

BLIND AND HANDICAPPED SERVICES

A free national library service providing recorded and braille materials to blind and physically handicapped persons is administered by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress (NLS). With the cooperation of authors and publishers who grant permission to use copyrighted works, NLS selects and produces full-length books and magazines in braille and on recorded disc and cassette. The reading materials produced are then distributed to a cooperating network of regional and subregional libraries that circulate them to eligible borrowers by postage-free mail. Network libraries also offer reference, readers' advisory, and other services.

Established by an act of Congress in 1931 to serve blind adults, the program was expanded in 1952 to include children, and again in 1966 by Public Law 89-522 to include individuals with physical impairments that prevent the reading of standard print. Fifty-six regional and 102 subregional libraries are currently part of the network, serving all parts of the United States, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

Playback equipment is loaned free for use with books and magazines recorded on disc at 8 rpm and on cassette at 15/16 ips. Accessories supplied on request includes headphones, pillowphones, remote control units, and special amplifiers. Libraries and other designated machine-lending agencies serve as distribution points for playback equipment and accessories.

Applications for library service from eligible persons or institutions such as hospitals and nursing homes are made directly to the network library or machine-lending agency serving a particular geographic area.

1. WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

By federal law, every individual who applies for library service must provide written certification, signed by a competent authority, of his or her inability to read or use standard printed material as a result of visual or physical limitations. Applicants must be certified as having one or more of the following conditions:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Blindness | Visual handicap | Physical handicap |
| Reading disability | Deaf/blindness | |

Please remember, if the person has a problem that might cause him to be eligible for the program he should apply. Charleston will clear the application with NLS.

Conditions that do not establish eligibility unless they are accompanied by a condition that does meet the criteria are:

- Developmental disabilities
- Emotional illness
- Hearing impairment
- Illiteracy due to lack of education
- Mental retardation

Patrons must fill out a copy of the enclosed application.

Competent authority is defined on the application blank.

2. WHERE TO TAKE APPLICATION AFTER CERTIFICATION

1. Application form may be returned to a sub-regional library.
2. Application may be sent directly to address given on application form, which is:

WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARY COMMISSION
SERVICES FOR THE BLIND & PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED
1900 KANAWHA BLVD., E.
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305

For more information on the program a person may contact Charleston using the toll free number: 1-800-642-8674 or the Parkersburg and Wood County Public Library at ~~485-6564~~ 420-4587.

Please do not lend materials in the Blind and Handicapped Department to patrons who have not been certified.

The Blind and Handicapped Department serves Region V which includes the following counties: Jackson, Calhoun, Roane, Wirt, Wood, Ritchie, Pleasants and Tyler.