



## Help for Veterans with vision loss

Many veterans of military service do not realize that help for their vision loss may be available through the Veterans Administration. Vision loss may be covered, and much help obtained, even if vision loss is not service connected. Low vision resulting from macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease, glaucoma, etc. may be covered by the VA.

The VA has a “Vision Impaired Service Team”, or “VIST” group led by VIST coordinators. Their sole job is to help the visually impaired .The number of VIST coordinators has increased in the last few years. Despite the recent bad publicity that VA medical services have had, the VIST coordinators and their services have steadily improved. The number of VIST counselors has increased, and they are dedicated, compassionate professionals who are able to help almost any eligible veteran.

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In our area we are we are lucky to have three excellent VIST coordinators, who work closely with us to help any v eligible veteran.

Mobile, west Baldwin County and the Mississippi Gulf coast- Susan Guillory

**1-228-385-6762**

East Baldwin County and Northwest Florida- Scott Turner

**1-850-912-2552**

Central Alabama- Debra Tazewell

**1-334-727-0550 ext:3458**

If you are a veteran and have vision loss, come and see us at CSV. After a full evaluation, we will make recommendations to the VIST Coordinator and help you obtain whatever will be best for you.

## Blind Rehabilitation Centers (BRCs)

The VA maintains 10 “Blind Rehabilitation Centers” in the United States. These are specialized in-patient facilities, fully staffed with optometrists, occupational therapists, assistive technology specialists and others. They provide:

- Orientation and mobility
- Communication skills
- Activities of daily living
- Manual skills Visual skills
- Computer access training
- Social/recreational activities
- And others

We have two BRCs relatively close –one in Birmingham and a new one in Biloxi. Our patients who have gone through these centers have been very happy. They have received excellent training and are uniformly happy with their care.

So, if you are a veteran with vision loss, even if not service connected, consider seeing us at CSVN for an evaluation and referral to VIST services.

Thank you for your service.