

Fairfax County Public Library

LOB #95:

SENIOR SERVICES (50+)

Purpose

This LOB provides information, programs and special access technologies for older persons, special outreach and access for those people with disabilities and provides outreach services for those in the community who are unable to travel to a library branch. The Senior Services (50+) LOB anchors the Library's comprehensive approach to literacy services and information access for every person to thrive at any age at every stage by removing barriers to library services for people with disabilities. Senior Services ensures disabled and senior customers continue to have access to programs and information available to the rest of the population.

Description

This LOB consists of the Access Services program which provides specialized staff and services for those in the community with vision impairment or who are otherwise unable to use traditional printed books and information or access a library branch.

The Access Services program serves people with vision disabilities and other disabilities that prevent the reading of standard print, and provides audio books and equipment to them via the Library of Congress' Talking Books Program. While not limited to the older adult population, the program is heavily used by those aged 62 and older. Access Services provides home delivery service for users unable to travel to a local library to borrow materials due to a disability, frailty or illness. Its deposit collection delivers rotating collections of large print and regular print books to 22 sites throughout Fairfax County including older adult living facilities, retirement communities, senior centers, nursing homes and adult care centers.

Access Services facilitates 16 book discussion groups that meet at senior centers, in retirement communities and in senior residential facilities by gathering, sending, even selecting titles in the formats (regular print, large print and audio) requested by participants in each group. Access Services provides administrative support for volunteer-led self-help discussion groups for adults coping with vision loss at Patrick Henry Library in Vienna and Reston Regional Library.

Access Services also makes available screen reader software, screen magnification software and text to speech reading equipment designed for those with blindness and low vision. It refers customers to reliable research and consumer resources and attends outreach events. Access Services participates in, advises and supports services for seniors and those with disabilities countywide through participation on countywide committees, and with other similar agencies, such as the Area Agency on Aging and Equity Programs.

The service is delivered by the FCPL in the Access Services branch in the Fairfax County Government Center, through U.S. mail, customer phone calls, e-mails and walk-in service.

The program is performed by library staff and volunteers. The program began as the Talking Books Service in 1972. Since then, the scope of services has expanded to include the current suite of services.

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Benefits

This LOB ensures access to reading for all in Fairfax County regardless of age or disability. This is a unique service offered by FCPL that directly impacts the quality of life, independence, and intellectual growth of older adults and others with vision or physical disabilities who have difficulty reading standard print or getting to a library.

The Senior Services (+50) LOB supports the following Vision Elements: Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities, Building Livable Spaces, Connecting People and Places, Maintaining Healthy Economies, and Creating a Culture of Engagement.

Mandates

This Line of Business is not mandated.

Trends and Challenges

Trends: Fairfax County projects a huge increase in its population of adults 50 years of age and older. Between 2010 and 2030 the 50+ population will increase by approximately 19 percent, the 65+ population by 51 percent and the 70+ population by 55 percent. Impairments in vision, hearing and mobility become more common as people age. Important goals include providing assistance and resources for seniors to thrive and stay in place, receive appropriate services in retirement communities and continue to be an active participant in society.

Challenges: Access Services will need to maintain staffing to meet the increase in demand for its services in light of the increase in the number of seniors who will be eligible for them. Advancing technologies will likely be available and funding to keep up with these will also be key.

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #95: Senior Services (50+)			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$487,348	\$492,739	\$537,982
Operating Expenses	18,146	7,533	21,204
Total Expenditures	<u>\$505,494</u>	<u>\$500,272</u>	<u>\$559,186</u>
General Fund Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$505,494	\$500,272	\$559,186
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	8 / 8	8 / 8	8 / 8
Total Positions	<u>8 / 8</u>	<u>8 / 8</u>	<u>8 / 8</u>

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Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Circulation of Large Print Collection	90,580	87,631	85,570	85,140	85,565
Number of Outreach Visits and Offsite Collection Deliveries	157	144	126	125	125
Number of Assistive Materials	21,722	22,204	27,959	27,958	27,955

The Library's large print collection refers to books in which the font is considerably larger than usual, to accommodate people who have poor vision. Among librarians, large print is defined as print that is at least a point size of 18. In FY 2015 more than 85,000 large print items were checked out of the library, approximately 1 percent of the library's total circulation.

The Access Services branch removes barriers to library services for people with permanent and temporary disabilities. These services include: providing opportunities to learn about assistive technology and equipment, providing books in alternative formats to people with vision impairments and delivering books to readers who cannot visit a local library. Access Services also provides rotating collections of large print and regular print library books to senior centers, retirement communities, hospitals and other eligible organizations located in Fairfax County. Titles are selected to match reading interests of clients in each institutional setting. Deposit sites are located throughout the County and consist mainly of Senior Centers and retirement communities. The library exchanges books with these sites 4 times a year. Books are kept at these locations for three months at a time, enhancing the site's own library collection. Materials are exchanged with these sites in one of three ways; items are physically delivered to about half the sites using a County vehicle; items are sent through the U. S. Post Office; and items are sent to other branch libraries where the site arranges their own pick-up. The number of deposit sites can fluctuate as the site's activities directors come and go and their personal enthusiasm for books and the library ebbs and flows. The number of Outreach Visits and Offsite Collection Deliveries fluctuates slightly from year to year. In FY 2015, the library provided 126 outreach visits and offsite collection deliveries. It is expected that this number will remain steady over the next several years.

The library has nearly 28,000 items in alternative formats including Talking Books and books in braille. The Talking Books program benefits individuals who are unable to read or use standard print due to permanent or temporary blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations. The Access Services library provides specially recorded books, magazines and players to residents of Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, the City of Falls Church and the Town of Herndon through the free Talking Book Program of the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Materials and machines may be borrowed and returned by mail at no cost to the user. The Disability Awareness Collection offers books and other materials related to learning about and managing disabilities. The Audio-Described DVDs are classic, popular and award-winning movies containing special descriptive narration for people with low vision or blindness. FCPL also lends a variety of multimedia nostalgia kits designed for use by groups of older adults. The number of items in the library collection of assistive materials is expected to increase over the next several years and is expected to receive increased usage as the County's population continues to age.

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Library staff welcome invitations to present informational programs and participate in community events. Readers in Fairfax County who are unable to travel to a local library due to disability, illness, or frailty may be eligible for free home delivery of library materials. The library's Access Services branch also sponsors support groups and assists book discussion groups for adults who are coping with the loss of sight. Groups meet at libraries and other locations throughout Fairfax County. The library is also able to provide access to assistive technology many residents need in order to take advantage of these assistive materials. Visitors to the library's Access Services may use a variety of assistive devices/services including:

- FM, infrared or loop systems for meetings and events. JAWS®: Screen-Reading Software screen-reading program that uses a voice synthesizer operated with keyboard commands;
- Juliet Pro: Braille Embosser. Printer with grade 2 braille output from Duxbury Translator;
- Magnifiers available for loan;
- myReader2, an auto reader and magnifier;
- PhonicEar®: Personal Listening FM System, augments speech through headphones with the presenter using a small microphone;
- Pico: Lightweight and portable video magnification device;
- Reading EdgeT: Scanning & Reading Device, converts text to speech. The text can be saved to a storage device;
- Sara Scanning and Reading Appliance, a scanner that recognizes text, translates it into speech then reads the text aloud;
- Smart View: Video Magnifier, a system that magnifies print placed on its display board up to 60x with different text and background colors;
- Tieman Braille Voyager: Braille Display Device that translates text into electronically raised pins simulating braille;
- Victor Reader Stream, a DAISY (Digital Audio Information System) and MP3 player; and
- ZoomText®: Screen-Magnifying and Reading Software that combines magnification with optional screen-reading voice. Provides access to Microsoft® Windows and the Internet.