

Vision Rehabilitation Overview

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION for the **Blind and Visually Impaired**

CONFIDENT LIVING WITH VISION LOSS

Over 100,000 blind and visually impaired individuals reside in Massachusetts, and of these at least 70% are seniors.

The number of seniors with low vision is expected to double by 2030 as aging “baby boomers” experience uncorrectable sight loss.



FORMS OF UNCORRECTABLE VISION LOSS

CATARACTS



DIABETIC RETINOPATHY



GLAUCOMA



MACULAR DEGENERATION



The Alliance on Aging Research reports that visual impairment is one of the top four reasons for Americans’ losing independence.

Vision loss in elders leads to increased rates of:

- Clinical depression
- Falls
- Nursing home placement
- Social isolation
- Poor diet and reduced exercise
- Medication mis-management

Yet vision is often **overlooked** as a factor in medical treatment.

Research suggests that vision rehabilitation greatly improves an older adult’s ability to age in place, as well as improving health and social outcomes. Some of the services available in Massachusetts are:

- **Low vision examinations:** An eye doctor will conduct a specialized exam to help you learn to use your remaining vision, giving you crucial information, techniques, and possibly devices to help you in your everyday life.
- **In-home vision rehabilitation:** An occupational therapist will come to your home and help you learn adaptive strategies for coping with vision loss and remaining independent and confident in your own home.
- **Volunteer services:** Visually impaired individuals are matched with a trained volunteer on a one-on-one basis to help with tasks such as grocery shopping, reading mail, or getting to medical appointments.
- **Peer-led low vision support groups:** These meet in cities and towns throughout the state and provide the opportunity for you to share fears, frustrations, coping mechanisms, and resources regarding changes in your vision in a friendly, understanding environment.

- For more information about these services, call us at 508-854-0700 or 888-613-2777.
- Doctors: visit mabvi.org for referral information.