

## For Immediate Release

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## The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired South Carolina Expands Virtual and Online Training Opportunities

**Charleston, SC** – The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired South Carolina (ABVI) recently announced the launch of virtual vision rehabilitation training for adults who are blind or visually impaired. As our offices continue to be closed for in-person trainings, we have been able to add additional virtual training classes as well as online learning opportunities to expand offerings to our clients in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties.

“The response to our new virtual training program has been overwhelmingly positive. Over the last month, we have seen participation continue to grow among existing and new clients,” said Courtney Plotner, ABVI President and CEO. “While these virtual opportunities were launched in response to the current pandemic, based on the feedback we have received from our clients, we plan to continue offering them moving forward. Virtual training helps remove transportation barriers for clients who do not live close to one of our training facilities as well as expand the number of clients we can serve in the Tri-County.”

Adults who are blind and visually impaired come to ABVI to gain independence and learn how to navigate their daily lives. In April, ABVI began offering vision rehabilitation training in four areas, but we are now able to provide almost all our classes through the virtual program. In addition, we have launched a new, educational webinar series that runs weekly through May. Below is a full list of our virtual and online training opportunities.

### Virtual Vision Rehabilitation Training

- **Activities of Daily Living** (health management, personal self-care, medication management, kitchen safety and more)
- **Assistive Technology Tutoring** (iPads, iPhones and video magnifiers)
- **Braille** (grades 1 and 2 offered)
- **Client Connections** (ABVI is offering group therapy, cooking class and book club through Zoom meetings and/or conference calls.)
- **Computer Training** (JAWS, ZoomText, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Office and typing)
- **Peer-to-Peer Mentoring** (connecting new clients with an existing client for mentoring)

### Vision Rehabilitation Webinar Series

ABVI’s new webinar series is hosted by Samantha McGovern, ABVI’s Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist and Certified Low Vision Therapist, every Wednesday at 11am. Below is a list of the topics that will be discussed in May:

- **May 6, 2020 – Interactive Cooking\***
- **May 13, 2020 – Managing Emotions**
- **May 20, 2020 – Tips for Staying Busy**
- **May 27, 2020 – Self Advocacy**

*\*The interactive cooking webinar will be a joint session with local chef Stephen Harman through Client Connections.*

To RSVP, please email [info@abvisc.org](mailto:info@abvisc.org) or call 843.723.6915. A full list of upcoming and past webinars can be found online at [www.abvisc.org/webinars](http://www.abvisc.org/webinars).

“It is our goal to get to the other side of the pandemic whole so we can continue to provide the critical independence training our Tri-County neighbors need,” said Plotner. “We are so grateful to all of our donors and partners who have supported us during this time. In addition, we are looking forward to participating in #GivingTuesdayNow to ensure we can continue to serve our clients now and beyond this pandemic.”

#GivingTuesdayNow is a new global day of giving and unity that will take place on May 5, 2020 – in addition to the regularly scheduled Dec 1, 2020 #GivingTuesday – as an emergency response to the unprecedented need caused by COVID-19. To support our #GivingTuesdayNow campaign, or to learn more about additional ways to support ABVI including volunteer and advocacy opportunities, please visit, [www.abvisc.org/relief-campaign/](http://www.abvisc.org/relief-campaign/).

To learn more about ABVI’s virtual training, webinars or to request a client application, please email [info@abvisc.org](mailto:info@abvisc.org), call 843.723.6915 or visit [www.abvisc.org](http://www.abvisc.org).

### **About the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired South Carolina**

The Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired South Carolina’s (ABVI) mission is to enrich the quality of life of the blind and visually impaired. Through our *Own Your Life* program, ABVI helps adults who are blind and visually impaired in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester Counties learn new approaches to daily life. ***Own Your Life offers two tracks: Personal Independence*** teaches adults how to navigate daily life with a visual impairment, while ***Vocational Rehabilitation*** helps clients who are ready to learn the adaptive skills needed to enter or re-enter the workforce. To learn more about ABVI’s services, visit [www.abvisc.org/services](http://www.abvisc.org/services).