

**163.485 Legislative findings and declarations relating to accessible electronic information for the disabled.**

The General Assembly finds and declares that:

- (1) Approximately eight hundred seventy-four thousand (874,000) Kentuckians have disabilities and, of this number, approximately three hundred thousand (300,000) are blind or visually impaired or have other print impairments that prevent them from using conventional print material;
- (2) Kentucky fulfills an important responsibility by providing books and magazines prepared in Braille, audio, and large-type formats to eligible blind and disabled persons;
- (3) The technology, transcription methods, and means of distribution used for these materials are labor-intensive and cannot support rapid dissemination to individuals in rural and urban areas throughout the state;
- (4) Lack of direct and prompt access to information included in newspapers, magazines, newsletters, schedules, announcements, and other time-sensitive materials limits educational, employment, and independent opportunities, literacy, and full participation in society by blind and disabled persons;
- (5) This limitation can be overcome through the use of high-speed computer, radio, and telecommunications technology, combined with customized software, providing a practical cost-effective way to convert electronic text-based information into human or synthetic speech suitable for statewide distribution and accessible through radio, a touch-tone telephone, and modern telecommunications technology;
- (6) Radio, telecommunications, and voice-based information systems are cost-efficient information delivery systems for this state;
- (7) Federal funds have been used to develop the technology and infrastructure needed for statewide toll-free access to daily newspapers and other timely information of local, state, and national interests, providing an efficient and cost-effective means of reader registration, content acquisition, and intrastate telecommunications support; and
- (8) Use of this accessible electronic information service will enhance Kentucky's efforts to meet the needs of blind and disabled citizens for access to information that is otherwise available in print, thereby reducing isolation and supporting full integration and equal access for such individuals.

**Effective:** July 13, 2004

**History:** Created 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 129, sec. 1, effective July 13, 2004.

**Legislative Research Commission Note** (7/13/2004). 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 129, sec. 4, provides that 2004 Ky. Acts ch. 129, which creates KRS 163.485, 163.487, and 163.489, is to be known as the Accessible Electronic Information Act.