

# **North Country Association for the Visually Impaired**

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## **VRT/OM Job Search**

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## **Job Summary**

The North Country Association for the Visually Impaired (NCAVI) is currently seeking a certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist and Orientation and Mobility Specialist (VRT/OM) to work in the Upstate New York (Canton/Potsdam) region. NCAVI provides services to people who are blind or visually impaired in Clinton, Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence Counties.

Starting salary: \$42,000/year; includes competitive benefits package.

For additional information about the position contact NCAVI at 518-562-2330. Interested applicants should send a CV/Resume, cover letter, and two letters of reference to:

NCAVI  
Amy Kretser, Executive Director  
22 US Oval, Suite B-15  
Plattsburgh, NY 12903  
Ncavi2001@yahoo.com

## **Job Description**

### **Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT) Orientation and Mobility Specialist (OM)**

VRT/OMs work with visually impaired individuals to reestablish or develop their ability to perform tasks in living and working environments and help participants live and travel independently. VRT/OMs train participants to perform all types of activities from using a computer to caring for daily needs such as dressing, cooking and eating. Participants with permanent vision loss often need special instruction to master certain daily tasks. For these individuals, therapists demonstrate the use of adaptive equipment. They teach participants how to use special equipment needed at home or at work, including computer-aided adaptive equipment to improve communication and control various situations in their environment. VRT/OMs assist with development of independent travel skills utilizing sensory information to establish position in the environment (orientation) and through the teaching of techniques for traveling safely from one point to another (mobility).

VRT/OM's perform diagnostic assessments to determine participants' current ability to live and travel independently, and to assist in the development of realistic goals that will serve as the focus of lessons. The specialist creates individualized treatment plans that are structured according to the individual's interests, needs and abilities.

## **Additional Job Related Information**

VRT/Oms provide training either in participants' homes or in appropriate community settings as determined by the participants' needs. Individual or group lessons may include kitchen skills, communication skills, financial management, home management, personal management skills, keyboarding and Braille. Lessons will incorporate the use of adaptive equipment and use of residual vision as appropriate. VRTs will also assist participants in learning how to use low vision aids as employed for VRT tasks.

Monitoring participants' safety and progress and evaluating the training environments are also essential components of job responsibilities. VRT/OMs demonstrate skills for establishing appropriate physical distances and maintaining a level of awareness for skill development, consumer safety, and the promotion of independence in training environments.

Qualified candidates are knowledgeable in methods of working with visually impaired individuals who are congenitally or adventitiously (acquired) blind or visually impaired and will work with individuals of all ages.

Candidates will work from a home office located in the Canton/Potsdam region, and will attend all staff meetings once per month or as needed. They are required to have adequate internet access in their home office and must maintain a clean, safe driving record as they are expected to use their personal vehicles to travel to appointments.

### **Essential Duties and Responsibilities**

To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. The requirements listed below are representative of the knowledge, skills, and/or ability required.

Essential duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following:

1. Consult with other professionals (The Commission and Low Vision Providers) to plan, coordinate and assess consumer rehabilitation objectives;
2. Assist participants in learning how to use low vision aids as employed for VRT/OM tasks;
3. Provide individualized and/or group instruction to participants;
4. Provide rehabilitation teaching training, i.e., meal management, home management, financial management, childcare, personal management and communication skills;
5. Perform Level 1 Social Casework as needed to meet participants' needs;
6. Consult with other professional staff to plan, coordinate and assess participant rehabilitation objectives;
7. Document participants' progress through the use of standardized reports submitted within the time frame required by the Commission for the Blind and/or other funders;
8. Maintain a schedule of appointments, seeing a minimum of two participants a day four days a week, or the equivalent;
9. Maintain a home office day for updates in the agency's Consumer Information System (CIS) and other essential office work;
10. Close cases in a timely manner;
11. Participate in staff in service training and community conferences (when appropriate) to maintain proficiency in the use of methods and equipment to meet consumer needs;
12. Participate in team meetings and make referrals to other service providers;

13. Participate in professional development activities as both a participant and presenter when needed;
14. Serve participants in areas assigned by NCAVI;
15. Other duties as assigned.

### **Education and/or Experience**

Candidates must have a dual Bachelors or Master's degree in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy and Orientation and Mobility, and be certified or eligible for certification in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy from the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP).

VRT/OMS are required to have solid computer/word processing skills, strong communication skills and demonstrate an ability to work both independently and as part of a team.

Experience working with older adults or within the vision rehabilitation field is preferred.

### **Salary & Benefits:**

NCAVI would like to reserve the right to negotiate the benefits package. The agency would be more likely to contribute to a more generous benefits package than to negotiate salary increases, and as such, NCAVI would want time to compare salary/related expenses vs increased benefits before making a final offer. The following outlines what is currently offered at NCAVI:

- Annual Salary: \$42,000/year
- Health Insurance is offered through NCAVI. NCAVI contributes up to \$3,000 per person per year.
- Flexible Spending Plans are available to employees
- NCAVI pays for employees to have VSP (vision insurance) – spouses/children are allowed, but are paid for by employee.
- 3% match on Simple IRA
- Mileage is reimbursed monthly at a rate determined annually by NCAVI's board of directors. The current rate is \$0.53/mile.
- Relocation Package:
  - 1.) Up to \$1,000 for travel arrangements for final candidates' interviews
  - 2.) Up to \$5,000 allocated to cover upfront costs associated with candidate's relocation (receipts for travel etc.)
  - 3.) Up to \$10,000 to be used as leverage for the right candidate. These additional relocation funds would be distributed quarterly throughout the first year as a bonus – not added to annual salary.