

BTBL History

1931

- Pratt-Smoot Act establishes the national free library service for blind persons. Two regional libraries established in Michigan. One to serve Wayne County; the other to serve the rest of Michigan and housed in Saginaw under the Bureau of Social Services.

1933

- Pratt-Smoot Act amended to include talking book service.

1935

- Machines provided free.

1952

- Service expanded to include children who were blind.

1959

- Michigan PA 127 of 1959 transferred control of State Library for the Blind to the State Board for Libraries.

1963

- Michigan State Library for the Blind moved from Saginaw to Lansing.

1966

- Service expanded to include all persons unable to read standard print.

1968

- Flexible discs introduced for magazines.

1972

- Grand Traverse Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened serving residents of Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Crawford, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, and Otsego counties.
- Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened serving residents of Washtenaw and Livingston counties.

1973

- Kent County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened serving residents of Kent County and the town of Greenville in Montcalm County.

1974

- Talking Book Center of the Mideastern Michigan Library Cooperative opened at the Genesee District Library
- Willard Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Battle Creek) opened serving residents in Kalamazoo, Branch, Barry, Calhoun, Hillsdale, and St. Joseph counties.
- Oakland County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Farmington Hills) opened serving residents of Oakland County.
- Wayne County Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped began receiving an appropriation of \$50,000 as a line item in Michigan State Library's budget.

1975

- Mideastern Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Flint) opened serving residents of Genesee, Lapeer, and Shiawassee counties.
- Upper Peninsula (Escanaba) opened serving residents of the U.P.

1976

- Automation of Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped began using custom software.

1977

- The first LSCA formula grants awarded to subregionals.

1978

- Northland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Alpena) opened serving residents of Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Cheyabogan, Iosco, Montmorency, Oscoda, Ogemaw, and Presque Isle counties.
- Montcalm and Ionia counties' residents transferred from Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Kent.
- Monroe, Lenawee, and Jackson counties' residents transferred from Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Washtenaw County.
- Blue Water Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Port Huron) opened serving residents in St. Clair, Sanilac, Tuscola, and Huron counties.

1979

- Muskegon County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opens to serve approximately 200 patrons in Muskegon County that were previously served by the Library of Michigan.
- Emmet, Charlevoix, and Otsego counties' residents transferred from Grand Traverse to Northland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Manistee, Missaukee, Roscommon, and Wexford counties' residents transferred from Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Grand Traverse Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1980

- Upper Peninsula Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped transferred from the State Library Branch in Escanaba to the Superiorland Library Cooperative in Marquette.
- Downtown Detroit Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened as part of Wayne County Regional.

1983

- Michigan State Library became Library of Michigan.
- In-WATS line established at Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped for 24-hour patron contact.
- Library of Michigan/Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped News began publication.
- Consumer Involvement Committee established.
- Macomb Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped opened serving residents of Macomb County.
- Southwest Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Portage) opened serving residents of Allegan, Berrien, Kalamazoo, Cass (in part), and Van Buren (in part) counties. Residents of Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties transferred from Willard Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Southwest Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1984

- State appropriation of \$140,000 (\$10,000 each) for subregional network library and Wayne County and Downtown Detroit LBPHs.
- Residents of Mason, Lake, Osceola, Oceana, Newaygo, and Mecosta counties transferred from Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Grand Traverse Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Monroe and Lenawee counties' residents transferred from Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Willard Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1986

- First competitive LSCA grants awarded to subregionals and Wayne County Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1987

- Capital Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Lansing) opened serving residents of Bay, Clare, Clinton, Eaton, Gladwin, Gratiot, Ingham, Isabella, Midland, Ottawa, Saginaw, and (in part) Shiawassee counties.
- Ottawa County residents transferred from Capital Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to Southwest Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1989

- Kurzweil Reading machine donated to Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped by Consumers Power.

1990

- Audio Materials Production Center opened; funded by Library of Michigan Foundation. This studio focuses on production of materials not available through the National Library service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped collection, concentrating on books on Michigan or the Great Lakes area. This studio is located in the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped area at the Michigan Library and Historical Center.
- Voice access to ANSWER, Library of Michigan online catalog, available.
- Southwest Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped closed. Patrons transferred to Capital Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Willard Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped closed. Patrons transferred to Capital Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- First contract grants awarded to subregional network libraries, Wayne County Regional and Downtown Detroit Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

1991

- Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped network libraries using READS (NLS-provided automated circulation software on LSCA-funded equipment).
- Capital Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped functions incorporated by Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped joined CUL, Consortium of User Libraries, for automated circulation.

1994

- Oakland County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped moved from Farmington Hills to Pontiac.

1995

- Reader Advisor Model of service adopted by Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Statewide Automation Committee formed for the purpose of investigating and recommending technology options for the future of the Library of Michigan network.

1996

- Descriptive videotape service instituted through Library of Michigan Foundation gift for Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped directly-served patrons.

1997

- Full Access for patrons in the LMSBPH service area to the CUL online public access catalog (OPAC) of Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped holdings via the Internet. Partial access to LMSBPH OPAC for Subregional Libraries begins.
- Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped celebrates 25 years of library service to individuals with disabilities.
- Grand Traverse Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped celebrates 25 years of library service to individuals with disabilities.
- Subregional State Aid increases 1%.

1998

- Kent District Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped moves to Grandville Public Library in Grandville.
- Wayne Regional moves from Wayne, Michigan to Westland, Michigan.
- Downtown Detroit Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped moves from the Detroit Public Library to the Douglass Branch Library in Detroit.
- Mideastern Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins using the Consortium of Users Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Macomb County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped celebrates 15 years of library service to individuals with disabilities.
- Kent District celebrates 25 years of library services to individuals with disabilities.
- Subregional State Aid increases to \$554,300 (\$46,191 each) for subregional network library and Wayne County and Downtown Detroit LBPHs.

1999

- Oakland County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped changes its name to Oakland County Library for the Visually and Physically Impaired.

- Kent District Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Blue Water Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Port Huron) begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Muskegon County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

2000

- Grand Traverse Area Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

2001

- Upper Peninsula Library for the Blind and People with Disabilities begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

2003

- STAR Library Services celebrates 25 years of library services to individuals with disabilities
- Kent District celebrates 30 years of library services to individuals with disabilities.

2005

- Northland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Alpena) begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Macomb County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Port Huron) begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

2007

- Northland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Alpena) closes.
- Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins serving additional residents of Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Emmet, Iosco, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Otsego, and Presque Isle counties.

2008

- Mideastern Michigan Talking Book Center closes. Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins serving additional residents of Lapeer and Shiawassee counties.
- Genesee District subregional library opens for Genesee County residents.
- Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled begins using the Consortium of User Libraries information/circulation system in coordination with the Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Washtenaw County Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled closes. Library of Michigan Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped begins serving additional residents of Jackson and Livingston counties

2009

- Ann Arbor District Library opens Washtenaw Library for the Blind and Physically Disabled serving Washtenaw County.
- Macomb County Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Port Huron) closes. Subregiona transfers to Suburban Cooperative.
- Executive Order No. 2009-36, effective October 1, 2009, abolished the Department of History, Arts and Libraries and transferred the Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to the Michigan Commission for the Blind.

2010

- Name changed from Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (SBPH) to MCB Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL).

2012 (October 1)

- On October 1, 2012, Governor Rick Snyder's Executive Order 2012-10 went into effect, creating a new bureau, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), and the library became the BSBP Braille and Talking Book Library.

See here for contact information

[Telephone, Fax, Hours, Directions, Holidays, and E-mail](#)