



## **Perkins School for the Blind Braille & Talking Book Library**

175 North Beacon Street  
Watertown, MA 02472-2790

**Phone:** 1-800-852-3133 or 617-972-7240

**Fax:** 617-972-7363

**TTY:** 617-972-7690

**Email:** [library@perkins.org](mailto:library@perkins.org)

**Website:** [www.perkinslibrary.org](http://www.perkinslibrary.org)

## **WHO WE ARE**

The Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) loans braille and recorded reading materials, and the player for the special four-track audio tapes, to eligible individuals who are unable to read print materials due to a visual, physical or reading disability and to organizations that serve them. One of the first libraries of its kind for the blind in the United States, the Braille and Talking Book Library was established in 1835 by the Perkins School for the Blind as one of its programs. In 1931, the BTBL became affiliated with the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress. State funding for the Library program is provided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, along with additional private support through the Perkins School for the Blind.

## **WHAT WE PROVIDE**

Upon approval of your application, books and equipment will be sent to you as often as you wish. The Library will also supply the special cassette player you need and mail it right to your door. There is no charge for any of the Library's services. All materials can be easily returned through the U.S. mail, postage free.

In addition to recorded books and magazines, the collection includes large print books, as well as braille books and magazines.

The Library also offers audio described videos. These videos contain an additional audio track that describes the key visual elements of the film for individuals unable to see the action on the screen.

## **READING MATERIALS**

The Library loans books in a wide array of different subject categories, spanning everything from classics to recent bestsellers in English and many other foreign languages. Books for both adults and children are available in braille, large print or on cassette. The Library also offers a selection of over 90 magazines on either cassette or in braille. For information on sources for recorded textbooks, contact the Library.

## **NEWSLINE AUDIO NEWSPAPER SERVICE**

NEWSLINE is an electronic system that allows users to listen to newspapers and magazines through synthetic voice output via any touch-tone telephone. It is free of charge to registered Library patrons and is accessed by calling either a local or toll-free telephone number.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Because our books are recorded at a slower speed on 4-track cassettes, we will loan our special cassette player to you, free of charge. Individuals borrowing equipment and materials are responsible for the equipment loaned to them, and must return the equipment to the BTBL if it is no longer needed.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE**

An individual is eligible if he or she:

- is legally blind with vision of 20/200 or less, or has a visual field no greater than 20 degrees
- is unable to see well enough to read with comfort for extended periods of time, even with correction
- has a physical limitation that makes holding a book or turning pages difficult
- is certified by a medical doctor as having a reading disability that has a physical basis, which prevents one from reading standard print
- is legally blind with a profound hearing loss

Schools, libraries, hospitals, nursing and rehabilitation centers, day care programs and other agencies serving individuals who qualify may also apply. An institution may borrow equipment and materials for use by eligible individuals in either a group setting or for one-on-one use.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Complete the enclosed Individual Application Form. All patron information will remain confidential. Have an accepted certifying authority complete the back section.

### **AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

A certifying authority must complete the Authorization Form, found on the back of the application. Proper certifying authorities are doctors of medicine; optometrists; registered nurses; therapists; and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (such as social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents). In place of any of these, certification may be made by professional librarians or by any person whose competence under specific circumstances is acceptable to the Library. In the case of a reading disability from organic dysfunction, certification must be made by a doctor of medicine or doctor of osteopathy who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

### **USING THE LIBRARY**

After your application is processed, you will receive the equipment and your first shipment of books. A catalogue listing of some of the most recent titles in the collection will be sent separately. Every two months you will be sent a copy of "Talking Book Topics," which lists the newest available recorded books. Braille readers will be sent a copy of "Braille Book Review," which lists the latest braille and recorded titles.

The Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) at [www.perkinslibrary.org](http://www.perkinslibrary.org) provides electronic access to the library's holdings, and allows borrowers to order materials online. You can also communicate directly to staff via email ([library@perkins.org](mailto:library@perkins.org)). All materials are delivered, and can be returned free, via the U.S. mail.



## **QUESTIONS?**

**Call the Library at 1-800-852-3133 or 617-972-7240**

**Email: [library@perkins.org](mailto:library@perkins.org)**

**[www.perkinslibrary.org](http://www.perkinslibrary.org)**

**Library Hours are 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM**

**Monday through Friday.**