

MAINE

Blind/Visual Impairment Resources



Maine Blind/Visual Impairment Resources

AllTech (formerly MECATS)

Lewiston Hall, 60 Pineland Drive, Bldg 4
New Gloucester, ME 04260

Phone: (207) 688-4573

E-mail: info@alltech-tsi.org

Website: <http://www.alltech-tsi.org/>

Organization Type: Assistive Technology, Information Centers

Disabilities Served: General / Non-disability Specific

ALLTech™ is a nationally recognized center that provides training, consultations, and technical assistance in the areas of assistive technology, specialized software, Web accessibility, and universal design in education. Their expert team provides in-depth assistive technology assessments based on the latest product releases and information. Assessments are conducted on-site, or in home, school, or workplace settings. AllTech also offers training, consultations, and follow-up services to individuals with disabilities, families, caregivers, and professionals.

Catholic Charities Maine

PO Box 10660, Portland, ME 04104-6060

207.781.8550 1.800.781.8550

Info@CCMaine.org

Services to Blind & Visually Impaired Children

Regional Offices:

Augusta Instructional Materials Center

St. Paul Center

136 State Street

P.O. Box 2028

Augusta, ME 04338-2028

207.620.3220 or

207.621.8520 x 5420

207.622.9781 Fax

Bangor

1066 Kenduskeag Ave.

Bangor, ME 04401

207.299.1933

esbvic@ccmaine.org

Education Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Children is a statewide service of Catholic Charities Maine providing assessment, instruction and consultation to blind and visually impaired children, their parents and school personnel.

Working hand in hand with Maine's Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI), our services are directed to the blind and visually impaired population, ages birth through 21

years old. Our goal is to assist in meeting the educational needs of the student through consultation and/or direct services in his/her education or home setting.

How the Program Works

After receiving a referral, our teachers assess the student's functional vision, review the educational implication of the visual impairment and recommend a service plan to the child's team. For school-aged students, the Pupil Evaluation Team (PET) determines the type and amount of services to be included in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Recommendations for the pre-school child are made to the Early Childhood Team (ECT) and services are identified in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Types of Services Offered

- Low vision training
- Teaching Braille
- Instruction in use of adapted equipment
- Selection and/or modification of specialized curriculum
- Instructional strategies to facilitate learning in blind/visually impaired children
- Concept development
- Activities of daily living

Maine Division for the Blind & Visually Impaired

45 Commerce Drive, Augusta, Maine 04333
(207) 623-7900
TTY: 1-800-794-1110

If you have a vision problem that prevents you from carrying out the activities of daily living, getting an education or a job, there is help. The Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired can provide many services to persons with severe visual impairments.

<http://www.maine.gov/labor/contact/index.html>

Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

- Telephone: (207) 287-5650 or Toll-Free (Maine only): 1-800-762-7106
- FAX: 207-287-5654
- Postal Address: 64 State House Station, Augusta, ME 04333

Library Services for People with Disabilities

Maine State Library Outreach Services provides a variety of programs listed below for residents with disabilities and the ability to search the online local catalog. These programs require certification by a qualified professional.

Books By Mail For Homebound Residents

- Books By Mail provides free delivery of library materials to individuals who are homebound due to disability.

Descriptive Video

- Descriptive videos are regular commercial films that have been augmented with special narration that describes the action for people who have visual impairments.

Large Print

- Maine State Library Large Print Service offers free large print books mailed directly to individuals who are visually impaired, and rotating collections of Large Print books to libraries who serve the visually impaired.

Talking Books

- The federal Talking Books program provides free books on special media and machines to people who are blind, visually impaired, physically handicapped or reading disabled as certified by a proper authority.

Braille in Maine

- Maine State Library Outreach arranges with the Perkins School for the Blind to have Braille library materials provided directly to eligible Maine residents without cost to users. Mainers who would like to borrow materials in Braille should contact the Perkins School directly at 1-800-852-3133.

Web Braille

- Maine Talking Books users are eligible for Web Braille service from the Library of Congress.

Technical Exploration Center (TEC)

34 Summer St, Suite 2A

Bangor, ME 04401

Phone: (207) 992-9270

Fax: (207) 992-9273

E-mail: info@tecmaine.org

Website: <http://www.tecmaine.org/>

Contact Name: Colleen Adams, COTA/L

Organization Type: General

Disabilities Served: General / Non-disability Specific, Communication and Speech, Hearing Impairments / Deaf, Mobility Impaired, Multiple Disabilities, Visual Impairment / Blind

The Technical Exploration Center (TEC) is an assistive technology program that lends equipment, and provides evaluations, resource materials, technical assistance and AT related training. The devices they lend out can be used for the following tasks: communication, computers (hardware and software), education, enjoyment of everyday activities, mobility, and recreation just to name a few.
 In collaboration with UCP of Maine, TEC runs the Adaptive Design Center. This Center is an accessible lab that offers people with disabilities and their families or support staff a place to create or modify equipment. Open by appointment, this lab offers cardboard construction, switch and electronic adaptations, foam and fabric adaptations as well as a variety of other options for making your current equipment more accessible and easier to use.

Maine Accessible Instructional Materials

<http://aim.maineite.org/>

In most schools, print-based instructional materials, such as textbooks, are a prime way of delivering curricular content. This system works fine for many learners. But for others—those who struggle to read because of physical, sensory, cognitive, or learning differences—such materials are not usable for learning.

These students need **Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)** in order to access the general education curriculum. Such access is guaranteed in federal education statutes, such as IDEA and NCLB, as well as those of several states.

This website is a resource to Maine educators and families interested in learning more about how to select, acquire and use **Accessible Instructional Materials** for students with **Print Disabilities**.

Iris Network

189 Park Avenue
Portland, ME 04102
Ph: 207.774.6273
Fax: 207.774.0679
info@theiris.org

The Iris Network is a statewide resource and catalyst for people who are visually impaired or blind so they can attain their determined level of independence and integration into the community.

Vision:

- We are nationally recognized as a leader creating support and opportunities for independence, working in partnership with people who are visually impaired or blind, and educating and involving the entire community.
- We continuously eliminate barriers related to vision loss. We use state-of-the-art methods and technology to offer services in response to changing needs of individuals across Maine.
- We make a positive difference in the lives of people with visual impairment.

Values:

- The Iris Network recognizes the diverse aspirations and abilities of people who are visually impaired or blind.
- Our services are based on respect for each individual's right to self-direction through informed choices.
- We believe that the education and integration of all individuals will result in a stronger society.

History of the Iris Network:

The Iris Network is one of the oldest and most respected non-profit agencies in Maine. William J. Ryan, a visually-impaired traveling almanac salesman, formed our organization in 1905. Ryan was passionately concerned about people who were visually impaired or blind he had met in his travels around the state. He wanted to help them conquer poverty and isolation. He formed the Maine Institution for the Blind to create opportunities for individuals with vision loss to learn a trade, earn a living wage, and live in community.

Ryan corresponded with Helen Keller and other leaders to promote his new organization. In 1907, Miss Keller hosted the Maine Institution for the Blind's first fundraiser, generating \$1,000—\$21,638 today—to support the organization. People came from diverse locations to live and work at the center. They caned chairs, made brooms, mattresses, and other textile products, sold their wares, and became an important social group in southern Maine.

As the 20th century progressed, the number of people who were visually impaired or blind grew, and their goals also grew and diversified. In the 1980s, the Maine Center for the Blind responded to these changes. The center shifted from offering sheltered workshops to developing and delivering individualized programs of training, education, and support so people might live in their own homes, engage in work of their own choosing, and contribute to their own communities.

Today, our organization is the Iris Network. Our name has changed, but our commitments to opportunity, partnership, and community still guide us. In the first few years of the twenty-first century, we formed an array of new programs and resources—the Iris Network Low Vision Clinic, the Maine Audio Information and Reading Service, statewide support groups, and residential services at the Iris Park Apartments. We are further diversifying our services with programs in assistive technologies and the arts.

Mainely Access Inc.

89 Auburn Street #1182
Portland, ME 04013

Mary Beth Walsh 207-650-8151
mbwalsh@mainelyaccess.com

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m.adams@mainelyaccess.com

Braille Transcription

Literary Braille Code, also called Grade 2 braille, is used for most works of fiction and nonfiction, including textbooks, except math, science, foreign languages, and music. Unless otherwise directed, Mainely Access produces documents in Grade 2 American English on 8 x 11 paper, 19 hole punched and bound. We comply with the standards of the Braille Authority of North America and the National Library Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

In addition to Braille, Mainely Access Inc. produces recorded text in both digital and analog formats. Final products are available in 2 or 4 track tape, CD, or MP3 file.

Pricing:

Braille documents are priced based upon the number of braille pages in the final document. Typically a single print page produces 2.5 to 3 pages of braille. Documents submitted in electronic format are produced at a rate of \$.75 per braille page. Documents submitted in hard copy (print) are produced at a rate of \$1.50 per braille page.

Audio recordings are produced at a rate of \$20 per hour regardless of final format chosen. We substantially discount multiple braille or audio copies of the same document.

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

150 State House Station

Augusta, 04333-0150

Telephone: 1-800-698-4440

Toll Free TTY: 1-888-755-0023

FAX: (207) 287-5292

Mission

BRS works to bring about full access to employment, independence and community integration for people with disabilities.

Organization

Working with its partners in the Maine Department of Labor's CareerCenter and the rehabilitation community, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) works with persons with disabilities through its three primary service provision units:

- **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)**
 - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)
 - Independent living Services Program
- **Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI)**
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Program for people who are blind or have a visual impairment
 - Education Program for children who are blind or have a visual impairment
 - Business Enterprise Program
 - Independent Living Programs

Pine Tree Guide Dog Users (PTGDU)

Pat Webber at 207-338-5520 or pweb@gwi.net

Pine Tree Guide Dog Users (PTGDU) is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to promote the well-being of dog guide users in Maine. Founded in 1997 with some financial support from the American Council of the Blind of Maine and a lot of energy and hard work from our founding members, PTGDU includes folks who are dog guide handlers, folks who raise puppies destined to become dog guides, and folks who are interested in working dogs of all kinds.

The Pine Tree Guide Dog Users hold quarterly meetings in various locations in Maine. Meetings are scheduled on the first Saturday of February, May, August, and November. Meetings generally consist of a luncheon with a guest speaker followed by a business meeting.

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

Nancy Matulis, President
11 Mayo Street
Dover-Fozcroft, ME 04426
panmat1@yahoo.com
Contact Person / Secretary
Mary Ellen Frost
P O BOX 213
Clinton ME 04927
gramcrackerfrost@gmail.com

The American Council of the Blind is the nation's leading membership organization of blind and visually impaired people. It was founded in 1961 and incorporated in the District of Columbia.

Affiliates: ACB has 51 state and regional affiliates and 20 national special interest and professional affiliates. The state/regional groups meet statewide once or twice yearly and many of these organizations also have local chapters. Many of these local chapters meet monthly. The national special interest affiliates meet annually during the ACB national convention and many of these groups have state/metropolitan chapters.

Purposes: The Council strives to improve the well-being of all blind and visually impaired people by: serving as a representative national organization of blind people; elevating the social, economic and cultural levels of blind people; improving educational and rehabilitation facilities and opportunities; cooperating with the public and private institutions and organizations concerned with blind services; encouraging and assisting all blind persons to develop their abilities and conducting a public education program to promote greater understanding of blindness and the capabilities of blind people.

Sources of Custom-Produced Books

Thomaston

Inmate Braille Project
Maine State Prison
P.O. Box A
Thomaston, ME 04861
Director:
Rev. Matt Kantrowitz

Braille: general (literary); spiral binding