



## Quick Reference for Libraries

**What is GLS?** GLS is a free braille and talking book library service for people with temporary or permanent low vision, blindness, or a physical disability that prevents reading or holding the printed page. GLS offers books the way you want them: in braille or audio formats, mailed to your door for free, or instantly downloadable. GLS works to ensure that all may read by providing eligible patrons access to free materials regardless of age, economic circumstances, or technical expertise.

**Do you have to be a local resident?** Any resident of Georgia who is unable to read or use regular print materials as a result of temporary or permanent visual or physical limitations may receive service through GLS. This includes those who are blind, have a visual disability, or have a physical disability that prevents reading.

**Are people with reading disabilities eligible?** Yes. Individuals are eligible if they have been diagnosed with a perceptual or reading disability that prevents them from reading regular print materials.

**Who can certify people as eligible?** Eligibility must be certified by one of the following: Library staff or Librarian, doctor of medicine, doctor of osteopathy, ophthalmologist, optometrist, psychologist, registered nurse, therapist, or professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (such as an educator, social worker, case worker, counselor, rehabilitation teacher, certified reading specialist, school psychologist, superintendent, or school media specialist).

**Where can I find an application?** The GLS website [gls.georgialibraries.org](http://gls.georgialibraries.org) is where you can find an individual application. The fillable pdf application may be completed online and printed, signed by the certifying authority and returned to GLS for processing. Completed applications can be scanned and emailed to [gls@georgialibraries.org](mailto:gls@georgialibraries.org) or mailed postage paid to the address on the return label printed on the application.

**Is there a number to call for assistance?** GLS Reader Advisors are available from 8am-5pm (Monday - Friday) by calling **1-800-248-6701**. They are available to answer questions, assist with book selection and to provide training on use of the products and services.

**How long does it take for an individual to begin receiving service after submitting an application?** The goal of GLS is to send the talking book player equipment and an initial shipment of books within seven working days of receiving a properly certified application.

**Does it cost anything to use the program?** No. There is no direct cost to eligible readers.

**How are materials received from and returned to the library?** Through the U.S. Postal Service, books, magazines, catalogs, and equipment that are sent to readers through the U.S. Postal Service as “Free Matter for the Blind” may be returned the same way.

**What kind of device is needed to play talking books?** Talking books require the use of a specialized playback device or a mobile reading app. iOS and Android smart devices may also be used to play the talking books.

**May I get books or magazines on my personal smartphone or tablet?** Yes. The free BARD Mobile app is available for your iPhone, iPad, iPod touch and your Android smartphone or tablet (including Kindle Fire) so you don’t need special equipment to read. Registered patrons may download electronic files of braille books, magazines, and music materials, as well as digital talking books and magazines from BARD Mobile at the App Store for iOS and digital talking books and magazines at the Play Store and Amazon Appstore for Android. You may be charged for data depending on your carrier’s plan.

**Do you have large-print books and other materials?** GLS offers large-print books through a partnership with Georgia’s PINES libraries. Requests are managed through GLS Atlanta where a Reader Advisor will request the large print title and mail it to the patron. The patron will return the book to GLS postage paid. Requesting the LP items through GLS offers additional advantages to the patron: an extended loan period, and no liability for overdue fines.

**At what age can a child start using talking books?** Books in the collection begin at the preschool level through adults of all ages. The program is designed to provide service during an active patron’s lifetime unless their disability is deemed temporary.

**Can people use the program if they are in residential care facilities or retirement homes?** Yes. Eligible patrons may enroll as an individual account holder or the facility may apply for an Institutional Account. They may call 1-800-248-6701 for assistance or more information.

**Is the program available to people who are illiterate or who are learning English as a second language?** No. Only individuals with a visual, physical, or diagnosed reading disability are eligible to use the service. Public libraries are an excellent source of information about local literacy and English-language programs.