

# Connecticut Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)

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## Description:

The State of Connecticut, Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) provides statewide home-based and community-based services through a continuum of individualized rehabilitation, education and social service programs. These programs are offered to adults who are legally blind and to children and adolescents who are legally blind or visually impaired. The agency works with individuals and families to assist consumers in acquiring the life skills and support services necessary to function independently in their homes and communities, with special attention to their educational and vocational environments. Supports include:

- Blindness adjustment counseling and referral,
- Broad educational services for children and adolescents,
- Rehabilitation teaching,
- Orientation and mobility instruction,
- Vocational rehabilitation,
- Volunteer services,
- Legal benefits conferred through certificates of legal blindness, including property tax exemptions, handicapped parking certificates and free fishing licenses,
- Assistance in establishing support groups,
- Referral to the Connecticut Radio Information Service (CRIS Radio),
- Access to the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (known as the Talking Book Program), and
- Entrepreneurial opportunities through the Business Enterprise Program (BEP).

BESB provides referrals to other programs and services based upon individual need. Most BESB materials are available in large print, in Braille or by tape recording.

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## Eligibility Requirements, Service Areas and Program Year:

### Eligibility Requirements:

- Adults must be legally blind as determined and reported to BESB by a physician or optometrist.
- Children or adolescents who are blind or visually impaired may receive services if they have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Accommodation Plan from birth until their graduation from high school (or until they no longer are enrolled in secondary education or reach the age of 22). Individual Family Service Plans detail the services that are considered necessary to facilitate a child's development and how a family can participate to enhance such development. Individualized Education Plans are

developed through a multi-disciplinary assessment, detail specific special education and related services. 504 Accommodation Plans detail all reasonable accommodations that are necessary for a child with disabilities who do not qualify for special education, to participate in school and activities.

Service Areas:

Statewide

Program Year:

N/A

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### **Contact Information:**

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### **Related Information:**

[Connecticut Tech Act Project, refer to page XV – 16.](#)

[New England Assistive Technology \(NEAT\) Center, refer to page XV – 51.](#)

[Vocational Rehabilitation Program, refer to page XV - 61](#)