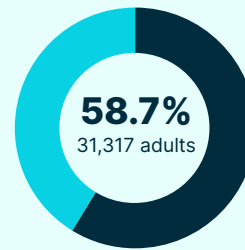


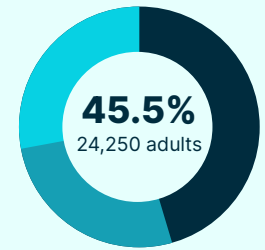
# Living with Vision Loss in Philadelphia

**53,351** adults in Philadelphia aged 18 and older, or **4.3%**, have a vision difficulty, defined as being “blind or having serious difficulty seeing, even when wearing glasses,” while the national rate is 2.8%.

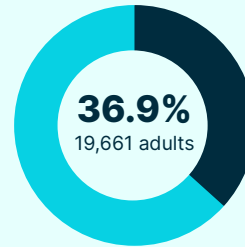
In Philadelphia, there is a strong correlation between neighborhood poverty and the prevalence of blindness. Plus, those with vision impairment are more likely to have overlapping health, social, and functional needs.<sup>1</sup> VisionLink has a client-centered focus to help Philadelphians facing vision loss navigate their every day and live as independently as they wish.



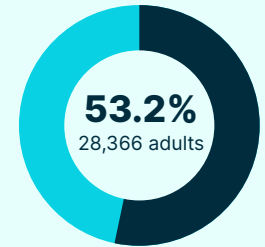
are women



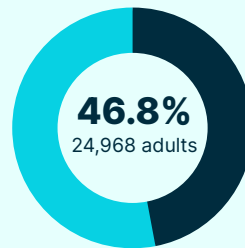
are Black/African American;  
27.6% are White



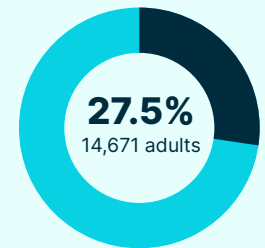
are seniors aged  
65 years or older



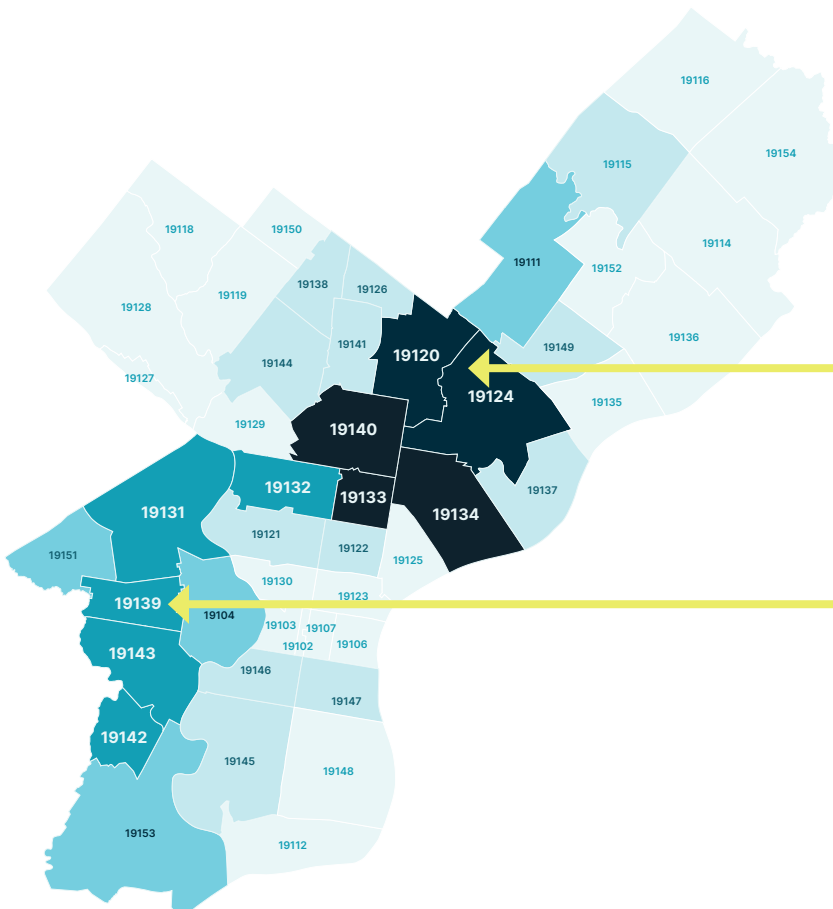
received food stamps  
or SNAP benefits<sup>2</sup>



have an independent  
living difficulty



live alone



## Vision Difficulty in Philadelphia

The number and percentage of adults with a vision difficulty vary greatly by neighborhood, but the data shows clusters of neighborhoods that define areas of greater need.

### North Philadelphia

Port Richmond, Nicetown, North Philadelphia (East), Olney, and Northeast-Frankford share both higher rates of vision difficulty among adults and higher rates of poverty.

### West & Southwest Philadelphia

Wynnefield/West Park, West Market, Kingsessing, and Paschall/Elmwood also have higher rates of adults with vision difficulties.



Connecting people with vision loss to resources for life.

# VisionLink

connects adults with vision loss in Philadelphia to resources for life.



## Independent Living Services

We offer personal and group instruction in Vision Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT), Orientation & Mobility (O&M), and Assistive Technology. VRT instructors teach non-visual skills in areas such as meal preparation, home management, shopping, handling currency, and identifying medications. We provide individualized O&M or white cane training in the community. Assistive Technology courses develop client proficiency with iPhones, iPads and devices such as Amazon Alexa, Google Home, and computers to access an array of voice-activated apps that assist with independent living.



## Community Education and Outreach

We connect clients to their communities in ways that develop skills and solve problems for more independent living, enrich experiences, and reduce social isolation. We work with more than 40 community collaborators, including medical providers and organizations that address housing, employment, healthcare and social services, as well as cultural enrichment. We place clients in direct contact with the services and resources they need and want, and we provide training to help organizations become more accessible for people with vision loss.



## Low Vision Resource Center

Clients receive one-on-one consultation and instruction and informed, warm referrals to wraparound medical and social services depending on their individual needs and situation. Through the Center, clients also have access to adaptive devices and equipment for demonstration and purchase, such as iPhones, magnifiers, bump dots, liquid levelers, and more.

For those with economic challenges, we offer financial assistance to offset the cost of adaptive devices, technology, and equipment as the administrators of the Philadelphia Lighthouse for the Blind.

For more information about our services, to enroll in our programs, or to refer a client, patient or family member, please visit [visionlinkphl.org](http://visionlinkphl.org) or call 215-627-0600, ext. 826.

About this flyer: In August 2024, The Research and Evaluation Group at Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) conducted external research activities for VisionLink to document information related to Philadelphia's visually impaired population. Funding for this work was provided to VisionLink by the Independence Blue Cross Foundation (IBX Foundation).

To read the full report visit [visionlinkphl.org/vision-impairment-in-philadelphia.pdf](http://visionlinkphl.org/vision-impairment-in-philadelphia.pdf).

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). Vision Health Initiative (VHI).
2. Saydah et al, *Eye Care Among US Adults at High Risk for Vision Loss in the United States in 2002 and 2017*.