



## **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

**Website:** [www.perkinslibrary.org](http://www.perkinslibrary.org) **Fax:** 617-972-7363

**Email:** [library@perkins.org](mailto:library@perkins.org) **TTY:** 617-972-7690

### **WHO WE ARE**

The Perkins Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) loans audio, large print and braille books and magazines along with playback equipment 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. 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, reading materials and playback equipment will be sent to you. There is no charge for any of the Library's services. All materials are delivered and returned through the U.S. mail, postage free.

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

The Library also offers audio described videos in VHS and DVD formats. 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 digital cartridge, braille, large print, download, and on cassette. The Library also offers a selection of over 100 magazines in audio, large print, and braille formats. 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, TV listings, 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. This service can also be accessed online via a password protected website.

## **EQUIPMENT**

Because our books are produced in a specialized format on digital cartridges or 4-track cassettes, we will loan a digital player or a cassette machine to your institution, free of charge. The cassette player is required to borrow older cassette titles from the collection or to use magazine services. The institution is responsible for keeping a record of the serial numbers of all machines loaned to it. Individuals borrowing equipment and materials directly are responsible for their own equipment. Equipment not being used by an organization must be returned to the Perkins Library.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE**

Schools, libraries, hospitals, nursing and rehabilitation centers, day care programs and other agencies serving individuals who qualify may apply. An institution may borrow equipment and

reading materials for use by eligible individuals in either a group setting or for one-on-one use.

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 (e.g., dyslexia), which prevents one from reading standard print
- is legally blind with a profound hearing loss

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Complete the enclosed *Institutional Application Form*. Be sure to provide contact information for the person who will be responsible for the materials. All patron information will remain confidential.

## **AUTHORIZATION REQUIREMENTS**

A certifying authority must complete the *Authorization Form*, found on the back of the application. In cases of legal blindness, visual impairment or physical disability, the administrator of the institution, agency, or school, or special education director, can serve as the certifying authority.

Other professionals who can certify an application may include doctors of medicine, optometrists, registered nurses, therapists, and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or special service agencies (such as case managers, counselors, social workers, 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 catalog 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 audio books. Braille readers will be sent a copy of *Braille Book Review*, which lists the latest braille and audio 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 sign in to order materials online. You can also communicate directly with 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**

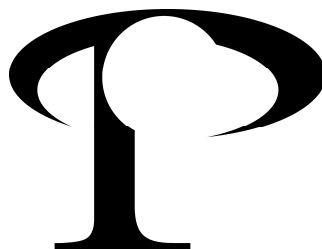
**Email: [library@perkins.org](mailto:library@perkins.org)**

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

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

**Monday through Friday**

**(except holidays)**



**PERKINS**  
SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND