




## In-Person Services Resume August 9th



**IN-PERSON SERVICES ARE BACK!**  
BEGINNING AUGUST 9, 2021  
[WWW.MASS.GOV/MCB](http://WWW.MASS.GOV/MCB)

1-800-392-6450      [MCBINFO@MASS.GOV](mailto:MCBINFO@MASS.GOV)

We are pleased to **announce a return to in-person services** effective **Monday, August 9, 2021**. On that date, MCB will be implementing a new hybrid work model for our team in alignment with the overall Future of Work initiative which enables Executive Branch employees to effectively reintegrate in-person, virtual, and in-office activities.

### Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment Update

Our community has experienced employment challenges due to COVID-19, but we are inspired by the resilience of the people we serve. We are motivated to continue to provide employment-related services to participants who are a part of our **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** program. Our team works to ensure individuals who are blind, visually impaired, and DeafBlind are prepared for career opportunities, along with helping to form connections with employer partners in the Commonwealth who are committed to inclusion and accessibility.



We have an **Employment Services** team who work cooperatively with our VR Counselors to provide services including resume development, mock interviewing, networking strategy, internship opportunities, soft skills training, job fair connections, and more.

Nearly 70 individuals participated in our 18th annual MCB Internship Program this year, joining a group of more than 700 interns who have been a part of the program since it began. The virtual opening ceremony in June featured a great keynote speaker, a panel from our community to answer questions from current interns, and an announcement about our Reach for the Stars contest which prompted interns to develop 60-second elevator pitches for the chance to win prizes. During the closing ceremony in August, winners will be announced, along with the 2021 Employer of the Year.

Since July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, we have achieved 158 job placements with both large and small employers. MCB exceeded the previous year's placement rate by 25 percent. During a period when many communities were experiencing job loss, MCB staff were able to pivot quickly. The latest mobile technology, strong partnerships with employers, mentoring opportunities for consumers, innovative employment training

programs ([Employment Now Initiative – Polus Center](#)) and our nationally recognized internship program, allowed MCB’s consumers to obtain some new employment opportunities. As the economy reopens and telework or hybrid employment opportunities are developed, we anticipate that MCB’s VR team and the Employment Services Unit will have MCB’s consumers poised for new employment options and successes during the remainder of this year.



Recently, you may have seen or heard our [“What’s Your Vision?”](#) advertisements that will run through October during National Disability Employment Awareness Month. These ads include successful members of our community and serve to motivate peers to conceive of employment as an achievable goal. The campaign has increased engagement with individuals and their families, as well as outreach to eye care providers and employers in Massachusetts, because together, all play a vital role in creating successful employment outcomes for individuals.

We have several upcoming events with our VR and Employment Services team including a [Visions of Employment](#) webinar for employers on Friday, September 10th from 9 to 11 a.m. EST. New employer partners will learn how MCB makes hiring easy and meet successful employers who worked with us to hire people who are blind and visually impaired. Plus, employers will get support before the [Virtual Job Fair](#) with MCB on October 1st. Please email [Carol.Cullins@mass.gov](mailto:Carol.Cullins@mass.gov) for more information.

Also, we hope that you received our recent announcement regarding our return to in-person services effective **Monday, August 9, 2021**. On that date, MCB will be implementing a new hybrid work model for our team in alignment with the overall Future of Work initiative which enables Executive Branch employees to effectively reintegrate in-person, virtual, and in-office activities.

All MCB offices will adhere to the workplace safety standards established by the Baker-Polito Administration’s [Reopening Advisory Board](#). Our MCB hours of operation are Monday thru Friday from 8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST with office locations in Boston and Springfield. Staff will schedule appointments with individuals we serve either in-person at an agreed upon location or remotely depending on need. For more information, visit [www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb).

Please let us know if you have questions during this transition, and we look forward to working with you to make your individual experience with MCB safe, positive, and effective.

Sign up for emails or opt-in for phone notifications from MCB to learn the latest at [www.Mass.gov/MCB](http://www.Mass.gov/MCB). Please connect with your Counselor if assistance is needed. We are grateful to work with such a talented group of individuals and dedicated group of employers. We look forward to a successful end of the year for VR at MCB!

Sincerely,  
Deputy Commissioner John Oliveira

## [AIM LIBRARY ANNOUNCEMENT](#)

MCB and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Partner to Ensure Continued Operation of the Accessible Instructions Materials (AIM) Library for

## COMMUNITY INSPIRATION

Meet a professor and artist who doesn't let vision loss define him. Learn how Bill Porter found his purpose through art despite being diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa. Bill credits **MCB, The Carroll Center for the Blind** and the **Massachusetts Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (MABVI)** for helping him learn new skills and technologies.



## NEED A CERTIFICATE OF BLINDNESS OR BLINDNESS ID?

Call 617-626-7415 or email [BlindnessRegistry@mass.gov](mailto:BlindnessRegistry@mass.gov).

Connect via the [Virtual Blindness Registry](#) Mon. thru Fri. from 10 am to 1 pm ET.



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Meet Linda Geary, a MCB Children's Services Worker on the Cape and South Shore, who has provided services to individuals who are blind and visually impaired for 43 years. Linda says that her favorite part of the job is traveling to meet with families in person at their homes for discussions about services and more. Thank you for your dedication to our community, Linda!

## MAKING THE GRADE

*For Parents & Caregivers of Students who are Blind & Visually Impaired in Boston Public Schools*

Please join MCB, New England College of Optometry, and Boston Public Schools on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. EST for a virtual program called "Making the Grade."

Learn about best practices and resources from professionals in the community, including Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialists (COMS).

[Register to Attend](#)

## MAKING THE GRADE

*A Virtual Program for Parents & Caregivers of Students who are Blind & Visually Impaired in Boston Public Schools*

Register to attend by Wednesday, October 6th to be eligible for a gift card contest!



Register Now to Attend

Wednesday, October 20, 2021  
6:30 to 8:00 pm EST

Register: [www.mass.gov/mcb](http://www.mass.gov/mcb)

More Info: 1-800-392-6450 or [MCBinfo@mass.gov](mailto:MCBinfo@mass.gov)



**NECO**

New England College of Optometry



## OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

REGION 1 ANNUAL PICNIC - Food & fun at Look Park on Fri., Aug. 20th at 10 a.m. ET

EMPLOYER WEBINAR - Join employer partners Fri., Sept. 10th from 9 to 11 a.m. ET

ANNUAL JOB FAIR - Connect with job seekers on Fri., Oct. 1st from 9 to 11 a.m. ET

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL - Talk transportation on Thurs., Oct. 7th from 12 to 1:30 p.m. ET

**MBTA CONTINUING TO ADD SERVICES BACK THIS FALL**

**The MBTA is continuing to add services across the system to support increased travel across the region this fall.**

Subway and Bus service changes will be effective on **August 29, 2021**, and schedules will be posted in mid-August.

To share more information about these service changes, the MBTA will be holding a public meeting on **August 5, 2021 at 6:00pm**. **[Register for the meeting](#)**.

For more information about the MBTA Fall Service Changes, please visit: **[www.mbta.com/servicechanges](http://www.mbta.com/servicechanges)**.

