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Georgia Library Spotlight: Georgia Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (GLS)

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Georgia Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (GLS)



Georgia Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (GLS) (formerly known as GLASS) is Georgia's free talking book and braille library, tailored to the needs of Georgians of all ages who cannot use standard print materials and require alternative, accessible formats.

Beyond people with blindness or low vision, who else can qualify as print disabled? The answers might surprise you. It could be someone whose physical condition prevents them from holding a book or turning the pages. A person with a diagnosed reading disability that prevents them from accessing standard print can also receive services from GLS. Even if the condition is temporary, GLS is here to help for as long as services are required.

Users of GLS have choices about how they access and enjoy materials. A special digital

talking book machine and cartridges loaded with books or magazines arrive by mail. Patrons can also download both audio and braille books digitally with Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) and Bookshare. Printed braille items are delivered by mail upon request. GLS patrons also benefit from a partnership with Georgia's PINES consortium, allowing them to receive by mail any of the large print books or audio-described movies held by libraries throughout the state.

The GLS Atlanta Library is located at the Fulton County Public Library Central Branch. GLS Atlanta is open to the public Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. and has computer stations equipped with assistive technology. A small collection of children's braille books is available. Like other public libraries, GLS Atlanta provides a variety of

engaging programs and classes for its patrons. Book club and peer support group meetings are made accessible to GLS patrons across the state via conference call. GLS Atlanta also offers braille classes and assistive technology training classes.

Throughout the year, GLS hosts several virtual and in-person events, including poetry slams, bingo, patron proms, and ice cream socials. The GLS Summer Reading Program, running through August 1, is inclusive and open to all ages.

It's easy to get connected to GLS. The application for service is online at <https://gls.georgialibraries.org/> and can be submitted by mail or email. Every application must be signed by a certifying authority, attesting to the applicant's eligibility. The certifying authority can be a staff member at any type of library, or one of many other approved service providers listed on the Application page of the GLS website.

Prospective or existing patrons can call 800-248-6701 toll free, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to reach a reader advisor. The GLS reader advisors are trained to answer questions, help with applications, assist in



fulfilling book requests, and offer technical support.

Ready to learn more? Connect with the GLS outreach team at glsoutreach@georgialibraries.org or go to <https://gls.georgialibraries.org/> to request promotional materials, schedule staff training, or propose other innovative ways to put GLS to work for eligible patrons at all types of libraries.

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