



The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Fund: 7000-9101

The Board of Library Commissioners is the agency of state government with the statutory authority and responsibility to organize, develop, coordinate and improve library services throughout the Commonwealth. Founded in 1890, it is the first state library agency in the nation, and since its inception has been working to ensure library service for all citizens of the Commonwealth. Today the MBLC brings innovation and collaboration into library services that provide equal access to all, and help communities save money. Funding for this budget line is down 12% from its high in FY2001.

Why the MBLC is Important

The Board's programs, services and leadership ensure that all residents of the Commonwealth, regardless of their geographic location, social or economic status, age, level of physical or intellectual ability, or cultural background, have access to information and resources that can change lives. Whether it's the statewide system of sharing, our support for technology in libraries, digital resources like eBooks and databases, the library construction program, summer reading program, digitization and preservation; grants to help immigrants, pre-k children, seniors, teens, prisoners, job seekers, and people with disabilities, the MBLC paves the road so that libraries can meet the needs of their local residents and that all people can thrive.

How a Lack of Funding has affected the MBLC

- The MBLC has been forced to cut multiple positions, which has made it a struggle to carry out the statutory mandate to improve library services for all the residents of the Commonwealth.
- Statewide research databases have been cut, reducing the amount of information available to Massachusetts residents.
- Staffing costs have been shifted to programs in order to keep them operating at an acceptable level.

What the MBLC would do with Increased Funding

- Increase advisory and outreach services to library directors, staff, trustees and friends in order to build their capacity to meet the library and information needs of MA residents.
- Increase staff support for grants for innovative programs and services at libraries.
- Shift staffing costs back to our administrative line so funding can be focused solely on supporting key programs including resource sharing and construction.