



Equipping Alaskans who are blind and visually impaired with skills for success in life and work

WELCOME TO THE ALASKA CENTER FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

We welcome you to the Center where we are committed to providing you with the tools you need to achieve your vocational and other goals. Below is a general summary of the services we offer.

Please know that we consider this time at the Center to be about you – what you want to learn, what is helpful for you, and what you want to do. We are here to partner with you as a team to make your experience at our Center as meaningful and effective as possible. Your feedback is a vital part of that and we encourage you to let us know at any time how we can be more helpful.

Initially, you will be in an Assessment Period during which you and the Instructors determine what skills you have and what ones you would like to develop. Together with your DVR Counselor, these will be discussed at the end of the Assessment Period and a plan for training developed that may target one or more areas of instruction to be emphasized and outcomes to be met. The Instructional Components include:

Activities of Daily Living – skills essential for effective personal and household management, including financial and other record-keeping

Assistive Technology – use of computers and other equipment for document production and management as well as daily and ongoing communications with others

Braille – reading and writing this option for notetaking and communication

Manual Skills – creating, planning, and producing items while increasing dexterity, decision making, and problem solving skills

Orientation and Mobility – use of the long white cane and other methods to increase your ability to shop for yourself and go places independently.

Because our facility is licensed by the Municipality of Anchorage under a special permit, we undergo inspections by several different agencies and companies yearly to ensure that we continue to offer a safe environment for our clients as well as staff and visitors. Those staying at the Center on a residential basis are required to provide us with the results of a recent physical examination that includes a test

for tuberculosis and other communicable diseases. Those who come for day classes will need to have the results of a tuberculosis test.

Also, if there are any medical or physical conditions that might make it difficult for you to walk or stand for any length of time or go up and down stairs, please let us know. With your permission, we may need to speak to your doctor so that we can be sure we are supporting your well-being and health.

If you will be staying at the Center, we will schedule a shopping trip with you as soon as possible so you can obtain groceries. There is space in the cabinets and refrigerator-freezer of the Student Kitchen for you to store them. If you plan to arrive on a weekend, please consider bringing some food with you to tide you over. We have noodle cups and breakfast bars if needed, and you are welcome to order out if that's your preference. Since we want to make sure we don't attract mice and other unwanted "guests", we ask that all meals and snacks be eaten in the Student Lounge or in our other dining area rather than in rooms.



A fully equipped kitchen is available for storage of food items and preparation of meals by those residing at the Center. Each Participant is trained to be able to plan and prepare nutritional, economic meals safely.



The Lounge has a big screen cable access television, telephones, and other accommodations.

Our Residential Monitor lives on-site and can help make you comfortable when you first arrive as well as throughout your stay at the Center.

Laundry facilities are available and residential clients are asked to wash bed linens and towels weekly for cleanliness. All entry and exit doors are locked at 5:00 p.m. each evening and on weekends and holidays when staff are not immediately available. An alarm system is maintained by the Residential Monitor, and a sprinkler system provides additional safety. Fire exits will be pointed out to you when you arrive.

We encourage you to bring the following:

- coat(s) appropriate to Anchorage weather (heavier in fall, winter, early spring)
- warm hat(s) and gloves (especially in colder months)
- covered footwear in which to walk outside such as boots for fall, winter, and spring (open-toed shoes, clogs, and flip flips are not suitable)
- snow pants and/or thermal undergarments in fall, winter, and early spring
- rain gear (especially head cover)
- night clothes and at least 3 changes of clothing
- sunglasses (suitable ones may be determined as part of the Low Vision Assessment)
- low vision devices currently being used, such as magnifiers and portable CCTVs
- shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste and toothbrush, hand soap, and other preferred toiletries
- a radio and/or alarm clock (if available)

If you are staying at the Center, we expect you to make your own bed daily, wipe the bathroom fixtures after use, and dispose of your garbage in one of our central bins. It is especially important to make sure all items (suitcases, clothing, bags, etc.) are put away in the bedroom closet and dresser so they don't create an obstacle for you should you need to leave your room quickly. Towels are supplied by the Center, as are bed linens, and are to be kept in your room instead of in the bathroom as part of Municipal infection control requirements. The Center can also provide you with shampoo, toothpaste, and a toothbrush in case you forget yours. Center staff may inspect bedrooms periodically to ensure client safety and well-being.



Single rooms come furnished with linens, towels, a dresser, a nightstand and lamp, a tape recorder, a full closet with shelf, and a desk and chair. A towel bar is located behind each locking entry door on which to place used items to prevent the spread of colds and other infections.

The use or possession of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal (non-prescription) drugs of any kind on any part of the Center grounds and in any Center-sponsored

activity is not permitted. In accordance with local ordinances, the Center is a non-smoking facility. We have a smoking area outside our facility and a place for ashes and cigarette butts.

If you take medications, you may keep them in a safe manner and take them according to schedule. Our staff will not monitor your usage but instead trust you to do this.

Possession of knives, guns or any other type of weapon is prohibited as is any physical violence so that our Center can remain a safe place for all of us.

Our Computer Lab is available for your use after class time so you can practice, complete assignments, and maintain communications with others. Usage in the Computer Lab is monitored by Center staff for overall safety and security.

The Center supports recycling efforts by providing a bin in the parking area for collection of materials that can be conserved such as soda bottles, shampoo containers, gallon milk jugs, paper products (magazines, cardboard, office paper, and cereal boxes, for example), and aluminum and tin cans. Also recyclable is plastic film (shopping bags) and glass, though these have to be taken separately to our Recycling Center.

For general use, a telephone is located in the Student Lounge and long distance calls may be made using individual Calling Cards only - collect calls cannot be accepted.

We understand that you may need to schedule and go to an appointment from time to time and will make adjustments in the schedule accordingly. If you are staying at the Center, visitors are welcome in the Lounge after classes are over and on weekends, and you are free to leave for a night or weekend to visit others. Please know that if we expect you and you are not here, we will be looking for you to make sure you are safe.

If you have an agency- or self-trained guide dog, you must ensure he or she is well-behaved, housebroken, well-maintained (grooming, walking, cleaning up after), and under leash or harness control at all times. Your dog must not exhibit any aggressiveness nor pose any type of physical or biological risk to people and/or other animals or alter the operation of the Center's program and facility in any way. We require proof from a licensed veterinarian of current rabies and parvo/distemper vaccinations as well as the results of a temperament-test. Any complaints by staff or other clients will be brought to your attention immediately and, if not corrected or correctable, you may be asked to leave for the safety of others.

We are very much looking forward to you coming to the Center and again, please call or e-mail us if you have any questions before then!