



**53.5
million
items**

available to patrons
through statewide
resource sharing

The Massachusetts Library System

Fund: 7000-9401

The Massachusetts Library System provides services and facilitation to make libraries stronger by working together to share materials, purchasing power, as well as their own professional expertise and talents. MLS serves more than 1600 libraries of all types including public, academic, hospitals, museums and more throughout the Commonwealth. In addition, MLS provides statewide delivery of Interlibrary Loan items patrons request through library networks.

Why MLS is Important

No library has the space or money to meet the needs of all of their residents. Through the interlibrary loan system and other digital resources provided in part by MLS, libraries are able to share resources which gives Massachusetts library patrons access to the 66.8 million items available in libraries statewide. This in turn saves libraries money which amounts to a total of \$55 million statewide each year.

MLS also provides training, consulting, temporary staffing and more to help libraries and librarians meet the challenges they face today, and prepare for the future.

How a Lack of Funding has Affected MLS

- A hiring freeze has left positions unfilled and has reduced the amount of training and consulting that MLS can provide. Current staffing is not adequate to meet demands of member libraries.
- A 60% reduction in funding to statewide databases spending has eliminated important resources for researchers and students and places a greater burden on individual schools and libraries to close the gap.
- Elimination of over 100 book delivery stops have hampered efforts to ensure that all Massachusetts residents have equitable access to information.

What MLS would do with Increased Funding

- Restoration and expansion of training and consulting services to libraries to address critical issues affecting Massachusetts communities including the opioid crisis.
- Restoration of access to the most needed electronic journals and magazines for students and researchers.
- Increasing book delivery to ensure equitable access to information for all.