

# Readers for the Blind Manual

## PREFACE

This manual was written to provide assistance to school districts seeking reimbursement from the Readers for the Blind Program (RBP), as authorized in Sections 178.160-178.180 RSMo.

## STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Any legally blind citizen of Missouri who regularly attends a public school district, a special school district, a Missouri college, university, technical or professional school that is legally authorized to grant degrees, other than an institution established for the regular instruction of the blind, may apply to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB) for RBP services. Public schools educating such students and employing a person or person(s) to read to the students from textbooks and materials used at the school should submit applications to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Financial and Administrative Services, Special Education Finance Section for processing, approval and payment.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Student eligibility must be certified each school year, following the beginning of the fall term. An application must be completed and submitted electronically to [spedfunding@dese.mo.gov](mailto:spedfunding@dese.mo.gov) by November 30<sup>th</sup> every year. All students listed who are new to the program, or who have not had a current eye report submitted within the past three (3) years must have a current eye report submitted along with the application to [spedfunding@dese.mo.gov](mailto:spedfunding@dese.mo.gov). Applications may be found [here](#).

The Special Education Finance Section is responsible for 1) seeking eligibility from RSB, 2) notifying the school district of a student's eligibility, and 3) funding the RBP related to students of school districts.

At the completion of the school year, the district will be asked to verify, in writing, a) the number of readers used during the school year, b) when services started and c) when services ended. An email should be sent to [spedfunding@dese.mo.gov](mailto:spedfunding@dese.mo.gov) to provide this information. Payment will be made following submission of this information.

## PROCEDURES FOR PAYMENT

Payment of five hundred dollars per annum with which to employ a person or persons to read to eligible students is contingent upon the availability of funds and paid at the end of the school year in which service was provided. Payment may be prorated to less than five hundred dollars per reader if the total number of readers exceeds the funds available.

## ASSURANCES AND RECORDS

The Superintendent of the school district or a designee must electronically agree to the assurance statement found at the bottom of the application. In doing so, he/she agrees that the information provided is accurate and current eye reports, when necessary, have been submitted with the application.

Records which support the district's application should be kept on file for at least five years by the school district. Records required include, as a minimum a) the Special Education Finance approval for participation, b) the student's IEP, c) the name and social security number of the reader or description of how and what assistance was provided (if not done by a person) and d) documentation of the billing and receipt of funds.

## STATUTE - SECTIONS 178.160-178.180, RSMo

State to furnish funds for readers for blind students, when.

178.160.

1. Whenever a blind person who is a citizen of this State and a pupil in actual attendance in a local school district program or a Special School District program or in actual attendance at a college, university, technical or professional school located in this State and authorized by law to grant degrees, other than an institution established for the regular instruction of the blind, applies to Rehabilitation Services for the Blind for the aid provided under this section, the State shall pay the sum of five hundred dollars per annum with which to employ a person or persons to read to the pupil from textbooks and pamphlets used by him in his studies at the college, university or school.
2. Blind persons who are eligible to receive the services of a reader under provisions of any other State or Federal program are not eligible to receive the aid provided under this section. However, money shall be paid under this section as matching funds to the extent required to provide services of a reader to blind persons who are eligible to receive the services of a reader under provisions of any other State or Federal program, provided that the matching funds provided under this section shall not exceed five hundred dollars per annum.

Qualifications of reader:

178.170.

If possible, the person selected as a reader for the blind pupil shall be a person who, in the judgment of the executive officer of the institution, is worthy of the assistance in pursuing his school work which the remuneration provided for in section 178.160 will accord him.

Compensation of reader, how and when paid.

178.180.

Except for school districts, the moneys shall be paid monthly out of the general revenue fund of the State, after the beginning of the school year of the institution, by Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Department of Social Services, to the Treasurer of the institution upon his presenting an account showing the names of individuals who received the services and the number of hours of services each received. For school districts, the money shall be paid out of the State school moneys fund upon application to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education showing the actual number of blind pupils attending school in the school district after the beginning of the school year with the regular distribution of State funds provided for in sections 163.081 and 163.082\*, RSMo. The account shall be verified by the executive officer of the school district or institution.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Division of Financial and Administrative Services

Special Education Finance

(573) 751-0622 or [spedfunding@dese.mo.gov](mailto:spedfunding@dese.mo.gov)



Administrative Memos



Webinars



Web Applications

## Contact Information

### Special Education Finance

Phone: 573-751-0622

**Fax: 573-526-6898**

**[spedfunding@dese.mo.gov](mailto:spedfunding@dese.mo.gov)**

**Special Education Finance**