

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

I. Policy Summary

Community outreach is an integral component of the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program. Vision Rehabilitation Specialists (VRS) must try to educate the public about programs and services that are offered in North Dakota.

II. Purpose

The goal of community outreach is to educate the public about OIB services, as well as educate individuals who are blind or have a visual impairment and need OIB services. The VRS is responsible to ensure all counties within his/her assigned region of the state are aware of the services that can be provided. Significant emphasis is placed on community outreach to minority and underserved populations in Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act. One of the core services defined in the OIB program is community awareness.

III. Community Outreach Training

Community outreach will be tailored to meet the needs of the venue, organization, or the audience and can be done in person or virtually. The training may be in the form of a PowerPoint, handout, hands-on experience, demonstration, presentation, etc. It will focus on community supports for individuals who are blind or have visual impairment. There is no limit on how many participants are in attendance as long as you are actively trying to educate on the program. No promotional items are distributed during community outreach training.

IV. Community Outreach Formats

- Pamphlets/brochures
- Press release
- Presentation
- PowerPoint
- Education/training

- Aging, AARP, social services, senior centers, etc.
- Contact with the medical community
 - Optometrists, ophthalmologists, diabetic educators, rehabilitation centers, hospitals, pharmacies, dialysis centers, diabetic management centers, etc.
- Contact with local community services
 - Meals on Wheels, grocery stores, banks, transportation services, libraries, churches, etc.
- Health fairs
- OIB program inquiries
 - Telephone or general

V. What Constitutes a Presentation?

A presentation occurs when a VRS educates an individual/group on our services or on a particular topic. For example, if a VRS presents to a group of medical personnel at the local doctor's office and educates on specific topics and disburses business cards and brochures this **would** count as a presentation. Another example is a VRS sets up a Teams meeting to provide education to an optometrist on the OIB program and mails out brochures and contact information. **This would also count as a presentation.**

VI. What does not Constitute a Presentation?

If no education occurs, this cannot be counted as a presentation. For example, if a VRS visits a doctor's office and places a business card and a few brochures on the table, this **would not** count as a presentation.

If you are fielding OIB program inquiries where someone calls to see if their father would qualify for the program this is not counted towards a presentation.

VII. Tracking

When a VRS completes a presentation that pertains to the education of OIB services, the VRS must track the presentation and the number of attendees on the *Vision Services Community Outreach Tracking Form*. The tracking form must be submitted to the Vision and Independent Living Services Administrator quarterly.

When you are fielding OIB program inquiries you track this on Workforce as *Community Outreach* time but do not count it as a presentation.

VIII. How to Document Time

See *Allocating Vision Rehabilitation Specialists Time Policy* NDVRS SP 20-25.