Blind/Low Vision Program Description

EmpowerTech's Blind/Low Vision Program focuses on computer or technology training needed to assist blind and visually impaired persons. The program is designed to assist individuals gain the skills necessary to go back to school, re-enter the work force and/or gain a greater measure of independence. Possible areas of training are:

1. Typing/keyboarding
2. Basic computer skills, including Microsoft Office applications
3. Instruction in screen reading software, including JAWS or WindowEyes and screen magnification software, including MAGIC or ZOOMTEXT
4. Literary, math and computer Braille
5. Talking scanner systems, such as Kurzweil or Open Book
6. Assistance in determining the specifications for purchasing a home computer and the assistive technology necessary to use it
7. Speech Recognition Software, such as Dragon Naturally Speaking and J-Say, which allows Jaws and Dragon to function together
8. Internet and e-mail skills
9. Other software/hardware of specific interest to the individual
10. Demonstrations of hardware/software, such as video magnifiers, reading systems, Braille note takers and Braille embossers

The training is vendored by the California Department of Rehabilitation and offers intensive staff support. The curriculum is designed with an individual approach to accommodate the unique needs of each student. Students attend the program four days each week for three hours each day from 9:30AM to 11:30 PM. The full training is 192 hours over three to four months.

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