

Florida's Entrepreneurship Program For The Visually Impaired

The Florida Division of Blind Services Business Enterprise Program provides entrepreneurs who are blind and visually impaired with rewarding careers and financial independence.



What is the Business Enterprise Program?

- The Florida Business Enterprise Program (BEP) administers one of the largest vending and food service training and job placement programs in the United States for people who are legally blind.
- Through job opportunities in a wide range of business operations, vendors who are blind and visually impaired can broaden their economic opportunities and become self-supporting entrepreneurs.
- Government and private locations can receive quality services provided by a licensed blind vendor from their area. Under the Federal Randolph Sheppard Act and supporting Florida legislation, we provide these vendors training, equipment and startup costs, as well as ongoing support.

Experience and success

- With annual gross sales nearing **\$24 million**, Florida-licensed blind vendors focus on service to succeed.
- Always growing, the program has **110+ trained** and licensed blind business operators throughout Florida.
- Through contracts with leading suppliers, the BEP brings state-of-the-art equipment to breakrooms and offices.
- With cashless vending, smartphone integrations and micro markets with healthier offerings, BEP training keeps vendors modern.

BEP vendors can provide:



Vending



Micro markets



Food service



Military dining



Cafés, coffee shops & other unique services

How does the Florida BEP program work?

- Our agency contracts directly with host locations for various services. These services are provided directly by blind vendors who undergo various vocational assessments and background screening.
- All vendors complete 18 weeks of classroom and hands-on training at the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Daytona Beach.
- Modules include vending operations, record keeping, food prep and safety, customer service and business management.
- Coursework is followed by six to 10 weeks of on-the-job training with other successful blind vendors.
- BEP vendors compete for business opportunities through a points-driven application process that evaluates performance, skills and experience.

Program oversight and facility management

- BEP licensed vendors are independent contractors who profit directly from the success of their business operations and their own hard work.
- Regional business consultants provide continual help and support to enhance a vendor's success and maintain service standards.
- Additional BEP staff provide contract monitoring, financial and service-related audits, and continued work to acquire new business opportunities and maintain relationships with facility management.
- Licensed blind vendors continue vocational growth through training, including equipment workshops, educational seminars and regular performance evaluations.



Learn more at Blindvendingfl.com

