for the Blind

This is no longer published, but is archived online.

[www.matildaziegler.com/](http://www.matildaziegler.com/)

## Oregon Talking Book and Braille Library

The Oregon state branch of a completely free national library service for children and adults who have a visual or physical disability (including physically based learning disabilities) that prevents them from reading traditional print materials. Though physically located in Salem, they loan braille and audio books and magazines to eligible readers across the entire state. All lending is done free through the mail or via download.

Once you are a registered user of Talking Books, you can also create a BARD account. BARD (**B**raille and **A**udio **R**eading **D**ownload) gives users FREE access to download any National Library Service digital book they want 24 hours a day/seven days a week. No limits, wait lists, due dates, or mailing, with free mobile aps for smartphones and tablets.

Oregon State Library

250 Winter Street NE

Salem, OR 97301-3950

503-378-5389

Toll-free: 800-452-0292

Talkingbooks.info@slo.oregon.gov

## [www.oregon.gov/library/print-disabilities/pages/default.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/library/print-disabilities/pages/default.aspx)

## Our Daily Bread

Offers daily devotions and other materials such as Bible studies in large print. They also have a very accessible iPhone app with daily content for each devotional.

Our Daily Bread RBC Ministries

PO Box 2222

Grand Rapids, MI 49501

616-974-2210

<http://ourdailybread.org/>

Reader's Digest Partners for Sight Foundation Publishes Reader’s Digest Select Editions Large Type. This series is a collection of current fiction, romance, adventure, mystery, and more.

Reader’s Digest Partners for Sight Foundation

Westchester One

44 South Broadway

17 Floor

White Plains, NY 10601

Toll-free: 800-877-5293

[www.rdpfs.org](http://www.rdpfs.org)

## Thorndike Press, Wheeler Large Print, and Walker Large Print

Browse the largest collection of titles offered in large print, with a selection of thousands of award-winning, bestselling, popular, and classic fiction and nonfiction titles.

Toll-free: 800-223-1244, ext. 4

[www.gale.com/thorndike/-/N-5p](http://www.gale.com/thorndike/-/N-5p)

# Computers and Adaptive Equipment

## Access Technologies, Inc.

ATI is a non-profit organization that provides ergonomic assessments, assistive technology, and technology training services. They offer training and workshops along with a try-before-you-buy equipment rental service.

Administrative Offices and Computer Lab

2225 Lancaster Drive NE

Salem, OR 97305

Toll-free and TTY: 800-677-7512

Voice and TTY: 503-361-1201

[www.accesstechnologiesinc.org](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org/)

## Apple Accessibility

Apple products have powerful, built-in accessibility features for vision, hearing, mobility, and learning.

[www.apple.com/accessibility/](http://www.apple.com/accessibility/)

877-204-3930

## iPhone Applications

Several free and at-cost applications are available for the iPhone. Some examples of free applications are:

* The National Federation of the Blind’s Newsline, a free, audible newspaper service.
* SayText, which reads text captured by your camera out loud.
* iBlink Radio, which includes radio stations, podcasts and reading services of special interest to persons who experience visual impairment.
* Color ID, which uses your camera to speak the names of colors in real-time.
* Seeing AI
* BARD

These applications and others are available for download through iTunes.

## Oregon Commission for the Blind Technology Center

Serves the adaptive technology needs of the Commission’s clients. Training includes the use of specialized hardware and software such as screen reading and magnifying software. Training in standard Windows applications such as Microsoft Office and Internet Explorer provides a foundation on which all future computer use is built. As a client leaves the Training Center and enters employment, technical assessment, consulting, and expertise are provided via the technology center and outside contractors to ensure the employee has efficient access to software required to perform the job. The Center is in our Portland office.

535 SE 12 Avenue

Portland, OR 97214

971-673-1588

TTY: 971-673-1577

Toll-free in Oregon: 888-202-5463

Fax: 503-234-7468

[www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Vocational-Rehabilitation.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Vocational-Rehabilitation.aspx)

## Oregon Telecommunication Devices Access Program (TDAP)

Loans adaptive telephone equipment and iPads to Oregonians at no cost and with no income restrictions to eligible Oregonians who have hearing, vision, speech, mobility, or cognitive impairments.

Oregon Public Utility Commission

201 High Street SE, Suite 100

Salem, OR 97301

503-373-7394

Toll Free: 800-522-2404

TTY: 800-648-3458

[www.rspf.org](http://www.rspf.org)

#  Consumer Groups

## American Council of the Blind of Oregon

Seeks the advancement of the social and economic interests of the blind and has local chapters throughout Oregon with over 300 members. The Council publishes newsletters in braille, large print, e-mail, and on cassette. They offer scholarships to qualified applicants, monitor and lobby national, state and local government. They are affiliated with the American Council of the Blind, a national non-profit consumer interest organization.

American Council of the Blind of Oregon

President Carrie Muth
Coos Bay, OR
541-269-1993

[www.acboforegon.org](http://www.acboforegon.org)

## American Foundation for the Blind

A national information clearinghouse on blindness. They publish the “Directory of Agencies Serving the Visually Handicapped in the US” and a catalog of “Products for People with Vision Problems.”

American Foundation for the Blind

1401 South Clark Street
Suite 730
Arlington, VA 22202

Phone: 212-502-7600

[www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org)

## National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of Oregon

A nonprofit organization committed to the empowerment of Oregonians with vision loss through education, advocacy, and mentoring in skills necessary to function independently in a wide variety of life roles. The NFB supports the needs of Oregonians who are blind through special interest groups for seniors, parents of blind children, students, professionals, and homemakers.

National Federation of the Blind of Oregon

State President – Carla McQuillan

Affiliate office telephone, voice or text:

541-653-9153

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m, Pacific Time

Email Carla at president@nfb-oregon.org.

[www.nfb-oregon.org/](http://nfb-oregon.org/)

# Correspondence Education

## Enrichment Audio Resource Services (EARS for Eyes)

A nonprofit organization that provides, free of charge, audio lesson tapes that teach adaptive daily living skills to persons who are visually impaired and their caregivers. Their list of free cassette lessons includes titles such as The Kitchen Environment, Indoor Mobility, and Managing Medications. The lessons, modeled after current blind rehabilitation techniques, are a must for anyone coping with loss of eyesight. EARS is committed to teaching seniors who have developed limited vision the necessary skills to continue living their lives with confidence and dignity.

Toll-free: 800-843-6816.

[www.earsforeyes.info/index.php/pages/Our%20Mission.html](http://www.earsforeyes.info/index.php/pages/Our%20Mission.html)

## Forsythe Center for Employment and Entrepreneurship

A program of The Hadley Institute (further described below), the Forsythe Center offers tuition-free courses and one-lesson, online modules to help prepare people for employment and entrepreneurship. Learning focuses on business-related topics (fundamentals, communications, law, writing, etc.), technology, self-employment and entrepreneurship and is offered through the adult continuing education program.

<https://hadley.edu/forsythe-center-employment-and-entrepreneurship>

## Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Offers correspondence classes on a wide range of subjects for persons who are blind. The school also has a program for parents of children who are blind. Courses are free of charge to all individuals who are legally blind.

700 Elm Street

Winnetka, IL 60093-2554

Toll-free: 800-323-4238

[www.hadley.edu](http://www.hadley.edu/)

# Employment Assistance

## Easter Seals CARES (Center for Administering Rehabilitation and Employment Services)

Provides a variety of employment services for people with disabilities.

Easter Seals Oregon

Portland: 503-228-5108

Toll-free: 800-556-6020

Medford: 541-776-6060

Salem: 503-370-8990

[www.easterseals.com/oregon/](http://www.easterseals.com/oregon/)

## Goodwill Industries International, Inc.

Provides job placement, career search assistance, rehabilitation programs, and tax assistance for persons with disabilities.

Goodwill Industries International

15810 Indianola Drive

Rockville, MD 20855

Toll-free: 800-GOODWILL

[www.goodwill.org/](http://www.goodwill.org/)

## Oregon Commission for the Blind

Provides vocational rehabilitation services to eligible Oregonians. Clients develop individualized plans for employment. Services include vocational counseling, training, placement, and computer technology. We have five offices across Oregon.

## Incight

To cause the success of education, employment, networking, and independence for people with disabilities.

Incight Headquarters

111 SW Columbia Street

Suite 940

Portland, OR 97201

971-244-0305

www.[incight.org/](http://incight.org/)

## WorkSource Oregon

A statewide group dedicated to stimulating job growth by connecting businesses and workers with the resources they need to succeed.

Portland: 503-280-6046

Bend: 541-388-6070

Salem: 503-378-4846

Medford: 541-776-6060

Eugene: 541-686-7601

La Grande: 541-963-7111

[www.worksourceoregon.org/](http://www.worksourceoregon.org/)

## Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Vocational Rehabilitation Serves people with disabilities throughout the state. They assist individuals with disabilities in getting and keeping a job that matches their skills, interests and abilities.

503-945-5600

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/employment/VR/Pages/index.aspx>

The Oregon Commission for the Blind is a separate agency from Vocational Rehabilitation Services and is specifically designated to provide employment and independent living services to Oregonians with vision loss. Please contact the Commission to learn more about eligibility requirements and services available.

<https://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Vocational-Rehabilitation.aspx>

# Eye Care/Low Vision Services

Many clinics offer or refer to a low-vision specialist. Low-vision clinics offer vision evaluations including visual acuity refraction; prescription of optical aids; demonstration of practical non-optical aids; information on adaptive skills for managing daily activities; library of low vision products and catalogs; and referral to additional resources. These resources are also available at the Oregon Commission for the Blind.

## Casey Eye Institute

Offers comprehensive low vision evaluations including visual acuity refraction; prescription of optical aids; demonstration of practical non-optical aids; information on adaptive skills for managing daily activities; library of low vision products and catalogs; and referral to additional resources.

Casey Eye Institute OHSU

3375 SW Terwilliger Blvd

Portland, OR 97239-4197

503-494-3000

Toll-free: 888-222-6478

<http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/health/services/casey-eye/index.cfm>

Devers Eye Institute (Legacy Low Vision Clinic) Offers assessment of visual functioning, low vision clinical examination and instruction, prescription and dispensing of optical and non-optical aids, information and referral.

Good Samaritan Building Two
1040 NW 22 Avenue

First Floor
Portland, OR 97210
503-413-8202

[www.legacyhealth.org/health-services-and-information/health-services/for-adults-a-z/eye-care.aspx](http://www.legacyhealth.org/health-services-and-information/health-services/for-adults-a-z/eye-care.aspx)

## EyeCare America

A public service program providing medical and surgical eye care to low-income US citizens or legal residents who are 65 or older. Call the EyeCare America help line to see if you are eligible for medical eye care at no cost.

PO Box 429098

San Francisco, CA 94142-9098

877-887-6327

[www.eyecareamerica.org](http://www.eyecareamerica.org/)

## Oregon Academy of Ophthalmology

Provides list of ophthalmologists in Oregon and other related information.

8 N State Street

Suite 200

Lake Oswego, OR 97034

503-222-3937

staff@oregoneyephysicians.org

[www.oregoneyephysicians.org](http://www.oregoneyephysicians.org)

## Oregon Optometric Physician Association

Provides a list of optometrists in Oregon and other related information.

4404 SE King Road

Milwaukie, OR 97222

503-654-5036

Toll-free: 800-922-2045

[www.oregonoptometry.org](http://www.oregonoptometry.org)

# Financial Resources

## ABLE Accounts

In 2014 a federal law was passed allowing people with disabilities to create tax-advantaged savings accounts called ABLE accounts. These accounts can be used for qualified disability-related expenses, such as education, housing and transportation. Most importantly, ABLE accounts allow people with disabilities to save money without losing their eligibility for federally funded benefits such as Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

[www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/financial-wellness/able-accounts/](http://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/financial-wellness/able-accounts/)

## Blanche Fisher Foundation

This foundation makes direct grants on behalf of individuals with physical disabilities. The aid may relate to the disability or may indirectly foster independence. The foundation prefers to supplement other resources rather than be the sole source of funding. Call to apply for a grant.

Blanche Fischer Foundation

4931 SW 76 Ave., Number 346
Portland, OR  97225
503-246-4941​

Fax: 971-865-2142
[www.bff.org](http://www.bff.org)

## Digital Federal Credit Union

Offers “Access and Mobility Loans” at low interest to persons with disabilities.

Digital Federal Credit Union

220 Donald Lynch Blvd

PO Box 9130

Marlborough, MA 01752-9130

508-263-6700

Toll-free: 800-328-8797

[www.dcu.org](http://www.dcu.org)

## Directory Assistance Exemption

You may qualify for exemption from charges for directory assistance calls in your area code or calls with operator-assisted dialing. To qualify for this exemption, you must sign a form certifying that you are unable to use a telephone directory. You can obtain an application for this service from the carrier of your choice.

## Free Telephone Number Search

800-373-3411

## Income Tax Exemption

A taxpayer who is legally blind may be entitled to a tax exemption based on their blindness on their federal tax return. If you have any questions regarding this exemption call the IRS.

Toll-free: 800-829-1040.

[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

## Mailing Free Matter for the Blind and Visually-Handicapped Persons

Braille, large print, and cassettes may be mailed free of charge to persons with visual impairments within specific guidelines. For more information, contact your local post office.

## Social Security Administration

Directs SSI and SSDI, which pay monthly benefits to eligible people. Work incentives are available to support individuals’ goals to attain self-sufficiency. For more information ask Social Security for the publication “If You Are Blind: How Social Security and SSI Can Help” (publication #0510052).

Toll-free: 800-772-1213

Toll-free TTY: 800-325-0778

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

## Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

To be eligible for SSI based on a medical condition, a person must:

* Have little or no income, assets or resources.
* Be considered medically disabled.
* Not be working, or be working but earning less than an amount called the “substantial gainful activity” level.

Apply for SSI at your local Social Security office.

Also refer to the ABLE account in the entry above.

## Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

To be eligible for SSDI, a person must:

* Have worked and paid Social Security taxes for enough quarters to be covered.
* Be considered medically disabled.
* Not be working, or working but still earning less than an amount called the “substantial gainful activity” level.

Apply for SSDI at your local Social Security office.

## Veterans Administration Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST) Coordinators

Veterans of the armed forces or military who are visually impaired, whether or not service connected, may qualify for benefits ranging from low vision evaluations to counseling and rehabilitative services at regional centers. The Visually Impaired Services Team can also refer veterans for other available services.

202-461-7317

[www.va.gov/BLINDREHAB/VIST.asp](http://www.va.gov/BLINDREHAB/VIST.asp)

# Guide Dog Schools

Most schools require students to attend onsite training for several weeks, which is sometimes followed up by training in the student’s home community. They provide the training, room, board, and dog at no cost to the student. Many also provide financial assistance for the dog’s feeding and care. Some schools will provide dogs to students who have additional disabling conditions. For more information about dog guides and a school’s particular training/services, please contact that school directly.

## Custom Canines Service Dog Academy

2310 Mustang Way

Madison, WI 53718

Phone: 844-888-8850

Fax: 1-844-888-8850

info@customcanines.org

## Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, Inc.

103 Vision Way

Bloomfield, CT 06002

860-243-5200

Fax: 860-769-0567

info@fidelco.org

## [www.fidelco.org/](http://www.fidelco.org/)

## Freedom Guide Dogs for the Blind

1210 Hardscrabble Road

Cassville, NY 13318

315-822-5132

info@freedomguidedogs.org

[www.freedomguidedogs.org/](http://www.freedomguidedogs.org/)

## Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc.

National Office

PO Box 151200

San Rafael, CA 94915-1200

Toll-free: 800-295-4050

[www.guidedogs.com](http://www.guidedogs.com)

Oregon Campus

32901 SE Kelso Road

Boring, OR 97009

503-668-2100

## Guide Dog Foundation

371 E. Jericho Turnpike

Smithtown, NY 11787-2976

Toll-free: 800-548-4337

[www.guidedog.org](http://www.guidedog.org)

## Guide Dogs of America

13445 Glenoaks Boulevard

Sylmar, CA 91342

818-362-5834

Toll Free: 800-459-4843

Fax: 818-362-6820

mail@guidedogsofamerica.org

<https://www.guidedogsofamerica.org/>

## Guide Dogs of Hawaii

715 S King Street, Suite 110

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

808-941-1088

Fax: 808-944-9368

info@guidedogshawaii.com [www.guidedogsofhawaii.org/](http://www.guidedogsofhawaii.org/)

## Guide Dogs of Texas, Incorporated

1503 Allena Drive

San Antonio, TX 78213

210-366-4081

Toll Free: 800-831-9231

Fax: 210-366-4082

[www.guidedogsoftexas.org/](http://www.guidedogsoftexas.org/)

## Guide Dogs of the Desert

60735 Dillon Road

Whitewater, CA 92282

Toll Free: 888-883-0022

760-329-6257

Fax: 760-329-2866

info@gddca.org

[www.guidedogsofthedesert.org/](http://www.guidedogsofthedesert.org/)

## Guiding Eyes for the Blind

611 Granite Springs Road

Yorktown Heights, NY 10598

Toll-free: 800-942-0149

[www.guidingeyes.org](http://www.guidingeyes.org)

## Leader Dogs for the Blind

1039 South Rochester Road

Rochester, MI 48307

Toll-free: 888-777-5332

TTY: 248-651-3713

[www.leaderdog.org](http://www.leaderdog.org)

## Noah's Dogs of Nebraska

P.O. Box 105

Louisville, NE 68037

920-643-0434

[www.noahsdogs.wordpress.com](http://www.noahsdogs.wordpress.com)

## Pilot Dogs, Inc.

625 West Town Street

Columbus, OH 43215

614-221-6367

[www.pilotdogs.org](http://www.pilotdogs.org)

## Southeastern Guide Dogs, Incorporated

4210 77th Street East

Palmetto, FL 34221

941-729-5665

Toll Free: 800-944-3647

Fax: 941-729-6646

info@guidedogs.org

[www.guidedogs.org](http://www.guidedogs.org)

## The Seeing Eye, Incorporated

10 Washington Valley Road

Post Office Box 375

Morristown, NJ 07963

973-539-4425

Fax: 973-539-0922

info@seeingeye.org

[www.seeingeye.org](http://www.seeingeye.org)

# Health Care

## Medicaid and Medicare

Medicaid is a medical insurance program for people who receive SSI. Medicaid can help meet the medical and/or dental needs of people who meet low income and resource qualifications. Funding comes from federal and state sources.

Medicare is a medical insurance program for people who receive social security benefits.

## Oregon Health Plan (OHP)

Offers health care to its members at little or no cost. There are many ways that you may be eligible for OHP if you live in Oregon and are a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen. Different eligibility rules and income levels apply to different groups of people. Call to apply for OHP coverage or learn more:

Division of Medical Assistance Programs

Administrative Office

500 Summer Street NE

Salem, OR 97301-1079

503-945-5772

Toll-free: 800-527-5772

TTY Toll-free: 800-375-2863

[www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan)

If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, are eligible for Medicare, or are 65 years of age or older, call your local Department of Human Services (DHS) or Area Agency on Aging (AAA) office, toll-free at: 800-282-8096 (voice and TTY) for more information about OHP and other health care programs.

# Housing Services

Oregon Housing & Community Services (Statewide) Administers federal and state antipoverty, homeless and energy assistance, and community service programs, as well as providing information and referrals. OHCS also assists in the financing of single-family homes, the new construction or rehabilitation of multifamily affordable housing developments, and grants and tax credits to promote affordable housing.

725 Summer Street NE

Suite B

Salem, OR 97301-1266

503-986-2000

TTY: 503-986-2100

[www.ohcs.oregon.gov](http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov/)

ACCESS (Medford area)

ACCESS provides housing, warmth and other essential services to Jackson County’s low income children, families, seniors and people with disabilities.

3630 Aviation Way

PO Box 4666

Medford, OR 97501

541-779-6691

[www.accesshelps.org](http://www.accesshelps.org)

Community Action (Washington County)

Community Action leads the way to eliminate conditions of poverty and creates opportunities for people and communities to thrive.

1001 SW Baseline Street

Hillsboro, OR 97213

503-648-6646

[www.caowash.org](http://www.caowash.org)

## Klamath & Lake Community Action Services

KLCAS operates a homelessness prevention program and provides information and resources for homebuyers and homeowners.

[535 Market Street](https://www.google.com/maps/place/KLCAS/%4042.2507015%2C-121.7850175%2C15z/data%3D%214m2%213m1%211s0x0%3A0xbbfa51094a238262?sa=X&ei=u8ySVdTnBIjkoATNjK3YDQ&ved=0CG8Q_BIwDQ" \t "_blank)

[Klamath Falls, OR 97601](https://www.google.com/maps/place/KLCAS/%4042.2507015%2C-121.7850175%2C15z/data%3D%214m2%213m1%211s0x0%3A0xbbfa51094a238262?sa=X&ei=u8ySVdTnBIjkoATNjK3YDQ&ved=0CG8Q_BIwDQ" \t "_blank)

541-882-3500

Toll-free: 866-665-6438

[www.klcas.org](http://www.klcas.org)

Home Forward (Portland area)

Home Forward is dedicated to providing safe, decent and affordable housing for individuals and families who are challenged by income, disability or special needs.

135 SW Ash Street

Portland, OR 97204

503-802-8300

[www.homeforward.org](http://www.homeforward.org)

Housing Works (Central Oregon)

Housing Works is a local housing authority for Deschutes, Crook and Jefferson counties. They provide affordable housing, rental assistance and new beginnings for low and moderate income Central Oregonians.

405 SW 6 Street

Redmond, OR 97756

541-923-1018

<http://www.housing-works.org/>

Rental Assistance Needs
Visit [http://www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org/) for information concerning rental assistance or Dial 2-1-1 for additional resources and information.

## Fair Housing Council of Oregon

FHCO is a nonprofit in Oregon dedicated to eliminating housing discrimination. Under federal and state housing law, disability is a protected class.

From any moment of the housing process ─ buying, renting, acquiring a loan, etc. ─ no one should be discriminated against based on protected classes (i.e. disability).

If you are renting, buying a home, or any point in between, call FHCO if you believe you have a fair housing question. FHCO is not a law firm, but they can help you with your fair housing situation. <http://fhco.org/>DMV Identification Card

The Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles handles the regulation and distribution of Oregon ID cards. Oregon Identification Cards are issued to non-driving residents for identification purposes in lieu of an Oregon driver’s license. You can find Oregon ID Card resources and information at Oregon’s licensing web site or by calling your local DMV office: [www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv/Pages/index.aspx)

# Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living are organizations operated by people with disabilities, for people with disabilities. The CIL’s mission is to help people with disabilities live as independently as possible in communities that understand and value their contributions.

## Abilitree

2680 NE Twin Knolls Drive

Suite 150

Bend, OR 97701

Hours: 8 a.m – 4 p.m

541-388-8103

Fax: 541-617-5845

[www.abilitree.org/](http://www.abilitree.org/)

Eastern Oregon Center for Independent Living (EOCIL)

Ontario Toll-free: 866-248-8369

Pendleton Toll-free: 877-711-1037

The Dalles Toll-free: 855-516-6273

[www.eocil.org](http://www.eocil.org)

## HASL Independent Abilities Center

305 NE E Street

Grants Pass, OR 97526

541-479-4275

Toll-free: 800-758-4275

[www.haslonline.org](http://www.haslonline.org)

## Independent Living Resources (ILR)

1839 NE Couch Street

Portland, OR 97232

503-232-7411

[www.ilr.org](http://www.ilr.org)

## Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA)

20 E 13 Avenue
Eugene, Oregon 97401
Phone and fax: 541-607-7020

[www.lilaoregon.org](http://www.lilaoregon.org)

## Spokes, Unlimited

1006 Main Street

Klamath Falls, OR 97601

Phone and TTY: 541-883-7547

[www.spokesunlimited.org](http://www.spokesunlimited.org)

## Umpqua Valley disAbilities Network

736 SE Jackson Street

Roseburg, OR 97470

541-672-6336

TTY: 541-440-2882

<https://www.facebook.com/uvdisabilitiesnetwork/>

# Legal Assistance

## Disability Rights Oregon

511 SW 10 Avenue

Suite 200
Portland, Oregon 97205

503-243-2081

Toll-free: 800-452-1694

<https://www.droregon.org/>

## Legal Aid in Oregon: Accessing Services

Medford: 541-779-7291

Bend: 541-385-6944

Grants Pass: 541-476-7058

Klamath Falls: 541-275-0533

Eugene: 541-485-1017

Portland: 503-224-4094

Salem: 503-581-5265

Ontario: 541-889-3121

[www.oregonlawhelp.org](http://www.oregonlawhelp.org)

## Northwest ADA Center

Provides technical assistance, information, and training regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Specialists are available to answer questions pertaining to all titles of the ADA and related legislation. Staff members are available for training on these titles and can cater trainings for a specific audience.

Northwest ADA Center

Center for Continuing Education in Rehabilitation

University of Washington

6912 220 Street SW

Suite 105

Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

Toll-free and TTY: 800-949-4232

TTY: 425-248-2480

[www.dbtacnorthwest.org](http://www.dbtacnorthwest.org)

## Oregon State Bar Association

16037 SW Upper Boones Ferry Road

Tigard, OR 97224

503-620-0222

Toll-free: 800-452-8260

[www.osbar.org](http://www.osbar.org)

## St. Andrew Legal Clinic (SALC)

SALC is a public interest law firm that provides legal services to low-income families. Services include child custody/support, domestic violence intervention, divorce, guardianship, parenting time and step-parent adoption.

Multnomah County: 503-281-1500

[www.salcgroup.org](http://www.salcgroup.org)

## TEL-LAW

TEL-LAW is a collection of recorded legal information messages prepared by Oregon lawyers. Written transcripts are available online. Messages are designed to help individuals understand legal problems, understand the justice system, and know where to go for help.

Phone: 503-620-3000

Toll-Free: 800-452-4776

[www.oregonstatebar.org](http://www.oregonstatebar.org)

# News and Current Events

## NFB-NEWSLINE®

The National Federation of the Blind developed NFB-NEWSLINE® to be used by anyone who cannot read a printed newspaper because of a visual or physical disability. NFB-NEWSLINE® uses the latest digital technology to bring readers who are blind and visually impaired an easy-to-use telephone service that "reads" all the text from various newspapers across the country. Users need only a touch-tone phone and their personal identification numbers to access the nationwide, toll-free number. By following a touch-tone menu, you will be able to access different sections of the newspaper. You choose the newspaper and voice you prefer. NFB-NEWSLINE® now offers more choices than ever, including special local channels to distribute announcements of specific interest to persons who are blind. This service is also available on iDevices via the NFB Newsline App.

Some Oregon newspapers currently available through NFB-NEWSLINE® are:

*The Oregonian, The Statesman Journal, Oregon AP Newswire*

If you are a registered user of Talking Book and Braille Services, call 800-452-0292 or email talkingbooks.info@state.or.us. Staff can sign you up for the service over the telephone. All users are assigned a personal identification number (PIN) and a security code to gain access to NFB-NEWSLINE®.

Funding for this service is provided by Oregon Commission for the Blind, National Federation for the Blind of Oregon and the State Library, Talking Book and Braille Services. You may visit the NFB-NEWSLINE® at: [www.nfbnewsline.org](http://www.nfbnewsline.org/)

# Parking Permits for Disabled Persons

Special parking privileges are available for individuals with disabilities. Those who are certified by an authorized health care specialist as having a permanent or temporary disability are eligible for a Disabled Person Parking Permit. You may apply at your local DMV office or you can download an application from their website and mail it to:

DMV Driver Issuance Unit

1905 Lana Avenue NE

Salem, OR 97314

[www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/driverid/disparking.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/DMV/pages/driverid/disparking.aspx)

# Recreation

## Golden Access Passport

Available to U. S. citizens or permanent residents who have a permanent disability. The pass is free and is good for life. It provides free entrance to most federal recreation areas and provides a 50% discount on use fees, such as camping fees.

Golden Access Passports must be obtained in person at federal locations where entrance fees are charged. You may obtain a Golden Access Passport by showing proof of medically determined permanent disability, or eligibility for receiving benefits under federal law.

Oregon Parks & Recreation Dept.

State Parks

725 Summer Street NE

Suite C

Salem, OR 97301

503-986-0707

Toll-free: 888-Go Parks (888-467-2757) [www.oregonstateparks.org/](http://www.oregonstateparks.org/)

## ODFW Oregon Disabilities Hunting and Fishing Permit

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) offers an Oregon Disabilities Hunting and Fishing Permit that confers certain benefits. This permit is free but must be renewed every five years; permanent angling and hunting licenses have been eliminated. Both Oregon residents and non-residents may apply.

The permit enables anglers to fish from an anchored craft and will allow access to many fishing sites reserved for persons with disabilities. The permit allows legally blind hunters to hunt with a designated shooter. For both hunting and fishing, this permit is not a license or tag. Anglers must still purchase license and/or Combined Angler Tag and/or shellfish license. Hunters must still obtain a hunting license and apply for and/or purchase appropriate tags prior to specified tag sale deadlines to hunt in controlled and general big game seasons. (Disabled veterans are encouraged to inquire about free Disabled Veteran Licenses.)

Obtain an Oregon Disabilities Hunting and Fishing Permit through the Salem ODFW office. Applications are available at the internet address below, and at sporting goods stores.

Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife

**4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE**

**Salem, OR 97302**

**503-947-6117**

[www.myodfw.com/articles/hunters-and-anglers-disabilities](http://www.myodfw.com/articles/hunters-and-anglers-disabilities)

## Oral Hull Park

This park is run by a group of volunteers who form the Oral Hull Foundation for the Blind. The park is for people who are blind and their friends and family. It provides overnight accommodations with kitchen facilities and/or prepared meals, fishing, a fragrance garden, swimming pool, hot tub, and recreation room. There are special events such as summer camp and fundraising events. Call Oral Hull for daily and weekend rates.

Oral Hull Park

43233 SE Oral Hull Road

PO Box 157

Sandy, OR 97055

Phone: 503-668-6195

[www.oralhull.org](http://www.oralhull.org/)

## Northwest Association of Blind Athletes

NWABA provides experiences in sports, such as tandem biking, kayaking, and skiing, to individuals of all ages and abilities with visual impairments.

311 West Evergreen, Suite 200

PO Box 65265

Vancouver, WA 98665

Local: (360) 448-7254

Toll-free: (800) 880-9837

[www.nwaba.org/](http://www.nwaba.org/)

# Referral Services

## 2-1-1

An easy-to-remember telephone number that helps connect people in need with the community resources available to help meet those needs.

If you are in an emergency, dial 9-1-1.

If 2-1-1 is not available from your location or telephone, dial 503-222-5555 or 503-655-8861.

# Senior Services/ Area Agencies on Aging

## Aging and People with Disabilities

For information regarding caregiver and adult foster homes, assisted living facilities, resource and needs assessment, and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) applications.

DHS Aging and People with Disabilities

500 Summer Street NE, E02

Salem, OR 97301-1073

Phone: 503-945-5811

Toll-free: 800-282-8096

TTY: 503-282-8096

[www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/SENIORS-DISABILITIES/Pages/index.aspx)

## Aging and Disability Resource Connection

The ADRC is a resource directory for Oregon families, caregivers and consumers seeking information about long-term supports and services.

Phone: 1-855-673-2372

[www.adrcoforegon.org](http://www.adrcoforegon.org)

## Area Agencies on Aging

Oregon’s 17 Area Agencies on Aging provide information and assistance on older adult needs and resources, as well as services including nutrition, in-home care, case management, caregiving, legal services, and transportation.

Central Oregon Council on Aging

373 NE Greenwood Avenue

Bend, OR 97701

541-678-5483

[www.councilonaging.org/](http://www.councilonaging.org/)

### Clackamas County Social Services

2051 Kaen Road

Oregon City, OR 97045

Resource Connection: 503-650-5622

[www.clackamas.us/socialservices](http://www.clackamas.us/socialservices)

### Community Action Program of East Central Oregon

721 SE Third Street, Suite D

Pendleton, OR 97801

Toll-free: 541-276-1926

[www.capeco-works.org/](http://www.capeco-works.org/)

### Community Action Team (Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook Counties)

125 N 17 Street

St. Helens, OR 97051

503-397-3511

[www.cat-team.org/](http://www.cat-team.org/)

### Community Connection of Northeast Oregon

2802 Adams Avenue

LaGrande, OR 97850-2621

541-963-3186

[www.ccno.org/](http://www.ccno.org/)

### Douglas County Senior & Disability Services

1036 SE Douglas Avenue

Roseburg, OR 97470

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

541-440-3677

Fax: 541-440-3658

[www.co.douglas.or.us/ss/default.asp](http://www.co.douglas.or.us/ss/default.asp)

### Harney County Senior & Community Services Center

17 South Alder Street

Burns, OR 97720-2048

541-573-6024

www.co.harney.or.us/index.php/senior-community-services-center-home

### Klamath Basin Senior Citizens Council

2045 Arthur Street

Klamath Falls, OR 97603

541-883-7171

[www.klamathseniorcenter.com/](http://www.klamathseniorcenter.com/)

### Lane Council of Governments

859 Willamette Street
Suite 500
Eugene, OR 97401
541-682-4283
Fax: 541-682-4099

[www.lcog.org/332/Aging-Disability-Resource-Connection-ADR](http://www.lcog.org/332/Aging-Disability-Resource-Connection-ADR)

### Malheur Council on Aging

842 SE First Avenue

Ontario, OR 97914-3621

541-889-7651

[www.mcoacs.org/](http://www.mcoacs.org/)

### Mid-Columbia Council of Governments

3641 Klindt Drive
The Dalles, OR 97058
(541) 298-4114
Toll-free: (800) 452-2333
TTY: (541) 298-3270
[www.ADRCofOregon.org](http://www.adrcoforegon.org/)

### Multnomah County Aging & Disability Services

421 SW Oak St

Suite 510

Portland, OR 97204

503-988-3646

[www.multco.us/ads](http://www.multco.us/ads)

Northwest Senior & Disability Services

3410 Cherry Ave NE

Salem, OR 97309

503-304-3400

Toll-free: 800-469-8772

[www.nwsds.org/](http://www.nwsds.org/)

### Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments

1400 Queen Avenue SE

Suite 206

Albany, OR 97322

541-967-8630

Toll-free: 800-638-0510

[www.ocwcog.org/](http://www.ocwcog.org/)

### Rogue Valley Council of Governments - Senior and Disabled Services

155 N First Street

Central Point, OR 97502

541-664-6674

[www.rvcog.org/home/sds-2/](http://www.rvcog.org/home/sds-2/)

### South Coast Business Employment Corporation

93781 Newport Lane

Coos Bay, OR 97420

541-269-2013

Toll-free:800-858-5777

[www.scbec.org/](http://www.scbec.org/)

### Washington County Disability, Aging and Veteran

### Services

5240 NE Elam Young Parkway

Hillsboro, OR 97124

503-846-3060

[www.co.washington.or.us/HHS/DAVS/](https://www.co.washington.or.us/HHS/DAVS/)

# Shopping Services

## Grocery Stores

Most supermarkets will provide shopping assistants to help you locate your selections. Many are offering online grocery shopping with delivery.

* Fred Meyer: [www.fredmeyer.com](http://www.fredmeyer.com)
* Safeway: [www.shop.safeway.com](http://www.shop.safeway.com)
* Schwans: [www.schwans.com/products/deals](http://www.schwans.com/products/deals)
* Instacart: [www.instacart.com](http://www.instacart.com) (also available on iPhone or Android app) Groceries delivered within one hour.

## Store to Door of Oregon

A non-profit agency that facilitates independent living for seniors and people with disabilities by providing a low-cost, personalized grocery shopping and delivery service. The area is limited to Multnomah County and parts of Washington County (Beaverton, Hillsboro, and Aloha.)

7730 SW 31 Avenue
Portland, OR 97219
503-200-3333
Fax 971-239-4951
office@storetodooroforegon

[www.storetodooroforegon.org](http://www.storetodooroforegon.org)

# Support Groups

Blindskills (Salem area)

Providing community outreach, support groups, and social opportunities for those with vision loss in the Salem area. They also serve as a resource for anyone seeking information, resources, services, and low-vision products.

Blindskills

503-581-4224

info@blindskills.com or Marja.byers@gmail.com <http://www.blindskills.org/>

## Guide Dog Users of Oregon

A consumer group affiliated with Guide Dog Users, Inc., offering support and special interest groups.

Guide Dog Users of Oregon

14761 SW Beard Road, Number 202

Beaverton, OR 97007-8137

503-523-7351

[www.guidedogusersinc.org/](http://www.guidedogusersinc.org/)

## Independent Living Resources (ILR)

Offers vision support groups.

1839 NE Couch Street

Portland OR, 97232

503-232-7411

[www.ilr.org/services.shtml](http://www.ilr.org/services.shtml)

## OHSU Casey Eye Institute

Compiles a list of support groups.

503-494-3537

[www.caseyamd.com](http://www.caseyamd.com)

## Oregon Commission for the Blind

Offers a one-term, 12-week, Living with Blindness class for clients referred by their vocational rehabilitation counselor and receiving services at the training center. Please contact OCB at 1-888-202-5463.

#

# Tax Preparation Assistance

The IRS, in conjunction with a variety of nonprofit organizations and tax software vendors, provides free tax preparation services to qualifying taxpayers. Free Tax Preparation options include e-filing with direct deposit of refunds – the fastest, most secure way for taxpayers to file their return and receive refunds. Three IRS-sponsored programs are listed below: the self-assistance model, the volunteer assistance program, and the Alternative Media Center.

### **Facilitated Self-Assistance Model (FSA)**

Using this free tax preparation option, taxpayers use a do-it-yourself model to prepare their own returns with the assistance of a certified volunteer and self-preparation software. Assistance may be provided via tax coach, helpline or online chat services. Below are two ways to use this program:

1. [MyFreeTaxes](https://www.myfreetaxes.com/) provides self-paced, step-by-step guidance to file tax returns online.

[www.myfreetaxes.com/](http://www.myfreetaxes.com/)

2. [Freefile](https://www.irs.gov/filing/free-file-do-your-federal-taxes-for-free) is available in two formats:

* FreeFile software – Self-paced, step-by-step guidance to file tax returns online.
* FreeFile fillable forms – Fillable forms for tax filers to complete their taxes and e-file.

<http://www.irs.gov/filing/free-file-do-your-federal-taxes-for-free>

### **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program**

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people who generally make $54,000 or less, persons with disabilities, and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns.

IRS-certified volunteers provide free basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to qualified individuals. In 2017 they prepared 3.6 tax returns providing over four-billion dollars in refunds. [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

## IRS Services for the Visually Impaired

The Internal Revenue Service has updated information on IRS.gov regarding the Alternative Media Center (AMC) at <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/information-about-the-alternative-media-center> and on our Accessible Forms & Publications page at <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/accessible-irs-tax-products>.

The AMC provides a variety of services to assist visually impaired taxpayers, including links to accessible forms and publications, instructions on how to obtain accessible copies of notices or letters, and information about upcoming enhancements to our accessibility services.

Visually impaired taxpayers who need assistance with a notice or letter in print formats or need other information about the services available through the AMC may call 800-829-1040.

# Transportation

Most counties in Oregon provide people with disabilities reduced fares on local public transportation.

## Amtrak

Offers discounts to passengers with disabilities. To receive the discount you must book your reservation by telephone or at a ticket counter. You must also provide written documentation of disability at the ticket counter and when boarding the train. Contact Amtrak about the kinds of acceptable forms of documentation of disability.

Toll-free: 800-872-7245

TTY: 800-523-6590

[www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)

## Cherriots

Salem-Keizer Transit

555 Court Street NE

Suite 5230
Salem, OR 97301

503-588-2424

Fax: 503-566-3933

[www.cherriots.org](http://www.cherriots.org)

## Cherriots LIFT

Eligibility Office
555 Court Street NE

Suite 5230
Salem, OR 97301
503-361-7554

**Fax:** 503-361-7560
adaeligibility@cherriots.org

[www.cherriots.org/lift/](http://www.cherriots.org/lift/)

## Dial-a-Ride—Central Oregon

541-385-8680

Toll-free: 866-385-8680

## Greyhound

Call Greyhound’s Customers with Disabilities Travel Assistance Line to learn about their Personal Care Attendant program.

Toll-free: 800-752-4841

[www.greyhound.com](http://www.greyhound.com)

## Klamath Basin Transit

1130 Adams Street

Klamath Falls, OR 97601

541-883-2877

[www.basintransit.com](http://www.basintransit.com)

Lane Transit District
3500 East 17 Avenue
Eugene, OR 97403

541-687-5555

[www.ltd.org](http://www.ltd.org)

Rogue Valley Transportation District (serving Medford, Ashland, Phoenix, Talent, Jacksonville, White City, and Central Point.)

Bus schedule: 541-779-2877

[www.rvtd.org/](http://www.rvtd.org/)

## Rogue Valley Lift Dial-A-Ride Service

Phone: **541-842-2080 option 1.**

TTY: 7-1-1

[www.rvtd.org/Page.asp?NavID=22](http://www.rvtd.org/Page.asp?NavID=22)

TriMet (Portland Metro Area)

Offers reduced fares for people with disabilities through an “Honored Citizens” program. To receive this service, complete the [Honored Citizen Application Form](https://trimet.org/pdfs/fares/honoredcitizen.pdf), which you can get several ways:

* Download it here: [www.trimet.org/pdfs/fares/honoredcitizen.pdf](http://www.trimet.org/pdfs/fares/honoredcitizen.pdf).
* Call the TriMet Ticket Office at 503-962-2455 (TTY: 503-962-5811) to have it mailed to you. Hours: Monday–Friday 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
* Get it via email ataccessible@trimet.org.
* Pick one up at the [TriMet Ticket Office](https://trimet.org/contact/tto.htm) at Pioneer Courthouse Square, 701 SW 6th Avenue, Portland, OR 97204.
* Call Oregon Commission for the Blind: 971-673-1588; we can also give you the disability verification you will need.

Bring the completed application with verification of your disability and a government-issued photo ID, to the TriMet Ticket Office. TriMet will then take your photo and give you a personalized Hop card. Disability verification can be from **a certified/ licensed health care provider who fills out the back of the application; the Social Security Administration**; a **certified agency** such as Oregon Commission for the Blind; **the Department of Veterans Affairs; or another transit agency. More details here:** [www.trimet.org/fares/hc-card.htm](http://www.trimet.org/fares/hc-card.htm)

## TriMet Lift Service

Provides door to door services for registered customers unable to ride fixed-route buses.

Reservations/Information: 503-962-8000

TTY: 503-962-8229

[www.trimet.org/lift/index.htm](http://www.trimet.org/lift/index.htm)

## Uber and Lyft

These smart services both have smartphone apps that make it easy to request a ride any time. Pay through the app; payment is completely cashless.

https://www.uber.com/

[www.lyft.com](http://www.lyft.com)

## Portland International Airport

For air travel, individuals who are blind may request either “Meet and Assist” or “Ground Assistance” services (including wheelchair) for assistance locating gates and getting on the plane. Call the airline representative or a travel agent for details.

503-415-6000

[www.pdx.com/Accessibility](http://www.pdx.com/Accessibility)

For additional help, a free smartphone app, Aira, allows people with sight impairment to use the camera on their smartphone or smart glasses to connect with an operator who can effectively “see” what the visually impaired person cannot, and personally guide them through a space or experience. Once users have downloaded this free app, they can connect to an agent free of charge while on Portland International Airport property. Android and Apple versions are available.

[www.aira.io/how-it-works](http://www.aira.io/how-it-works)

# Voting

## Forms and Pamphlets

Voter registration forms are available in post offices, public libraries, online, telephone blue pages, and the Oregon Commission for the Blind. An audible version of the Voter’s Pamphlet is available through Talking Book and Braille Services, at 800-452-0292 or email talkingbooks.info@state.or.us.

Please visit <https://www.droregon.org/voting-rights> for further information regarding use of an Alternate Format Ballot, as well as accessibility features that include screen-readers and text-enlargers.

## Audio Voters Guide

The League of Women Voters of Oregon produces a web-based audio voter's guide for state primary and general elections. The files are in mp3 format, and they are all downloadable.

Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Oregon League of Women Voters

1330 12 Street SE

Suite 200

Salem, OR 97302

503-581-5722

[www.lwvor.org](http://www.lwvor.org)

# Tips Guide

These tips are simply methods that persons with visual impairments have discovered for performing everyday household tasks. Most likely you will develop your own system for getting things done. We hope these tips will get you started.

There is also a section to share with your family and friends to let them know how they can be of assistance to you.

Training in these and many other techniques is available through the Oregon Commission for the Blind.

## Using Equipment and Appliances

### Telling Time

Talking clocks are available at many major stores or through catalogs. If you prefer to read the time, you can purchase a clock with large numbers or a Braille watch. Another potential method for telling time is to buy an inexpensive alarm clock and pry the face off so that the clock hands may be read with your fingers.

### Reading Temperatures, Scales, and Other Measuring Devices

Talking thermometers scales, calculators, and other devices are available at many stores or through mail order catalogs.

### Setting Thermostats and Appliance Dials

You can mark thermostats and dials on stoves, washers, dryers, televisions, and other appliances by placing tactile dots of silicone caulking or plastic on dial settings. The dial is set by matching one of these dots with a dot placed on the backboard above the dial at the “On” location. Place these dots at frequently used settings. These can be used as reference points to estimate other settings. If desired, use a color that contrasts with the appliance to enhance visibility. Two products ideal for marking dials and other household equipment are silicone caulking which is available at most hardware stores and a product called Hi-Marks, which is available at many stores and at OCB. Hi-Marks is a tube of soft plastic that hardens on application. The plastic is bright orange and can be read by sight or touch.

## Handling Finances

### Identifying Money

Coins can be identified by feeling the size and edges. You can tell quarters and dimes by their ridges, and nickels and pennies by their smooth edges. Bills can then be identified by placing ones unfolded in your wallet, fives folded once lengthwise, tens folded once widthwise, and twenties folded twice, once lengthwise and once widthwise. Larger bills and one dollar bills could be placed in separate compartments of your wallet or purse.

### Free Currency Reader

In advance of issuing tactile-enhanced Federal Reserve notes, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP) is providing currency readers, free of charge, to eligible blind and visually impaired individuals. All U.S. citizens or persons legally residing in the U.S. who are blind or visually impaired can request a free currency reader from BEP by downloading the application at the site below:

[www.bep.gov/uscurrencyreaderform.html](http://www.bep.gov/uscurrencyreaderform.html)

### Writing Checks

A check-writing stencil and signature guide may help in filling out checks and signing your name. These can be obtained by contacting OCB. Many banks furnish raised line or large print checks for customers who are visually impaired. Check with your bank to see if they provide this service.

## Preparing Meals

### Identifying Packaged Foods

Food products can be identified through a variety of simple methods. Make a habit of keeping different kinds of products on different shelves. For example, place canned vegetables on the top shelf and canned fruits on the bottom. Place rubber bands on similar canned goods to distinguish one can from another. For example, use one rubber band for creamed corn and two for whole kernel corn. Or place a rubber band at the top of a can of tomato soup and in the middle of the can of chicken noodle soup. If you can read larger print, try making a large print label to wrap around the cans. Other labeling methods are magnetic toy letters, magnetic tape with raised large print or braille letters, or nail polish.

There are also stand-alone devices and iDevice applications that will take a picture and read the items aloud. The PenFriend audio labeler is also a great tool for this task. This revolutionary labelling system was designed for anyone who cannot see. Labelling everything from your CD collection to frozen foods is literally as easy as 1, 2, 3 ...

[www.braillebookstore.com/PenFriend-Audio-Labeler.1](http://www.braillebookstore.com/PenFriend-Audio-Labeler.1)

### Organizing Cooking Materials

Place equipment and ingredients on a large tray of a color that contrasts with your work surface to keep objects from rolling, spilling, or becoming misplaced. You may want to use a second tray as a workspace or transfer each item after it has been used.

### Pouring

Liquids can be poured into a cup or glass without spilling by using one of several methods:

1. Use weight as a guide by judging the weight of the container when empty and then when full.

2. Place index finger in the glass up to the first knuckle. When the liquid reaches your fingertip, stop pouring.

3. When pouring very hot or cold liquids, place your hand on the outside of the container to feel the level rise.

4. For hot liquids, measure while cold, pour into saucepan, heat and return to the cup.

5. Purchase a device equipped with a sound alert indicator to let you know when the liquid level nears the top of a container such as: [www.rehabmart.com/category/liquid\_indicator.htm](http://www.rehabmart.com/category/liquid_indicator.htm)

### Using Recipes

Record your favorite recipes or write them out in large print using a felt tip pen or print them out on a computer. Recorded, large-print, and braille cookbooks are also available.

## Personal Care

### Identifying Clothing

Organize clothes by locations in closet and drawers. Some items can be identified by texture, style, or by details such as button shapes. Identify the color of clothes by attaching a tactile labeling device. Commonly used labels are clothing tags with raised marks and small safety pins placed in the waistband or collar. Use small safety pins to match socks. Pins placed in specific area of socks can be used to determine color. For example, pinning socks at the toe might designate blue and at the heel might designate brown. Pin socks together before washing to keep pairs matched. The PenFriend audio labeler is also a great tool for identifying clothing.

[www.braillebookstore.com/PenFriend-Audio-Labeler.1](http://www.braillebookstore.com/PenFriend-Audio-Labeler.1)

### Sewing

When sewing or mending take advantage of widely used products such as self-threading needles, Velcro fasteners and Stitch Witchery.

### Identifying Medicines

Use many of the same techniques that you use to label food to identify medicine containers. The different sizes and shapes of the containers may also be of help. **ScripTalk Station** provides those who cannot read the information on their prescriptions a safe and easy way to manage their personal healthcare. Simply press a button and place the special Talking Label over the reader. A pleasant natural sounding voice speaks all the information printed on the label. To learn more: [www.envisionamerica.com/products/scriptability/scriptalk/scriptalk-station-for-patients/](http://www.envisionamerica.com/products/scriptability/scriptalk/scriptalk-station-for-patients/)

## Tips for Interacting with Family, Friends and Others

Because many people are uncertain of the needs of individuals who are visually impaired, they can be awkward and uncomfortable when spending time with you. You can help clear up this awkwardness by stating your needs as plainly as possible. Here are some tips on how you might do this in several common situations.

### Receiving Assistance

Tell others that if they think you might need assistance, they should simply ask if they can be helpful and how. Ask them not to make assumptions about your needs. By making this request, you are asking others for the same courtesy they would extend to anyone.

### Walking with a Sighted Person

Instead of allowing others to grab onto you while you are walking with them, you will find that it is both safer and more comfortable for you to hold onto their elbow. Let others know that this is your preference and demonstrate for them how this technique works. Grasp their arm above the elbow gently but firmly. Walk slightly behind them so that you can follow their motions. Let them know that physical cues are usually all that are necessary to signal where they are going and that verbal explanations usually are not needed.

### Receiving Directions

Let people know what type of information you wish to receive. Let them know that specific terms such as “right,” “left,” “north,” “west,” are better than pointing or saying “over there.” Ask clerks in stores to take you directly to the aisle and not to say “in aisle four.”

### Conversing

You may find that others are at first uncertain about how to speak with you. They may address their comments to your sighted companions rather than speak directly to you. Or they may speak more loudly that usual. Let them know that if they wish to get your attention, they should simply address you by name.

### Hadley Online Seminars

The mission of The Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to promote independent living through lifelong distance education programs for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, their families, and blindness service providers.

Hadley has a course for you if you are:

* A blind or visually impaired individual 14+ years of age
* A relative of a blind or visually impaired child
* A family member of a blind or visually impaired adult
* A professional or paraprofessional in the blindness field

### Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youths & Adults

Provides training and resources exclusively to people age 16 and over who have combined vision and hearing loss.

Northwest Region Office (AK, ID, OR, WA)

1200 12 Avenue South

Suite 175

Seattle, WA  98144

206-324-9120

Text Only: 206-602-0790

[www.helenkeller.org/hknc/northwestern-region](http://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/northwestern-region)

***Thank you for using the Oregon Commission for the Blind Resource Guide!***

Please share it with your communities, and contact us if you have additional ideas, information, or corrections at 888-202-5463 or ocb.mail@state.or.us. The most current copy of this resource guide can be found at:

[https://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Brochures\_Resources.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/blind/livingwithvisionloss/Pages/Brochures_Resources.aspx%20)