



FACT SHEET

Serving People with Disabilities

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Libraries will be eligible to apply for grants ranging from \$7,500-\$20,000 to plan and implement a project based on the specific needs identified by the library. The MBLC will make available information on how to conduct a library scan and community assessment. These grants will be funded on a two-year implementation schedule.

Components of the project will include the following:

- Libraries must conduct a library and community scan of possible and potential services for their user population as part of the needs assessment and prior to submitting the application.
- Libraries will develop public relations strategies that attract people with disabilities to the library. They will outline how they will work in partnership with community agencies serving people in this population and reach out to other local libraries.
- Libraries will provide training for all staff in the use of adaptive equipment and how best to serve patrons with a variety of special needs. They will promote their services in their community.
- Libraries will provide equipment, materials, and services that allow people to utilize the library more effectively.
- Libraries will identify a "staff team" who will become experts in the area
- Grants may be used for training, assistive technology, equipment, and staffing but are not intended for renovation of facilities, e.g. automatic doors, ramps, etc.

ELIGIBILITY

All types of libraries may apply for this grant.

INTERESTED?

Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent form with the "Serving People with Disabilities" option checked off. If you need more information about this program, call Shelley Quezada at the MBLC 1 800-952-7403 ext. 235 or email shelley.quezada@state.ma.us.

BACKGROUND

Under the Library Services and Technology Act *Massachusetts Long Range Plan (2013-2017)*, the MBLC identified issues for libraries seeking to provide service for people who face special challenges using libraries. Many residents of Massachusetts cannot fully utilize libraries for a variety of reasons including disabling conditions such as visual, hearing, and mobility impairments. Moreover, many libraries lack adaptive equipment, current library collections may be inadequate; and the staff may lack the appropriate training to serve a more diverse group of library users. The MBLC has encouraged all types of libraries to consider their role as an information access point for all, including those members of the community who are traditionally under-represented among library users.

To aid libraries in developing services for people with disabilities, the MBLC has developed a planning process for libraries to use with their communities. MBLC staff will work with libraries to identify the appropriate steps to integrate new accessible services into the library's existing long-range plan.

2013-2017 MASSACHUSETTS LONG RANGE PLAN GOAL & OBJECTIVE

Goal 1: Support learners of all ages with their individual educational and learning goals.

Objective 2: MBLC supports literacy programs for all ages.