



Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired Receives Full AER Accreditation

Miami, FL – Jan. 28, 2026 — Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired has recently been awarded full accreditation by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) Accreditation Council for excellence in management and high-quality services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

Full accreditation was granted for all 12 of their programs including: Assistive Technology Instruction; Blindness Prevention; Community Integration Services; Early Intervention; Itinerant Services; K–12 Programs; Low Vision Clinic; Orientation and Mobility; Outreach; Preschool Programs; Recreation; and Vision Rehabilitation Therapy.

The AER Accreditation Program continues a commitment first established in 1962 by the Commission on Standards and Accreditation of Services to the Blind, in direct response to increased federal attention to consumer rights and the growing need for high-quality rehabilitation and educational services for individuals with vision loss. Current U.S. projections indicate an increase of 118%, to 25 million people, who will require vision rehabilitation services by the year 2050.

“This accreditation of all programs affirms our unwavering commitment to quality, innovation, and accountability in serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired, from infants to seniors,” said Virginia Jacko, President and CEO of Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. “Our team works tirelessly to ensure that every person we serve has access to education, independence, and opportunity. We are proud that our programs, leadership, and outcomes have been recognized as meeting and exceeding the highest national standards.”

Miami Lighthouse has been continuously accredited since 1978 and is internationally recognized as a Center of Excellence in Vision Rehabilitation. The recent five-year accreditation review included an expanded panel of certified professionals and executive leaders who evaluated management practices, conducted virtual site visits, and interviewed leadership, staff, consumers, and community stakeholders.

The AER review panel commended Miami Lighthouse for its timely and thorough responsiveness, effective coordination with reviewers, and impressive Assistive Technology

program inventory, noting the scope and complexity of programs offered. In 2025 alone, Miami Lighthouse and its subsidiaries served 35,547 program participants through no-cost services delivered locally, statewide, nationally, and internationally.

Adding to the organization's excellence, their subsidiary, Miami Lighthouse Academy, is an Accredited Professional Preschool Learning Environment (APPLE), a designation awarded only to early learning centers that meet rigorous national standards for high-quality instruction, safety, and early childhood development. The Academy is also recognized by the Florida Gold Seal Quality Care Program, a state designation honoring only those providers that demonstrate the highest levels of quality in early learning. These Miami Lighthouse Academy accreditations affirm the delivery of exceptional learning in an educational environment for young learners, including children who are blind or visually impaired.

About Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Founded in 1930, Miami Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to building a more inclusive and equitable society in which people who are blind or visually impaired can thrive, remain independent, and lead productive lives. Through education, training, research, and vision enhancement, Miami Lighthouse provides comprehensive, no-cost programs spanning early childhood through adulthood, including vision rehabilitation, education, employment readiness, technology literacy, and critical eye care. As the sole provider of professional vision rehabilitation services in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties and the statewide provider of blindness prevention services, Miami Lighthouse is nationally and internationally recognized as a Center of Excellence in Vision Rehabilitation and has been continuously accredited since 1978.

Contact:

Virginia A. Jacko

President and Chief Executive Officer

Miami Lighthouse for the Blind & Visually Impaired, Inc.

President, Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, LLC

President & Founder Miami Lighthouse Academy, LLC

vjacko@miamilighthouse.org

(305) 856-4176