

Public and Home School: 2026 APH Federal Quota Program of Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired in WI LEAs and agencies serving school aged students 3 – 21 years

Students who are blind or visually impaired in Wisconsin may be eligible to obtain and loan specialized educational materials and equipment from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). The APH utilizes funds allocated annually by Congress to the Federal Quota Program for the students who meet specific criteria and are formally registered by their Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and agencies **by the first Monday in January 2026, which is Monday, January 5, 2026.**

1. **LEA, please complete the [APH Census Designee Form](#), no later than **December 26, 2025****, to designate your vision program coordinator or teacher of the blind and visually impaired (TVI) who will complete the APH Federal Quota Census paperwork for your district or agency.
2. Your designee will receive an email with the digital census packet for the agency or school, including instructions; they should be watching their email closely. Secure file transmittal will be explained in the instructions.
3. Registrations must be submitted no later than midnight on **Friday, February 20, 2026.**

All students **must** have a signed [Parent/Guardian Permission Form \(FERPA release\)](#) for the district or agency on file **within** the LEA or agency. Many LEAs and agencies collect this form at annual IEP meetings. **WCBVI does not receive a copy of these FERPA Parent/Guardian Permission forms, but any audit done by APH would require that the LEA or agency provide proof of that documentation on file.** For questions, view our [Parent/Guardian Permission Form \(FERPA release\) FAQ](#) document.

Eligibility for Federal Quota Registration

For students to be formally registered in the APH Federal Quota census program, they **MUST** meet the requirements as outlined in the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind. Students must:

- **Meet the definition of blindness (MDB)** — a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less (using a Snellen chart or an acuity determined in Snellen equivalents) in the better eye with the best correction or a peripheral field of vision no greater than 20 degrees,
-OR-
- **Function at the definition of blindness (FDB)**—when visual function meets the definition of blindness as determined by an eye care specialist (ophthalmologist

or optometrist) or a medical doctor such as a neurologist. Students in this category manifest unique visual characteristics often found in conditions referred to as neurological, cortical, or cerebral blindness or low vision (e.g., brain injury or dysfunction).

NOTE: Educational vision assessments are not acceptable forms of documentation and solely medical diagnosis may not be accepted to verify eligibility. For example, the medical professional should state that the student indeed functions at the definition of blindness (FDB).

NOTE: Ocular reports and medical information used to determine MDB or FDB should be kept in your district or agency. They are not collected by WCBVI and should never be emailed or mailed.

-OR-

If neither MDB nor FDB are met, students may also be eligible because they:

- **Qualify under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) definition of blindness: an impairment in vision, that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance ([34 CFR §300.8\(c\)\(13\)](#)).**
- **NOTE: Students should be registered as MDB or FDB first if there is a choice. IDEA is to be reported for students who qualify but do not meet MDB or FDB and are under age 22 on the first Monday in January.**

For more information or questions about the APH Federal Quota census process in Wisconsin, criteria or student eligibility, **contact the APH Federal Quota Census Coordinator at aphcensus@wcbvi.k12.wi.us**

*reminder not to email student names or personally identifiable information (PII)