

VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration
VA Portland Health Care System

VA Portland Health Care System

Low Vision Clinic Handbook

www.portland.va.gov/services/LowVisionClinic.asp

Portland, Vancouver, Salem and Bend locations



(360) 905-1751

Or toll free:

1 (800) 949-1004 ext. 32245 or ext. 31751

Main Hospital Number: (503) 220-8262

Table of Contents

Low Vision Clinic Overview.....	3
Clinic Mission, Vision, Values, & Goals	3
Contact Information for Staff.....	5
Blind Rehab Continuum of Care	6
The Rehab Process	7
Low Vision Optometry and Therapy	8
Orientation & Mobility.....	9
Health & Safety	10
Rules ABOUT Service Animals	11
Code of Conduct	11
Religious Support.....	11
Retail Store/Canteen.....	12
Transit Overview	12
Public Transit to the Portland Hospital	13
Veterans Transit Service (VTS) to Portland	13
Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Network.....	14
Vancouver Shuttle	15
Address and phone number for each location.....	16
Patient Rights.....	16
Patient Responsibilities.....	21
Veteran Grievance Process.....	22

Advanced Low Vision Clinic Handbook

Welcome to the Advanced Ambulatory Low Vision Clinic (ALVC) at the VA Portland Healthcare System. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of Veterans and Active Duty Military Personnel with significant vision loss not correctable with glasses, including Veterans with functional vision loss from traumatic brain injury and stroke. Services are available at the Portland campus, Vancouver campus, Salem Outpatient Clinic, and Bend Outpatient Clinic. There are no charges for our services or any of the devices we prescribe. If your needs change, you may return to our clinic at any time.

Please read through this handbook prior to your appointment and keep this information in a safe place for future reference.

Our Mission: The mission of the ALVC is to increase Veteran and Active Duty Service Member confidence and quality of life using a rehabilitation process that focuses on independence. This is consistent with the overall Medical Center Mission; honor America's Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. It also fits into the National mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs; to serve America's Veterans and their families with dignity and compassion and to be their principle

advocate in ensuring that they receive the care, support, and recognition earned in service to this Nation.

Our Vision: Continue to be the benchmark of excellence and value in health care and benefits by providing exemplary services that are both patient-centered and evidence based. It will emphasize prevention and population health and contribute to the nation's well-being through education, research and service in National emergencies.

Our Values: The ALVC values of Integrity, Commitment, Advocacy, Respect, and Excellence (I CARE) are reflected in the ALVC mission, vision, and goals, as well as the overall VA commitment to rehabilitation of the Veteran who has a visual impairment.

Our Goal: Our goal is to provide education and training to Veterans and their families so they may reach their low vision rehabilitation needs. Veterans are encouraged to utilize the skills and devices obtained from services to meet their low vision needs at home, work, educational, recreational, and social settings. We strive to minimize the impact of vision loss in order to improve and maintain function, enhance safety and quality of life for Veteran's and their family.

Contact Information for Staff

Director of Low Vision and Blind Rehabilitation Services

VA Portland Healthcare System
Advanced Ambulatory Low Vision Clinic
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.
Portland, OR 97239

(503) 402-2986

Fax: (503) 402-2943

Portland Assistant Chief of Optometry Section

VA Portland Healthcare System
Advanced Ambulatory Low Vision Clinic
3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.
Portland, OR 97239

(503) 220-8262, Ext. 54400

Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist

VA Portland Healthcare System
1601 E Fourth Plain Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98661

(360) 759-1654

Fax: (360) 690-1846

Certified Low Vision Therapist

VA Portland Healthcare System
1601 E Fourth Plain Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98661

(503) 220-3403

Fax: (360) 690-1846

Portland Staff Optometrist

VA Portland Healthcare System
3710 US Veterans Hospital Road, P3-Eye
Portland, OR 97239
(503) 220-8262, Ext. 56197

Salem Staff Optometrist

VA Portland Health Care System
Salem CBOC – Eye Clinic
1750 McGilchrist Street SE, Suite 130
Salem, OR 97302
(971) 304-2294
Fax: 971-304-2205

Bend Staff Optometrist

VA Portland Health Care System
Bend CBOC – Eye Clinic
2650 NE Courtney Dr.
Bend, OR 97701
(541) 647-5278
Fax: (541) 647-5234

Blind Rehabilitation Continuum of Care

The VA provides a continuum of care to provide services close to home and in a timely manner. The Portland Advanced Low Vision Clinic is part of an extended team that provides rehabilitation services to visually impaired Veterans and Active Duty Service Members in the Pacific Northwest. More information about the Blind Rehabilitation Continuum of Care may be obtained at: <http://www1.va.gov/blindrehab/>

You may have been referred to us by your primary care provider, an eye care professional, or by a Visual Impairment Services Team Coordinator. The Low Vision Clinic provides clinical examinations, a full spectrum of adaptive devices, and specialized training in low vision.

The Rehabilitation Process

The Low Vision Program has been developed as a resource for you. We are here to provide information about your eye conditions, provide education on how to adapt to vision loss, and evaluate and train on devices to facilitate everyday functioning.

Low Vision Phone Appointment

We begin with a telephone appointment to complete a low vision questionnaire. The call consists of questions about your vision as well as how your vision affects your daily activities. At the end of the call you will be asked to develop rehab goals related to vision loss.

Your rehabilitation plan is then developed. We view treatment as a partnership and encourage questions and additional goals throughout the process. Family members and significant others are welcome in the appointments as part of your support system.

Low Vision Optometry Appointment

At this appointment a Low Vision Optometrist will check your vision and trial glasses, magnification devices and/or other devices to address your goals. Other factors such as glare, contrast, lighting, eye movements, and visual field loss may be evaluated. The Low Vision Optometrist will determine what additional training or devices may assist you in achieving your goals. Note this appointment generally takes **1-1.5 hours**.

Low Vision Therapy Appointment

About a week after your Low Vision Optometry appointment you will have a **Low Vision Therapy** appointment. You will receive training on the device(s) that were recommended by the Low Vision Optometrist, as well as trial other devices as needed. At this time further assessment may be completed to address any remaining goals. If all of your goals have been met, and you do not require further training, services will be completed at this time. Note this appointment generally takes **1-1.5 hours**.

Length of Training

There is no set limit on the number of **Low Vision Therapy** visits you may need, so further training may be scheduled after the initial follow-up appointment. After completing your training session(s) you may return to the Low Vision Clinic at any time if your goals and needs change.

Training may include:

- Daily Living Skills: eating, meal preparation, medication management, clothing care, dressing, and telling time
- Money Management: reading bills and financial statements, maintaining financial records, writing and managing a checkbook, identifying money and making change
- Functional Communication: Dialing a phone, locating and reading a telephone number, signing your name, writing letters and notes
- Hobbies: Reading, watching television, doing puzzles, playing cards, doing needlework and other crafts, woodworking, sewing, and fishing

Orientation and Mobility

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) instruction teaches principles of safe, independent travel. Training programs are designed around your individual needs and potential for independent travel. Lessons may include human guide techniques, self-protective indoor techniques, detecting curbs, negotiating stairs, managing light and glare, crossing intersections, utilizing public transportation and long cane travel in various environments including residential, business and downtown areas. Depending on your specific needs, instruction with a variety of devices (i.e. Monocular telescopes) as well as techniques to use your vision may be presented.

Health and Safety Information

Hand Washing

In order to prevent the spread of infection, we require that each Veteran wash his or her hands carefully before attending evaluations and training sessions. If water is not available, waterless hand cleanser dispensers are located throughout the VAMC. Staff members are required to wash their hands between every patient contact to stop the spread of germs. Don't be embarrassed to ask staff to wash their hands when entering the evaluation room or treatment session. We take hand washing very seriously. Please let the Program Director know if you have any questions or concerns.

Smoking

All VA facilities are now smoke-free. No smoking or vaping is allowed in, near or around any VA medical facility. This applies to cigarettes, cigars, pipes (including electronic and e- cigarettes), and vape pens or e-cigars. The VA offers resources to quit smoking. Tobacco cessation counseling and medications are provided at all VA medical centers. You may also call 1-855-QUIT-VET or text VET to 47848 or utilize the VA's interactive quite tobacco app <http://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach>.

Fire Safety & Emergency Drills

In case of fire, smoke alarms or other emergencies, staff will instruct and assist Veterans with exiting the building and meeting in a designated spot. Drills may be held during your visits with us.

Prohibited Items

The following items are not permitted on VA grounds: alcohol, illegal drugs, firearms, or other weapons.

Dog Guides

Only Service Dogs are allowed at VAPORHCS. ALL animals are restricted from dental areas & where invasive procedures are performed.

(Ref. 38 CFR 1.218(a)(11) and VHA Directive 1188)

Code of Conduct

All patients and staff of the VA Portland Health Care System are expected to conduct themselves to socially acceptable standards. It is expected that we treat each other with dignity and respect at all times. Aggressiveness or inappropriate behavior of any kind will not be tolerated and may result in immediate discharge (see Patient Rights and Responsibilities).

Religious Support

A chaplain is available at the Portland and Vancouver sites and through telehealth at Community Based Outpatient Clinics. We will help accommodate your requests if you need to be in contact with a chaplain.

Retail Store/Canteen

A retail store and canteen are available at both the Portland and the Vancouver campuses. The retail stores carry a variety of items including personal care, cards, snacks, soft drinks, clothing, batteries, electronics and seasonal items.

Portland Campus

Retail Store: Building 100, 1st floor

Food Court: Building 100, 1st floor, near Retail Store

Vending machines in the dining area: Open 24 hours

Vancouver Campus

Retail/Canteen: Building 15, Room 200

Vending machines in the dining area: Open 24 hours

Please note: There are no retail/canteen services at the Salem and Bend CBOC's

Transportation

Use this link for more information on transportation (<https://www.portland.va.gov/VTP/index.asp>)

Free parking is available at all locations.

A free shuttle service is available between the Portland and Vancouver campuses.

Public Transportation to the Portland Hospital:

TRI-MET bus #8 runs about every 20 minutes from Downtown to the VA Hospital.

Other Transportation Options for Portland:

**Veterans Transportation Service (VTS):
Contact VTS at (503) 273-5044 for reservations.**

VTS is a VA program designed to increase access to VA funded medical care. The program operates within a 20-mile radius of the Portland VA Medical Center and can transport both ambulatory and non-ambulatory Veterans.

Unlike the travel eligibility requirements associated with transportation reimbursed through Beneficiary Travel, VTS has no eligibility requirements other than a Veteran needing transportation for medical treatment and a verified VA medical appointment.

VTS operates as follows:

- Office Hours: 4 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday thru Friday
- Reservations are required and scheduled based on need
- Reserve your ride as soon as you make your medical appointment and no later than four business days prior

- Your scheduled pick-up time may be significantly earlier than requested depending on the transportation needs of other Veterans.
- Vehicle operators must be able to park their vehicles in a safe location that does not block or impede traffic, allows the operator to maintain sight of vehicle at all times and has an accessible path of travel

What you need to know:

- Other Veterans share the ride
- Vehicles may travel in several directions during your trip and make stops to serve other Veterans
- Travel time will vary based on trip distance, traffic conditions and other Veterans being served
- Please be ready to leave at your scheduled pick-up time
- Veterans are advised to bring sufficient medications and drinks/snacks as may be needed throughout the day

Other Transportation Options for Portland:

Disabled American Veterans (DAV):
Through the Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN), VA volunteers transport Veterans to and from VA medical facilities for treatment.

All rides must be scheduled at least four days in advance by calling (503) 721-7804.

AREA	PHONE
Portland DAV	(800) 949-1004 Ext. 57804 or call (503) 721-7804
Roseburg DAV	(800) 549-8387 Ext. 44358 or (541) 440-1293
Southern Oregon DAV	(541) 826-2111 Ext.3619
Bend (local rides only)	(541) 678-5457

DAV Vans are NOT Wheelchair Accessible and are not equipped to carry oxygen canisters larger than can be carried in a sling or backpack. DAV riders MUST be able to access/egress vehicles without any assistance.

Vancouver Shuttle

The VA Portland Medical Center Shuttle is a service established between the Portland and Vancouver campuses to facilitate patient transport for patient care needs.

For the latest schedule, please visit

www.portland.va.gov/VTP/Shuttle_Service.asp

Locations (For printed directions call (360) 905-1751)

VA Portland Healthcare System

3710 SW Veterans Hospital Road
Portland, OR 97239
Building 100, Floor 8C
Phone: 503-220-8262

Vancouver Clinic:

1601 E Fourth Plain Blvd.
Vancouver WA 98661
Building 17, 3rd Floor
Phone: 360-696-4061

Salem Community Based Outpatient Clinic:

1750 McGilchrist St. SE, Suite 130
Salem, OR 97302
Phone: 971-304-2283

Bend Community Based Outpatient Clinic:

2650 NE Courtney Dr
Bend, OR 97701
Phone: 541-647-5268

Patient Rights

The Department of Veterans Affairs respects the rights of the patient, recognizes that each patient is an individual with unique health needs, and because of the importance of respecting each patient's personal dignity, provides considerate, respectful care focused

upon the patient's individual needs. The Department of Veterans Affairs assists the patient in the exercise of his or her rights and informs the patient of any responsibilities incumbent upon him or her in the exercise of those rights.

The following list of Patient Rights are assured for each patient unless medically contraindicated. You have the right to consent to or refuse recommended treatment and to be informed of the medical consequences of such refusal. This facility has in place mechanisms for the consideration of ethical issues arising in the care of patients and to provide education to caregivers and patients on ethical issues in health care. You have the right to present grievances if you feel these rights have not been provided.

Your Rights

1. You will be treated with dignity, courtesy, compassion, and respect. Your privacy will be protected, and you will receive care in a safe environment. We will seek to honor your personal values and beliefs, regardless of race, creed, sex, religion, national origin, or handicap.
2. You will receive clinically appropriate treatment for your health care needs. You, and any persons you choose, will be involved in decisions regarding your care.

3. You will be given the name and professional title of the provider in charge of your care. You will be informed of the benefits and risks of treatment as well as the consequences of non-treatment. You may choose to consent to or refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law.

4. You have the right to have your pain assessed and to receive treatment to manage your pain.

5. Your medical record will be kept confidential. Information about you will not be released without your consent unless the medical facility is legally authorized to provide information about you or your care to another agency. You have the right to see your records, comment, and request correction of your personal health information. Data about your care may be grouped with data from other patients, excluding your name and personal information, to allow us to study the quality of care we provide.

6. You have the right to determine whether or not you will participate in any research or educational projects that affect your care or treatment. You will be made aware of how any information collected about you will be used.

7. You have the right to complete Advance Directives (to plan and decide in advance what your wishes would be if faced with a life/death situation, an

unexpected death, or a terminal illness) if you wish. You may name someone else to make health care decisions for you in case you become unable to do so for yourself.

8. You may consult with the medical facility's ethics advisory committee if you are unable to resolve an ethical dilemma in your care.

9. You have the right to express a complaint and receive prompt attention to your concerns without fear of reprisal or your access to care being compromised. You have the right to pursue resolution of problems or complaints with your Primary Care Provider, treatment team, and/or a Patient Advocate.

10. You have the right to protective services if you and/or the medical facility believe that you have been the victim of neglect, abuse, or exploitation.

11. You have the right to receive information about financial costs related to your care before you are treated.

12. You will retain your legal rights while hospitalized except where State law provides otherwise.

13. You have the right to communicate freely and privately with people. You may have or refuse visitors. You will have access to public telephones for making and receiving calls.

14. You may write letters and may receive help in writing letters if needed.

15. You will be allowed to wear your own clothes and to keep personal possessions based on your medical condition and facility rules.

16. You have the right to keep and spend your own money. You also have the right to receive an accounting of VA held funds.

17. Your mental, emotional, social, spiritual, and cultural needs will be considered. You will have the opportunity for religious worship, spiritual support, social interaction, and regular exercise.

18. You have the right to freedom from chemical or physical restraint, unless clinically required. You have the right to be free from unnecessary or excessive medication.

19. You may decide whether or not to participate in social, spiritual, or community activities. You may decide whether or not to perform tasks in or for the medical center-unless your treatment program requires it.

Patient Responsibilities

Your complying with the following list of Patient Responsibilities is necessary to assure you of the highest quality care. It shows the importance of your contribution to your care.

You are responsible for the following:

1. To follow all of the Medical Center's safety rules and posted signs.
2. To be considerate and respectful of all medical center personnel and other patients.
3. To cooperate with your treatment staff. If you have questions or disagree with your treatment plan, you are responsible for discussing it with your treatment staff.
4. Try to prevent injury to yourself, other patients, visitors, and staff members by your own actions and to be responsible for the safekeeping of clothing, money, and personal possessions you choose to keep with you while you are in this facility.
5. To make all of your scheduled diagnostic or treatment appointments on time.
6. To avoid interfering with treatment of other patients, particularly in emergency situations.

7. To assist by alerting staff when another patient is having any difficulty.
8. To tell your visitors to be considerate of the patients and medical center personnel and to observe the visiting hours.
9. To be understanding and patient if you encounter delays.
10. To make sure you understand what medications you must take following discharge from the medical center and whether you are scheduled for outpatient follow-up visit(s)
11. You are responsible for sharing complete and accurate information about your medical condition with your health care providers.

Veteran Grievance Process

It is the intent and practice of VA Portland Health Care System to be responsive and sensitive toward the concerns of patients, their families, and outside advocates who operate on the patient's behalf.

If you have a grievance, please talk first with staff at the point of care. If you are unable to resolve your concern, then please talk with the Director of the Low Vision Clinic. Our team will work with you to resolve any issues within three business days of your

grievance. If you feel that you are not able to resolve your concern within the Low Vision Clinic, there is a Patient Advocate available to assist you with prompt consideration and a timely written response with notification regarding actions to be taken (within 30 business days). There will be absolutely no retaliation or withholding of services in response to any grievance.

Patients also have the right to express concerns or grievances and make appeals directly to Medical Center Management after attempts at resolution through the Patient Advocate and team leader for customer service have been unsuccessful. Every effort is made to resolve concerns in as informal a manner as possible and as quickly as possible.

The Patient Advocates at the VA Portland Health Care System may be reached by dialing:
(503) 273-5308

The Patient Advocates are available in the Release of Information office, building 101, room 123 in Portland and in Building 11, reception waiting area in Vancouver Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Patients may leave a voice message for the Patient Advocate or they may talk with the Administrative Officer of the Day (AOD) on holidays, weekends and after administrative hours.