

## INTRODUCTION

The Talking Books Program provides library service to persons in Maine who are unable to read standard-print materials because of a visual or physical problem or an organic reading disability. Talking Books in Maine is coordinated by the Outreach Services Section of the Maine State Library and is part of the nationwide system of state and local libraries providing recorded books, playback equipment, and catalogs under the auspices of the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (a division of the Library of Congress).

To be eligible for the program, all you need to do is fill out an application and have it signed by a certifying authority. When we receive your application, we will call you to find out what kind of and how many books you would like, and the type of selection service you want.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Talking Book Topics**

You will receive a magazine every other month called **Talking Book Topics**. You may choose to receive it in large print; it is also available on the National Library Service web site: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/> . Each issue has articles about the service, as well as lists of recently produced titles. Books are divided into seven categories—adult nonfiction, adult fiction, children’s nonfiction, children’s fiction, young adult nonfiction, young adult

fiction, and foreign language books. There is also an author-title index.

If you have any questions about Talking Book Topics, please contact us at Maine State Library Outreach.

### **Talking Books Newsletter**

You will also be sent our **Talking Books Plus Newsletter** which comes out on an irregular basis. It includes tips on using the service and information on other materials that may be available to you. It is sent in large type, and we can also send it to you as a plain text e-mail.

### **Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)**

You can view the titles in our collection at our online catalog at [www.mainetalkingbooks.org](http://www.mainetalkingbooks.org).

If you would like to get a user ID and password to place requests using our catalog, give us a call at 1-800-762-7106.

### **Magazines**

The Talking Book Program provides magazines which are listed in Talking Book Topics. We order these magazines for you, but they are sent directly to you by the producer. Therefore, you will experience a delay of 6 to 8 weeks when adding, changing, or stopping a magazine. Magazines are sent on a digital cartridge, and you must return the cartridge to continue receiving magazines.

## **Braille and Audio Reading Download service (BARD)**

Patrons with a digital machine and a computer with a high-speed internet connection can download digital books and magazines. Patrons with a refreshable Braille display can download and read books in Braille. Go to the BARD website at <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/> to sign up.

## **Braille Books**

Braille books are available to patrons in Maine through Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts. If you would like to receive Braille materials, you may contact Perkins School directly by calling 1-800-852-3133.

## **Service Centers**

Some libraries serve as Talking Book Service Centers. These libraries have machines to loan you if yours breaks and you are awaiting a replacement from Outreach Services. They also have small collections of books that you can borrow when circumstances find you with nothing to read and no books in the mail. Please call your local library to see if they participate in this program.

## HOW TO ORDER AND RETURN MATERIALS

- 1) You have two service choices:
  - a) Turnaround service--this option makes it so that you automatically receive books on a regular basis.
  - b) On demand--this option lets you receive only those books you specifically ask for, like a regular library service.
  
- 2) Use the catalogs sent in your introductory packet and **Talking Book Topics** to select the books you would like to read. Request forms are included in the back of each catalog, or you may use regular sheets of paper. You may also use the order form on our web page:  
[www.maine.gov/msl/outreach](http://www.maine.gov/msl/outreach)
  
- 3) List books by number, e.g. DB 50534, etc. Books with RC numbers are cassettes, books with DB numbers are digital cartridges.
  
- 4) Especially if you decide to be on automatic turnaround service, it's helpful if you can periodically send in lists of books you'd like to read. (If you do not wish to receive substitutes, and if none of your requested titles are available, no books will be shipped!)
  
- 5) If you are on turnaround, you will receive an initial shipment of books, and thereafter another book will be sent for each one you return. Send each book back to us as soon as you finish to ensure smooth mail service. You may keep books for a lending period of up to two months.

- 6) Turn over the address label for return mailing. When the hole in the label is in the upper left corner, the label is correct for returning. No postage is needed for the container.
- 7) At any time you may request more (or fewer) books, or send in Outreach requests for certain books.
- 8) If the titles you have requested are not available when you return a book, we will select books from general categories (e.g. westerns, romances, biographies, etc.) for you, as indicated on the Reader Profile Sheet filled out when we called you.

### **Loan Period**

Individuals may borrow books for a period of two months. If no one else is waiting for the book, you may renew it.

To remain active in the Talking Book Program, and to retain use of the player we provide, you need to order at least one book or magazine a year from us.

### **Mailing Instructions**

Books, machine and request lists may be sent postage free. Simply write, “free matter for the blind and physically handicapped” in the upper right-hand corner of the envelope or mailing label. Book containers are already marked; all you have to do is turn over the address label card so our address shows. If you have any problems receiving or returning your books, please contact your post

office. If you can't resolve a problem, you may call the Coordinator of Outreach Services at 1-800-762-7106.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR LIBRARY**

Please notify Maine State Library Outreach of all address, phone, or name changes as soon as possible. Also, let us know right away if your machine is not working and you need a replacement.

### **Damaged Books**

If you have a damaged book, return it to us with a rubber band around the damaged cartridge, or check off the “damaged” box on the mail card.

If you need another copy of a damaged book so you can finish reading it, just call and ask us to send another copy when you return the damaged copy. Please don't put notes inside cartridge boxes or write on the description cards--we can't replace them!

### **Vacations**

If you go on vacation, please let us know so we can change your book service. Magazines are handled differently than books, and you should have someone pick them up, or have the post office hold them for you.

If you will be gone less than six months, please temporarily stop your book service, or have books sent to another

address. Please let us know when you return, so we can resume regular service.

If you will be in another area for six months or longer, the network library in that area will serve you. You may borrow a player from that library or take your own, just let us know what you opt to do.

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TALKING BOOKS PROGRAM  
MAINE STATE LIBRARY  
1-800-762-7106

## **EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Care and Mailing of Equipment**

1. Please save the box in which the machine was delivered. You will need it to return the machine, and although any sturdy box may be used, the original box and packing material is best.
2. If your machine needs repairs, call us at 1-800-762-7106, or 287-5650. When you call with problems, please have your machine in front of you so we can help you try to correct simple problems. If the problem cannot be corrected this way, you will need to return the machine to us so a volunteer repair group can fix it. **DO NOT** take it to a commercial repair shop.
3. If you need to send in your machine for any reason, please write or call the library; otherwise, we will assume you are canceling your service. When you call, ask us to send you a mailing label. Your machine will be mailed free matter.