

# Information for People in Birmingham who are Blind or Partially Sighted

## Useful information about Services for People who are Blind, Deaf and Blind or are Partially Sighted, living in Birmingham

This factsheet includes information about the following:

1. The Blind and Partially Sighted Registers
2. Allowances and Benefits
3. Support for Adults who are Blind or Partially Sighted

### The Blind and Partially Sighted Register

The Directorate for People is responsible for keeping and maintaining the Register of people living in Birmingham who are Blind or Partially Sighted.

We keep the Register so that we know who might need help and support. You don't have to be included on the Register but it may be beneficial to do so as you may be entitled to certain allowances and benefits if you are registered. (Please see Section 2 for more details)

### How can I register?

#### Step 1

#### Getting an eye examination

If you are having problems with your sight, your GP can arrange an eye examination for you at your local eye hospital or eye clinic.

#### Step 2

#### Assessment and Diagnosis

If, after your assessment, you are diagnosed as Severely Sight Impaired (Blind) or Sight Impaired (Partially Sighted), your Consultant Ophthalmologist will give you a copy of a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI). If you agree, your Consultant will send copies of the certificate to:

- Us (Directorate for People) for registration
- Your GP
- The Department of Health (for National Statistics)

If you are already a patient of a Consultant Ophthalmologist and you are not sure if you have been given a CVI, you should ask your Consultant.

## Step 3

### Registration

Once we have received your CVI, we will contact you to offer you a choice of registration card with or without your photograph. If you opt for the card with your photograph, we will require a passport size photograph to be able to produce this card. Your registration card will also have your registration number and acts as proof of registration, so you should keep it safe.

Following this, we will write to you to advise you about the services and support available.

If you require further information about registering, you can telephone the **Blind and Partially Sighted Register Team on 0121 303 4714**.

### Support for Adults with Sight Problems

Once registered, you will be referred to the Adults & Communities Access Point (ACAP) Team. If you feel that a visit would be useful to discuss daily issues around your sight loss, please ask to be referred to the Rehabilitation Team.

If you are Blind or Partially Sighted you can get support from our Visual Impairment Service, which has a Social Work Team and a Rehabilitation Enablement Service. You do not have to be registered as Blind or Partially Sighted to apply for these services. For further information contact [visual.impairment.team@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:visual.impairment.team@birmingham.gov.uk).

### Support from the Rehabilitation Team

The Rehabilitation Team can support you to stay as independent as possible in your own home by working with you to help you regain daily living skills.

For more information about these services, please contact the Visual Impairment Service on 0121 303 1234, select option 3.

## **Support from the Social Work Team**

The Social Work Team can help you get the support you need to take care of yourself. This may involve helping you to get personal care and support at home or referring you to another service that can help you get what you need. The Social Work Team can also help if you are a carer of someone who is Blind or Partially Sighted.

## **Allowances / Benefits for People who are Registered as Blind or Partially Sighted**

Once you are registered as Blind or Partially Sighted, you may be able to get the following allowances:

### **Blue Badge**

These parking badges are given to people with a physical disability or to those who are registered as Severely Sight Impaired (Blind) and who need to park close to where they need to go.

To apply for a badge, ring the Blue Badge Section on 0121 303 1234, select option 2

### **Blind Person's Travel Pass**

For more details, phone Centro on 0845 303 6760

### **Blind Person's Tax Allowance**

For more details, phone HMRC Tax Helpline on 0300 200 3300

### **TV Licence**

If you or someone you live with is registered as **Severely Sight Impaired** (Blind), you can get a half price TV Licence. For more information and to apply go to [www.tvlicensing.co.uk](http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk) or telephone 0300 790 6131

### **Free Directory Enquiry Service**

Phone free on 0800 58 70 195 to talk to a trained operator who will help you with your enquiry.

### **Eye Tests**

If you are registered as Severely Sight Impaired (Blind) or Sight Impaired (Partially Sighted) you should tell the optician before your eye test as you may be able to have a free eye test.

## **Voting by Post or Proxy**

If you are unable to vote in person, you can vote by post or you can ask someone to vote on your behalf. This is called voting by proxy. To find out more, phone Birmingham City Council Elections Office on **0121 303 2731**

## **Free Royal Mail Postage**

If you are registered Severely Sight Impaired (Blind) or in some cases Sight Impaired (Partially Sighted) you can post items such as Talking Books, Braille items or specialist equipment free of charge.

## **Support for Children and Families with a Child who is Blind or Partially Sighted**

If you have a child who is Blind or Partially Sighted you may be able to get help and support from Birmingham City Council Disabled Children's Social Care – Duty Telephone **0121 464 9192 / 0121 675 0685 / 0121 675 3249**

Children who are Blind or Partially Sighted can also get support with their education. For more information phone Access to Education – Sensory Support on **0121 303 1793**

## SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

### Visual Impairment Rehabilitation Service

The Visual Impairment Rehabilitation Service provides advice and guidance and can work with you to overcome the practical difficulties arising from your sight loss. An individual plan to meet your needs will be negotiated following assessment.

Training can be provided in your own home or at our Rehabilitation Suite depending on need. A wide range of needs are covered; the following are examples of the main areas:

- **Independent Mobility**

You may find it difficult to get around as safely as anyone else. A Team Specialist can work with you to make this possible.

- **Communication**

We can work with you, assess for and provide equipment to help with reading and writing where possible. Also reading by touch, access to computers, use of telephones and talking books, newspapers and magazines.

- **Kitchen Safety**

Yes, we all need to eat! A team specialist can work with you to overcome any fears and difficulties, concentrating on safer techniques.

- **Equipment**

Some specialist equipment necessary to meet the needs in your individual plan may be provided free of charge.



Contact us on:

0121 464 9455

[Visual.impairment.team@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Visual.impairment.team@birmingham.gov.uk)

Please visit **My Care in Birmingham:**  
**[www.mycareinbirmingham.org.uk](http://www.mycareinbirmingham.org.uk)**  
for further information.

The fastest way you can get information and advice  
about adult social care.