

Division of Services for the Blind

Arkansas Workforce Connections

About us

The Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) is a state agency within Arkansas Workforce Connections that can provide services to you if you are blind, severely visually impaired, or losing your vision. DSB can also direct you to other helpful services that may be needed.

Mission

DSB's mission is to provide individualized services to empower blind and severely visually impaired persons to achieve independence through skill and career development.

Learn more

1-800-960-9270

501-682-5463

DWS.ARKANSAS.GOV

Programs & Services

Supported Employment (SE)

Supported Employment provides integrated competitive employment in the community for consumers who have the most severe disabilities and who need extended, ongoing support to maintain employment and community inclusion. SE is a "place then train" model. Consumers are placed in jobs in the community. Training and long-term support, provided during employment.

Older Individuals Who are Blind (OIB)

Independent living skills training is provided to older individuals who are blind and severely visually impaired, are age 55 or older, and do not plan to enter the workforce. Individuals can be taught adaptive ways for personal care, travel using a white cane, and home management skills to increase their independence.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

This program helps prepare consumers for employment through training and/or job-related services. Your needs will be assessed. You and your counselor will develop an employment plan outlining the steps and services needed for you to reach your goal. VR services are available to you if you are not currently employed, are seeking to advance in your present career, or in danger of losing your job due to vision loss.

Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program (VFP)

Consumers are trained to manage snack bars and vending machines throughout the state. DSB staff locate, equip and stock the facility initially. The consumer then manages the facility as a small business owner.

Small Business Program

DSB staff assists consumers interested in owning their own business by helping them develop a realistic business plan and providing start-up funding and guidance.

Technology Training

DSB staff can train consumers on how to use assistive technology and teach them computer skills to become more independent and increase employability. Staff can also assess the client's technology needs.

Transition Services

Transition services are available to youth starting at age 14 to ensure there is not a gap between services provided to students through the education system and those provided by vocational rehabilitation. DSB counselors provide counseling and guidance and other services to help youth transition from high school to employment or post-secondary education.

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More Services

Arkansas Information Reading Services (AIRS)

AIRS broadcasts news and information 24 hours a day over the digital channels of Arkansas PBS (AETN). A digital television is required to receive the signal. AIRS can also be accessed at airs.aetn.org or on AIRS plus at 844-888-0981. To listen to AIRS RADIO on Alexa, say, "Alexa, OPEN AIRS RADIO"—and when prompted, say, "LISTEN LIVE."

Friends of AIRS (FAIRS)

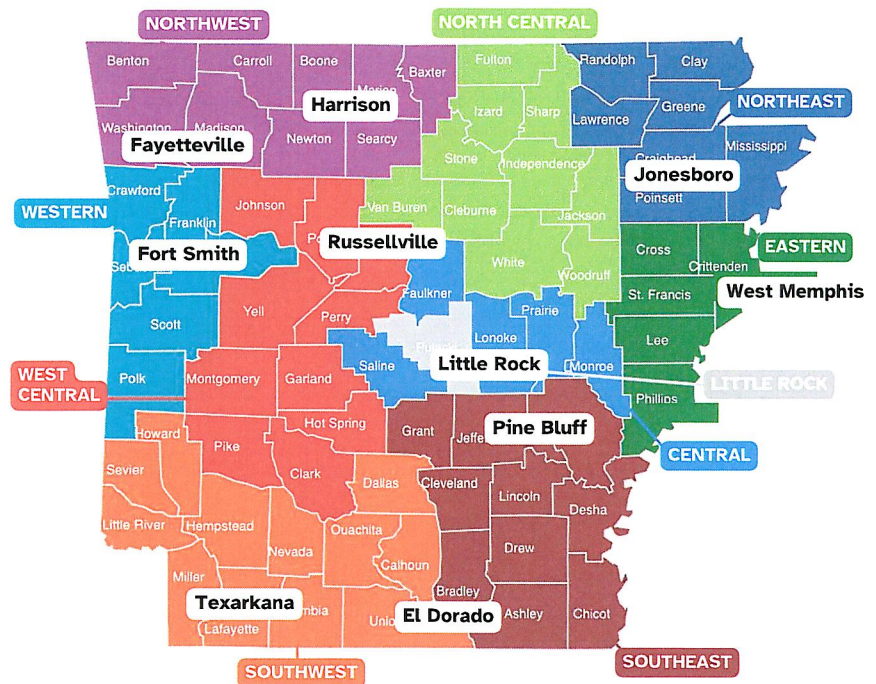
FAIRS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that supports the work of AIRS. FAIRS also accepts bequests, memorials, honor gifts, and other donations to financially assist the work of AIRS. For more information about making a charitable gift, call 501-852-5125.

AIRS need volunteers to send in local news and assist with other tasks. To become an AIRS volunteer, call 501-612-4175 and leave a message including your name and phone number for a return contact or send an email to airs@myarkansaspbs.org.

Consumer Groups

While DSB has many ways to assist you to reach your goals, we also encourage you to learn all you can about your eye condition and talk with other persons in similar circumstances. One of the best ways you can meet people who personally understand the difficulties related to vision problems is through involvement in a "consumer group". In Arkansas, there are two main consumer groups whose mission is to improve the lives of persons with blindness or visual impairment: Arkansas Council for the Blind, <http://www.arkansasacb.org> National Federation of the Blind Arkansas Chapter (NFB), <http://www.nfbbar.org/chapters>

Office Locations



For additional information about DSB volunteer opportunities, programs and services, call (800) 960-9270 or (501) 682-5463 or Deaf Relay 711 or contact us as dws.arkansas.gov/dsb/referral.

If you need this material in an alternate format, please contact DSB at (501) 682-5463 or (800) 960-9270.