

# Newsline

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## Montana State Library (\$240,000)



### Program Description

Newspapers are the primary means through which healthcare and local and state officials communicate with the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Print newspapers are not accessible to blind and low vision individuals so the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) creates audio recordings of newspapers of record that subscribers can access to hear important news of the day. Newsline provides immediate COVID-19 information that cannot be found in an accessible format anywhere else. With state funding the Newsline service would be free to all qualified Montanans however Montana currently provides no funding, so Montanans have no means to access critical COVID-19 related news that is shared with the newspaper media. As a result, this population is shut out of vital information.

The most common way to access Newsline content is via the telephone, but there are many other ways subscribers may use the service. For example, Apple users can subscribe to Newsline through an iOS app. Other subscribers use a handheld reading machine called the Victor Stream/Trek that accesses Newsline directly. Subscribers can access Newsline via the web or through e-mails pushed to one’s address. In addition, Amazon devices such as the Alexa smart speakers can read Newsline via on Alexa skill.

[NFB-NEWSLINE® | National Federation of the Blind](#)

### Required Resources

As the program sponsor for the State of Montana to the National Federation for the Blind, the Montana State Library would fund an agreement with the NFB to offer Newsline in Montana. The NFB would use the funds to record Montana newspapers and to offering training and marketing for the Newsline service.

Funding	
Total OTHER ARPA Funds	\$240,000
Estimated Costs	
Annual Newsline Service (\$40,000 x 4 years)	\$160,000
Annual Training and Marketing (\$20,000 x 4 years)	\$80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$240,000</b>

### Objectives and Measurable Outcomes

The purpose of Newsline is to keep blind and low-vision Montanans informed. MSL and the NFB would initially seek to enroll at least 350 Montana subscribers for this service. The NFB would record six Montana newspapers and Montana Associated Press content. Currently MSL services 3,000 blind and low vision Montanans through the Talking Book Library. To demonstrate the success of the program, MLS and NFB desires to increase the subscriber base to include more MSL Talking Book Library patrons. As a result, these subscribers will have access to critical, timely pandemic -related news.