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Professional Certificate in Orientation and Mobility for Visual Impairments

## Cane Techniques and Skills

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### \*\*A\*\*

**Alphabet Cane:** A long, lightweight cane used by individuals with visual impairments to detect objects and obstacles in their path. The cane has a single touch contact point and is typically made of fiberglass or carbon fiber. It is called an "alphabet cane" because it can be shaped into the letters of the alphabet to communicate specific information about the user's mobility needs.

### \*\*B\*\*

**Bell:** A small, handheld device that emits a loud, distinctive sound. Individuals with visual impairments may use a bell to alert others to their presence and to signal their need for assistance. Bells are often used in conjunction with a white cane or guide dog.

**Braille:** A system of raised dots that can be read by touch. Braille is used to represent the letters of the alphabet, numbers, and punctuation marks. It is an essential tool for individuals with visual impairments, allowing them to read and write independently.

### \*\*C\*\*

**Cane techniques:** The specific ways in which a white cane is used to navigate the environment. There are several different cane techniques, including the two-point touch technique, the constant contact technique, and the swing and tap technique. These techniques allow individuals with visual impairments to safely and efficiently move through their surroundings.

**Ceramic discs:** Small, flat discs made of ceramic material that are attached to the end of a white cane. Ceramic discs provide a more stable and durable contact point than rubber tips, and they produce a distinctive sound when the cane is tapped on the ground.

### \*\*G\*\*

**Guide dog:** A trained service animal that assists individuals with visual impairments in navigating their environment. Guide dogs are highly skilled and can help their handlers to avoid obstacles, cross streets safely, and complete a variety of other tasks.

### \*\*H\*\*

**Human guide:** A sighted person who provides assistance to an individual with a visual impairment by guiding them through their environment. A human guide may be a friend, family member, or professional trained in orientation and mobility.

### \*\*O\*\*

**Orientation and mobility:** The skills and techniques used by individuals with visual impairments to navigate their environment. Orientation refers to the ability to understand one's location and the relationship between different landmarks, while mobility refers to the ability to move safely and efficiently through the environment.

**Obstacle detection cane:** A specialized type of white cane that is designed to detect obstacles at knee level and above. Obstacle detection canes are typically made of flexible materials and have a rolling or rotating contact point that allows them to sweep smoothly across the ground.

**\*\*R\*\***

**Red and white cane:** A type of white cane that has a red stripe or section. The red and white cane is used to indicate that the user is both visually impaired and hearing impaired.

**\*\*S\*\***

**Symbol cane:** A type of white cane that has a symbol or emblem attached to the end. The symbol cane is used to indicate that the user is visually impaired and may need assistance or accommodations. Common symbols include the international "blind" symbol (a person with a white cane on a blue background) and the guide dog symbol (a dog with a harness).

**\*\*T\*\***

**Tactile paving:** Special paving materials that have a distinctive texture or pattern. Tactile paving is used to provide tactile cues to individuals with visual impairments, helping them to navigate their environment. Common uses of tactile paving include the edges of train platforms, the tops of curbs, and the bases of pedestrian crossings.

**Traffic signals for the visually impaired:** Special traffic signals that are designed to provide auditory or tactile cues to individuals with visual impairments. These signals may emit a distinctive sound or vibration when it is safe to cross the street, allowing visually impaired individuals to cross safely and independently.

**\*\*W\*\***

**White cane:** A long, lightweight cane used by individuals with visual impairments to detect objects and obstacles in their path. The cane is typically made of fiberglass or carbon fiber and has a single touch contact point. It is called a "white cane" because it is traditionally painted white, which serves as a visible indication that the user is visually impaired.

**White cane laws:** Laws that provide certain rights and protections to individuals who use white canes to navigate their environment. White cane laws typically require drivers to yield the right of way to pedestrians who are using white canes, and may also provide for penalties for drivers who fail to do so. White cane laws vary by country and jurisdiction.