

New York State Library: An Overview

The **New York State Library** provides information and library services to New Yorkers through its **Research Library, Talking Book and Braille Library, the Division of Library Development** and the **New York Online Electronic Library (NOVELNY)**.

The **Research Library** is the principal library for the people and government of New York State. With over 20 million items and a strong focus on the culture and history of New York State, the Library serves the research needs of New Yorkers including state agency staff, other libraries, schools and universities, and the business, legal and scientific communities. The Library loans books and other library materials to individuals onsite and to libraries statewide through interlibrary loan. Through its rapidly growing *Digital Collections*, the library now makes many documents, particularly New York State government publications, available online. Over 200 years old, the Library is one of the 125 largest research libraries in North America. Visitors can access the comprehensive local history and genealogy collection, law library, federal and state document collection, and historic manuscript collection, as well as use free internet and wireless service. All New York residents 18 years and older may apply for a Resident Borrower's Card.

The **Talking Book and Braille Library** is a regional library for the National Library Service for the blind and physically handicapped and provides audio and braille books and magazines, including downloadable books for eligible readers. TBBL serves some 32,000 adults and children in 55 upstate counties.

The **Division of Library Development** works in partnership with the state's 72 library systems to bring cost-effective, high-quality library services to New Yorkers via the state's 7,000 school, public, academic, and special libraries. Staff experts work with librarians, trustees, school administrators, public officials, and local leaders to solve problems and find new ways of making library services and resources available to their community. Library Development administers more than \$130 million in state and federal funding for New York's libraries and helps New York's libraries take full advantage of federal funding programs like the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) and federal E-rate telecommunications discounts.

The **New York Online Virtual Electronic Library (NOVELNY)**, is a rich online resource of high-quality information, reference materials, full-text magazine and newspaper articles, and scholarly publications. The State Library provides all New Yorkers with free 24/7 access to NOVELNY e-resources. Visit <http://www.novelnewyork.org/>.

New York's Libraries – A Primer

- **Library systems** work at regional levels to improve local library programs and services for all New Yorkers. Systems offer continuing education and resource sharing programs no one library could afford on its own. New York has 72 library systems: 23 **Public Library Systems**; 9 **Reference and Research Library Resources Councils**; and 40 **School Library Systems**.
- **Public libraries** are established and funded locally by municipalities, districts or associations. There are 756 public libraries with over 1,000 outlets serving New Yorkers. A **public library district** is a type of public library in which the community elects the library's governing board and votes on the library's budget.
- **School, academic and special libraries** are at the heart of their parent institutions. Every K-12 public school is required to have a library. The academic library is the center of learning on college and university campuses. Over 1,600 special libraries serve employees of government, hospitals, law firms, businesses and other organizations.



For information, contact:

Office of the New York State Librarian and Assistant Commissioner for Libraries

Phone: (518) 474-5930 **Fax:** (518) 486-6880 **Email:** paula.paolucci@nysed.gov

Web site: <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov>