

### **7.03 School Orientation and Mobility Specialist (Ages Birth-21)**

To be endorsed as a school orientation and mobility specialist, an applicant shall hold an earned bachelor's or higher degree from an accepted institution of higher education; have successfully completed an approved preparation program for school orientation and mobility specialists; have successfully completed a practicum or internship in a school setting, equivalent to a minimum of 320 hours, full-time, under the supervision of an Academy of Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP)-licensed orientation and mobility specialist; have passed the ACVREP examination and hold a current and valid ACVREP orientation and mobility certificate. The orientation and mobility specialist shall have demonstrated the competencies specified below:

- 7.03(1) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about the legal framework, historical and auricular foundations and cultural social-economic factors affecting students with visual impairments and other concomitant disabilities, and about systems of orientation and mobility and is able to:
- 7.03(1)(a) articulate the history and philosophy of instructional practices as related to orientation and mobility instruction for children and youth with visual impairments.
  - 7.03(1)(b) incorporate and address in planning variations in beliefs, traditions and values across cultures and their potential effect on attitudes toward and expectations for individuals with visual impairments.
  - 7.03(1)(c) research, identify and apply for appropriate and relevant federal entitlements that provide specialized equipment and materials for individuals with visual impairments.
  - 7.03(1)(d) communicate effectively with regard to current educational definitions, identification criteria, labeling issues and incidence and prevalence figures for individuals with visual impairments to a variety of audiences, as needed and appropriate.
  - 7.03(1)(e) describe the use of the long cane as a mobility system; the different types of long canes, adapted canes and adaptive mobility devices and their strengths and limitations as travel tools in consideration of individual travel needs and travel environments; and articulate and utilize prescription techniques for canes, adapted canes and adaptive mobility devices.
  - 7.03(1)(f) describe the dog guide as a mobility system; the methods and strategies for providing orientation assistance to a dog guide user; and the process for making referrals to dog guide training centers.
  - 7.03(1)(g) describe the use and application of electronic travel aids (ETAs) as a supplementary mobility system; how ETAs are classified and the basic principles of operating commercially available ETAs.
  - 7.03(1)(h) explain the uses and applications of optical and non-optical devices as a supplementary mobility system; the classification and basic principles of operation of optical and non-optical devices and the various ways in which persons with visual impairments may use these devices in travel environments.
  - 7.03(1)(i) describe the use of ambulatory aids such as, but not limited to, support canes, walkers, crutches and wheelchairs, and the manner in which these devices may be used by individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

- 7.03(1)(j) articulate the correlation between and the advantages and disadvantages of mobility systems for persons with a range of visual impairment, including those with concomitant disabilities, and communicate this information effectively to students and their families.
- 7.03(2) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about human development and the implications of blindness/visual impairment and deaf-blindness upon development, and orientation and mobility skill acquisition. The school orientation and mobility specialist is able to:
- 7.03(2)(a) explain the structure, function and normal development of the human visual system and the impact on development of other sensory systems when vision is or becomes impaired.
- 7.03(2)(b) describe and interpret basic terminology, manifestations, movement and travel implications of diseases and disorders of the human visual system.
- 7.03(2)(c) explain the classification and quantification of hearing loss; the special auditory needs of persons with visual impairments; the use of hearing aids by persons with visual impairments and the uses of audiometric data for traffic interpretation.
- 7.03(2)(d) describe the role of perception as it pertains to cognition, sensation, attention, memory, cognitive mapping, orientation and the utilization of information as conveyed through sensory means.
- 7.03(2)(e) articulate the effects of medications on the functioning of the sensory systems and on general mobility.
- 7.03(2)(f) describe the impact of and needs generated by hearing loss on an individual's modes of communication, movement and travel.
- 7.03(2)(g) explain the effects of visual impairment, with and without additional disabilities, on early development of motor and cognition abilities, self-esteem, social/emotional interaction, self-help, communication, travel safety and orientation and mobility skill(s) acquisition.
- 7.03(2)(h) describe the impact of vision loss on the family and the strategies available to family members, caregivers and support systems in encouraging and supporting independence.
- 7.03(2)(i) describe the similarities and differences between the sensory, cognitive, physical, cultural, social, emotional and travel needs of students with and without visual impairments.
- 7.03(2)(j) discuss the role and function of incidental learning when vision is impaired as related to concept development and travel skills.
- 7.03(2)(k) recommend adaptations across student travel environments that can address and accommodate individual sensory and physical needs.
- 7.03(3) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about the accurate assessment of students' sensory, developmental and orientation and mobility performance and is able to:
- 7.03(3)(a) interpret and apply specialized terminology as used in medical diagnoses of eye reports, low vision evaluation reports, orientation and mobility assessment(s) of individuals with visual impairments and those with concomitant disabilities.

- 7.03(3)(b) articulate the rudimentary practices used for screening hearing function(s) and ensure that hearing is screened prior to assessment of orientation and mobility knowledge and skills.
  - 7.03(3)(c) gather background information and family history relevant to the individual student's visual status and orientation and mobility needs.
  - 7.03(3)(d) utilize in planning data from specific and appropriate orientation and mobility assessments to measure functional vision and orientation and mobility knowledge and skills, including, but not limited to, concept development, sensory-motor function and informal and formal mobility techniques.
  - 7.03(3)(e) address in planning ethical considerations, legal provisions, regulations, policies and guidelines for the valid orientation and mobility assessment of individuals with visual impairments, including those with concomitant disabilities.
  - 7.03(3)(f) adapt and implement a variety of orientation and mobility assessment procedures when evaluating individuals with visual impairments, including those with concomitant disabilities.
  - 7.03(3)(g) incorporate into planning the interpretation and application of assessment results from related professional fields in conjunction with orientation and mobility assessments of individuals with visual impairments, including those with concomitant disabilities.
  - 7.03(3)(h) implement appropriate strategies to assess environments for accessibility and safety.
  - 7.03(3)(i) analyze and utilize assessment information in the development of the individualized family service plans (IFSP) and individualized education programs (IEP) for individuals with visual impairment, including those with concomitant disabilities.
  - 7.03(3)(j) write behaviorally stated goals and objectives that are realistic, measurable, appropriately sequenced and based on assessment findings.
  - 7.03(3)(k) apply strategies and methods for using assessment information to the ongoing evaluation of student progress and implement appropriate program adaptations and remediation strategies, accordingly.
  - 7.03(3)(l) create and accurately maintain required school records with regard to orientation and mobility assessments for individuals with visual impairments, including those with concomitant disabilities.
- 7.03(4) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about specialized instruction and appropriate modifications and accommodations for learners with visual impairment and is able to:
- 7.03(4)(a) establish appropriate and effective communication, interaction and rapport with children/students of all ages and their families or others who may be accountable.
  - 7.03(4)(b) counsel students regarding the setting of high but achievable mobility goals; choosing a mobility system and related matters involving the use of mobility skills in daily living; and recognize and incorporate into planning students' evolving attitudes toward orientation and mobility instruction.
  - 7.03(4)(c) identify resources and/or acquire and utilize and/or design and produce appropriate media and materials that support orientation and mobility instruction including, but not

limited to, visual, tactile and auditory maps, models, graphic aids and recorded information.

- 7.03(4)(d) apply observational techniques appropriate to orientation and mobility instruction.
- 7.03(4)(e) implement instructional strategies that can enable person(s) with visual impairments to use sensory information in travel environments.
- 7.03(4)(f) design and implement instructional programs using the optical and non-optical devices recommended by eye care professionals for use in travel environments.
- 7.03(4)(g) evaluate and select environments for the introduction, development and reinforcement of orientation and mobility knowledge and skills.
- 7.03(4)(h) demonstrate the construction, assembly and maintenance of the long cane and other adaptive mobility devices; articulate the nomenclature related to the cane and its parts; use appropriate resources for procuring long canes and other devices and demonstrate proficiency in maintaining and repairing canes and other adaptive mobility devices.
- 7.03(4)(i) provide student instruction and support to address sensory skills, body image concept development, directionality, environmental concepts, address systems, interpretation of traffic patterns and related orientation and mobility concepts.
- 7.03(4)(j) modify and provide instruction related to techniques of trailing, upper and lower body protection, squaring off, search, room familiarization, use of landmarks and cues, solicitation of assistance and human guides.
- 7.03(4)(k) modify and provide instruction related to appropriate cane techniques and their applications in indoor and outdoor environments including but not limited to diagonal cane and touch technique; touch technique modifications, including three-point touch, touch and slide, touch and drag; constant contact technique and the use of the cane for shore-lining.
- 7.03(4)(l) provide instruction on techniques for using adaptive mobility devices in indoor and outdoor environments.
- 7.03(4)(m) provide instruction with regard to orientation and travel skills including, but not limited to, route planning; direction taking; distance measurement and estimation; utilization of compass directions; recovery techniques; analysis and identification of intersections and traffic patterns; use of traffic control devices; negotiation of public conveyance systems, such as elevators and escalators; techniques for crossing streets; and techniques for travel in indoor, outdoor, residential, small business, business district, mall and rural area environments.
- 7.03(4)(n) select appropriate distances and positioning relative to the student for safe and effective instruction as the student advances through the orientation and mobility program, which may best facilitate progress as skills relevant to a wide variety and complexity of environments are introduced.
- 7.03(4)(o) select, design, implement and utilize “drop-off” lessons for the assessment of orientation and mobility skills.
- 7.03(4)(p) instruct students on how to address travel needs when the distance between the instructor and the student is remote, and develop and facilitate “solo” lessons and independent travel experiences.

- 7.03(4)(q) articulate the role of regular and special education personnel and related service professionals who may be involved in interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary or trans-disciplinary instruction of the child/student.
- 7.03(4)(r) develop appropriate lesson plans and record pertinent anecdotal lesson notes concisely.
- 7.03(5) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about effective communication and successful collaboration with students, their families and relevant education and community personnel and is able to:
  - 7.03(5)(a) describe and respond to movement and travel-related concerns of parents of individuals with visual impairments with varied and appropriate strategies to assist them in addressing such concerns.
  - 7.03(5)(b) articulate the roles of individuals with visual impairments to parents and other family members, educational service providers and relevant community personnel, in planning for students' individualized orientation and mobility programs.
  - 7.03(5)(c) describe the roles of and be able to provide direction for paraprofessionals or para-educators who assist with the orientation and mobility instruction of students with visual impairments.
  - 7.03(5)(d) utilize appropriate strategies for assisting families and other team members in planning for level-transitioning of students with visual impairments.
  - 7.03(5)(e) provide resources for service, networking and organization specifically oriented to students with visual impairments and deaf-blindness to families, related professionals and other support personnel.
  - 7.03(5)(f) advocate for the necessity of role models for students with visual impairments and deaf-blindness.
  - 7.03(5)(g) utilize appropriate and effective communication, consultation and collaboration skills and strategies in working with students with visual impairment, parents, regular and special education staff and community personnel regarding students' orientation and mobility needs and program(s).
  - 7.03(5)(h) initiate and coordinate respectful and beneficial relationships between and among families and relevant professionals, where appropriate, to encourage and assist families in becoming informed and active participants in students' orientation and mobility programs.
  - 7.03(5)(i) plan and conduct conferences with families or primary caregivers as required and/or necessary.
  - 7.03(5)(j) manage and direct the activities of para-educators or peer tutors who work with individuals with visual impairments.
- 7.03(6) The school orientation and mobility specialist is knowledgeable about adhering to ethical and appropriate professional practices in contributing to the orientation and mobility skill development of children/students and is able to:

- 7.03(6)(a) apply the ethical considerations governing the profession of orientation and mobility to the education of the learner who is visually impaired, recognizing the importance of the orientation and mobility specialist as a role model for students with visual impairment(s).
- 7.03(6)(b) recognize cultural and other biases to assure that instruction of students is discrimination-free.
- 7.03(6)(c) articulate and address in planning concerns related to student safety and potential liability and keep current on national and local environmental accessibility standards.
- 7.03(6)(d) engage in the activities of professional organizations which represent and advocate for the field of visual impairment, whenever relevant.
- 7.03(6)(e) keep current on literature and documented effective research applicable to individuals with visual impairments and orientation and mobility needs and apply relevant information to planning and objectives setting for students.
- 7.03(6)(f) practice professional self-assessment and seek out professional development activities that support the advancement of personal skills and knowledge and which can benefit students with visual impairments, their families and/or colleagues, and to maintain ACVREP certification.