

## Resources for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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### Association of Blind Citizens-Assistive Technology Fund (National Program)

Phone: (781) 961-1023

Website: [blindcitizens.org](http://blindcitizens.org)

The Assistive Technology Fund (ATF) will provide funds to cover 50% of the retail price of adaptive devices or software. The ABC board of directors believes that this program will allow blind and visually impaired individual's access to technology products that will have a significant impact on improving employment opportunities, increase the level of independence and enhance their overall quality of life. Applications will be reviewed by the Assistive Technology Committee (ATC) and recommendations will be submitted for board approval.

Applicants must be legally blind and a resident of the United States to qualify for this program. Applications must be submitted by June 30th and December 31st for each grant period (two per year). Applicants will be notified if their request for a grant is approved.

The online form located here <https://blindcitizens.org/assistive-technology-fund/> can be completed to request funds.

### Blind Services Division-Vocational Rehabilitation

Phone: (800) 372-7172

Website: <https://kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/Blind-Services/Pages/Blind-Services-Division.aspx>

Mission is to provide opportunities for employment and independence for those with visual disabilities. Assist blind or visually impaired individuals in obtaining or maintaining employment, economic self-sufficiency, and independence. Services are provided statewide with administrative operations in Frankfort and field offices in Ashland, Bowling Green, Covington, Elizabethtown, Lexington, Louisville, Owensboro, Paducah, Prestonsburg, and Somerset.

### Bluegrass Council of the Blind, Inc.

Phone: (859) 259-1834

Website: <https://bcbky.org/>

Serving the needs of adults that are blind or visually impaired in Central KY-primarily Fayette, Anderson, Bourbon, Clark, Jessamine, Madison, Montgomery, Scott, and Woodford counties. There are two main programs: peer support and assistive technology

and training which provide the following services: support group meetings, peer group meetings, demonstrations of technology and devices, group and individual training on AT such as accessibility features on smart phones and tablets, educational seminars, community outings, and technology lending/distribution program. An affiliate chapter of the American Council of the Blind.

## **Computers for the Blind**

Phone: (214) 340-6328

Website: [computersfortheblind.net](http://computersfortheblind.net)

Computers for the Blind is a non-profit 501(c) 3 volunteer organization located in Richardson, TX which provides accessible computers to persons who are blind and visually impaired. This program collects donated laptop and desktop computers from businesses and individuals. Skilled volunteer computer technicians wipe them clean and install screen reader software (NVDA). Larger monitors and/or a trial version of Zoomtext can be provided upon request. Full versions are available for a reduced price. E-mail and word processor software are part of the software library along with simple accessible tutorials on how to operate the accessible software. There is a low cost for each computer. Visit the application page online here <https://computersfortheblind.org/application/>

## **iCanConnect-The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program**

Phone: (800) 825-4595

Website: [www.icanconnect.org](http://www.icanconnect.org)

National program that provides free equipment and training for people with both significant hearing and vision loss.

### **For Kentucky, the local contact is Helen Keller National Center for DeafBlind Youths and Adults**

Phone: (516) 393-7733

Website: <https://www.icanconnect.org/how-to-apply/kentucky/>

Marilyn C. Trader, MSW, [mtrader@helenkeller.org](mailto:mtrader@helenkeller.org)

Janice Harvey, [jharvey@helenkeller.org](mailto:jharvey@helenkeller.org)

## **Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation**

Phone: (877) 675-0195

Website: <https://katlc.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

The Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) offers low interest loans for qualified applicants with disabilities who need assistive technology. Program is currently in search of a new lending partner and is not providing loans at this time.

## Kentucky Deaf-Blind Services

Phone: (502) 564-4440

Website: <https://kcc.ky.gov/Vocational-Rehabilitation/Blind-Services/Pages/Deaf-Blind-Services.aspx>

Deaf-Blind Services are through the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) which can include assistance with obtaining assistive technology, employment services, and specialized training to improve quality and ease of everyday life.

## Kentucky Council of the Blind

Phone: (502) 895-4598

Website: <https://kentucky-acb.org/>

Run by volunteers dedicated to helping individuals with low vision lead fuller, more independent lives. KCB's grants can assist individuals in obtaining needed assistive technology, for more information contact [techgrant@kentucky-acb.org](mailto:techgrant@kentucky-acb.org)

### Local Chapters

#### Eastern Kentucky

Based in Jackson and Hazard. Individuals with low vision and their families are encouraged to participate in chapter activities (e.g. picnics, dinners, get togethers at the Breathitt County Library, etc.). To find out how to participate, call President, Ronnie Patrick at (606) 671-0226 or Vice President, Frank Campbell at (606) 693-9360, or email [kcb@kentucky-acb.org](mailto:kcb@kentucky-acb.org).

#### Louisville

Roundabouts (peer support) are sponsored by this organization and are a great way to make new friends and learn new skills. This chapter also advocates for individuals that are blind or have low vision, so especially helpful areas have been transportation issues, pedestrian safety, and questions regarding education and rehabilitation services. Call (502) 895-4598 or email [louisville@kentucky-acb.org](mailto:louisville@kentucky-acb.org).

#### Northern Kentucky

Serving Covington, Florence, Newport, Erlanger, and surrounding areas. Meetings occur the second Wednesday of every month via conference call and occasionally at local restaurants. This chapter also participates in community events to raise awareness about vision loss and advocate for improved services in the area. For more information contact Gerry Slusher, president at (859) 781-7369 or [grader@fuse.net](mailto:grader@fuse.net).

#### Owensboro

Dedicated to promoting public awareness about visual impairment and blindness and serving as a local resource for blind and low vision adults and their families in the Owensboro/Henderson area. Monthly meetings are hosted as well as special workshops and outings. Contact Sheryl Lott at (270) 686-8689 or email [owensboro@kentucky-acb.org](mailto:owensboro@kentucky-acb.org) for more information.

## **Kentucky Lions Eye**

Phone: (502) 583-0564

Website: <https://www.kylionseye.org/>

Houses three programs: Patron Program which provides financial assistance to Kentuckians who are uninsured or under-insured and need eye surgery, the Holloran Program which provides financial assistance to individuals blind in both eyes in Bullitt, Hardin, Jefferson, Oldham, Shelby, and Spencer counties (can help pay for low vision equipment/aids, household repair/appliances/installation of accessibility equipment, TARC tickets/transportation assistance, medical and dental expenses), and the Lions Eyeglass Program which provides eyeglasses to those in need.

## **Kentucky School for the Blind Charitable Foundation**

Phone: (502) 897-3990

Website: <https://www.ksbcf.org/>

Goal is to level the educational playing field for blind and visually impaired students. They assist a number of ways from connecting families to resources, providing equipment, awarding scholarships, and funding grants to improve lives of those with visual impairments.

## **National Federation of the Blind Kentucky**

Phone: 410-659-9314

Website: <https://nfbofky.org/>

The state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind. They operate many programs and services of use to individuals with blindness and impaired vision including training and education, advocacy and outreach, and assistance obtaining technology and products.

## **South Central KY Council for the Blind**

Phone: (270) 883-1855

Website: <https://sckcb.org/wp/>

Membership organization formed by blind individuals to promote the independence, dignity, and advancement of blind and visually impaired people. The organization provides information and referral to address a wide range of blindness-related questions, employment information, grants for assistive technology or services, and scholarships for legally blind students. Services the Barren River Area Development District comprised of Allen, Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Monroe, Simpson, and Warren counties.

## **Accessible Books, Education, and News**

### **American Printing House (APH)-Louis**

Phone: (800) 223-1839 ext. 705

Website: <https://louis.aph.org/#/>

E-mail: [resource@aph.org](mailto:resource@aph.org)

The Louis Database of Accessible Materials contains information on accessible materials produced by over 75 organizations throughout the US and Canada including educational materials in braille, large print, audio, and electronic file format. This site also houses, the Accessible Media Producers Directory (AMP) and the APH Library. The AMP is a self-listing directory of producers of accessible formats such as braille, tactile graphics, large print, e-files, and audio. The APH Library supports the research, business, and educational needs of APH staff while also supporting visiting researchers and those pursuing careers in the education of the blind. Many other resources can be found on the American Printing House website <https://www.aph.org/>

### **Bookshare**

Phone: (650) 352-0198

Website: <https://www.bookshare.org/cms/>

Bookshare provides the world's largest online library of accessible reading materials for people with print disabilities (blindness, dyslexia, etc.). Individuals can sign up for membership and access the library on their own. Organizations that serve individuals with print disabilities (schools, libraries, community centers, etc.) can sign up and provide access to their students or clients. A Bookshare membership offers unlimited access to accessible books, textbooks, newspapers and magazines. Bookshare offers free memberships to U.S. schools and qualifying U.S. students. Bookshare Download Formats include DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) and BRF (Braille Refreshable Format).

### **Envision's College Success Program**

Phone: (316) 440-1541

Website: <https://collegesuccessbvi.org/>

Developed to help students who are blind or have low vision get the resources they need to make the most of their college experience and achieve their goals. This program offers a holistic support system including mentorship, access to resources, community and events. Experts in the field including recent college graduates who are blind guide students in the transition from high school to college and employment.

## **Kentucky Accessible Materials Database (KAMD)**

Website: <https://louisville.edu/education/abri/kamd>

The primary function of the Kentucky Accessible Materials Database (KAMD) is to provide K-12 Kentucky public schools a way to discover what instructional materials are available in digital format, and to provide a method for schools to acquire these digital materials for use by qualified students with disabilities while at the same time protecting the publishers' intellectual property rights (i.e., copyright). KAMD downloads textbooks from the National Instructional Materials Access Center's website and then converts the files to an accessible format such as Microsoft Word or ePUB. There needs to be a request for a specific book by an eligible student before KAMD can download the book. To receive KAMD books the student must include the need for digital books in their IEP and also fit into a specific disability category: Blind or visually impaired; Reading disability; Physical disability that prohibits the student from accessing standard printed material.

## **Kentucky Talking Book Library**

Phone: (800) 372-2968 or (502) 564-5791

Website: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/talkingbook/Pages/default.aspx>

Email: [KTBL.Mail@ky.gov](mailto:KTBL.Mail@ky.gov)

The Kentucky Talking Book Library (KTBL) provides free library service to Kentuckians who cannot read traditional print because of a visual, physical, or reading disability. Audio and Braille materials are sent to and from users by postage-free mail or can be downloaded from the internet. A special Talking Bok player is provided on loan.

## **National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC)**

Phone: (502) 899-2230 or (877) 526-4622

Website: [www.nimac.us](http://www.nimac.us)

The NIMAC is a federally-funded, national file repository that has XML-based NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard) files which are able to be produced into accessible formats such as braille, large print, and digital text. Currently, the NIMAC has over 71,000 files from more than 160 publishers.

## **Radio Eye**

Phone: (859) 422-6390

Website: <https://www.radioeye.org/>

Broadcasts current news, public service, and general interest programming to people who are blind and print disabled.

# Frequently Used Vendors of Assistive Technology for the Blind and Visually Impaired

## Maxi Aids

Phone: (800) 522-6294

Website: <https://www.maxiaids.com/>

## Independent Living Aids

Phone: (800) 537-2118

Website: <https://independentliving.com/>

## LS&S

Phone:(800) 468-4789

Website: <https://lssproducts.com/>

## Vision Aid Systems, Inc.

Phone: (800) 765-7483

Website: <http://www.visionaidsystem.com/>

## Freedom Scientific

Phone: (800) 444-4443

Website: <https://www.freedomscientific.com/>

## Humanware

Phone: (800) 722-3393

Website: <https://www.humanware.com/en-international/home>

## Optelec

Phone: (800) 444-4443

Website: <https://us.optelec.com/>

## Applevis

Website: <https://applevis.com/>

Leading online resource for blind and low vision users of Apple products such as the Mac, iPhone, iPad, Apple Watch, and Apple TV.