

Qualifications

An individual with a physically-based disability that makes it difficult or impossible to read a printed book likely will qualify for Bookshare® services. Organizations (schools, libraries, and rehabilitation and social services agencies) can also obtain Bookshare services to support their efforts to meet the reading needs of people with these disabilities. The individual signing up for our services, or the organization serving that individual, will be asked to provide Bookshare with a Proof of Disability (certified by someone who is a Competent Authority as described below) during the registration process. As explained in more detail below, the Qualifications to enroll in and use Bookshare services are based on an exception contained in Section 121 of U.S. Copyright law, commonly known as the Chafee Amendment. These qualifications are not set by Bookshare itself - we have to comply with the law that makes Bookshare possible as a qualified provider of these copyrighted materials. Many of the copyrighted books in Bookshare are provided to us through permission agreements with publishers, and our commitment to them is to limit the distribution of copyrighted materials to people with disabilities, using the same set of qualifications. Because of differences in national laws, and limitations in permissions agreements, not all Bookshare titles are available in all countries.

This webpage, including the Table that follows and the answers to Frequently Asked Questions, below, provide the guidelines for determining what qualifies as a print disability. It also lists examples of Competent Authorities qualified by law to make this assessment. A Competent Authority is a person with professional qualifications which permit that professional to certify that the prospective Bookshare member qualifies under U.S. Copyright law or its local equivalent. For more detailed information, carefully review the Frequently Asked Qualifications Questions at Bookshare.org.

Disability	Qualified/Not Qualified	Examples of Competent Authorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual Impairment (VI) • Blindness / Low vision 	Qualified, if confirmed by a listed Competent Authority	<p>A family doctor, ophthalmologist, optometrist, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Special Education teacher</p> <p>Certification from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the U.S. or similar national body in other countries</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Disability (PD) 	Qualified, if confirmed by a listed Competent Authority that the disability significantly affects the use of printed materials	A family doctor or other medical professional, physical therapist, resource specialist, Special Education teacher
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Disability (LD) • Reading Disability 	Qualified, if confirmed by a listed Competent Authority, that the disability has a physical basis and significantly affects the use of print	A neurologist, psychiatrist, learning disability specialist, Special Education teacher, school psychologist, or clinical psychologist with a background in learning disabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism • Emotional disabilities • ADHD • ESL and ELL • Intellectual Disabilities 	<p>Not qualified under this diagnosis,</p> <p>unless accompanied by a qualifying visual, physical, learning or reading disability as certified by a Competent Authority as above</p>	Examples listed above