# Webinar transcript: “How to support library patrons to read CELA’s audiobooks and magazines: Transitioning from reading on CDs to other devices”

This webinar was recorded in June 2025

## Introduction and land acknowledgement

00:00:09

**Faline Bobier:** How to Support Library Patrons to Read CELA's Audiobooks and Magazines: Transitioning from reading on CDs to other devices. Welcome to this webinar, intended to give you an overview of how you can support your patrons with print disabilities to read CELA's audiobooks. My name is Faline Bobier, I'm the Training and Outreach Coordinator with CELA, and I'll be presenting the webinar. A recorded version of this webinar will also be available on the CELA website.

(silence)

Before we begin, I'd like to read a brief land acknowledgement. I currently live and work in Toronto, the traditional territory of many nations, including of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. Wherever we find ourselves today across Turtle Island, we can be grateful to the First Nations for their careful stewardship of the land.

To start with learning goals or the agenda, I'm going to talk about what CELA is, a bit about the audiobooks in our collection, and how CELA Library accounts work, then I'll describe the different player options that you can choose from. I'll focus on the three main options, and how to get CELA books and magazines on them. I'll talk a bit about how CELA can support your library's book clubs and reading programs, and where you can find help, training, and tutorials. We are providing additional support for patrons and libraries while you transition from using CDs to another option.

## What is CELA?

00:02:07

First of all, what is CELA? CELA, the Centre for Equitable Library Access, is a comprehensive, accessible library service providing over 1.4 million books, magazines, and newspapers to people with print disabilities living in Canada. CELA is a national not-for-profit organization that provides accessible reading services to the approximately three million people across Canada with print disabilities.

Our services ensure that people with print disabilities across the country are more able to fully participate in learning, work, and community life, and contribute to the social, cultural, and economic development and success of their local and broader communities. Our mission is to support public libraries in the provision of accessible library collections, and to champion the fundamental right of Canadians with print disabilities to access media and reading materials in the format of their choice.

## About CELA’s audiobooks

00:03:19

First of all, a little bit about CELA's audiobook collection. We have a wide selection of favorite authors, topics in both English and French. We also have some audio magazines, mostly Canadian titles. We have titles available from OverDrive, Audible, and other commercial publishers. Our recorded books include professional recordings, including celebrity and author narrators. We get our audiobooks from commercial audio producers, as well as from other libraries for people with print disabilities internationally.

## Alternatives to CDs

00:04:08

Alternatives to CDs. We know that many of your patrons enjoy receiving their books on CDs that arrive at their home, or that they get from your public library. While this format has worked well for many users, the fact is recent shifts in technology, the marketplace, and in our federal funding have required CELA to make the decision to cease production and distribution of audiobook CDs to all CELA users and CELA member libraries, effective July 31st, 2025.

We do understand how disappointing this news is to many of our users. We also know that this news will require libraries to make changes to how they offer CELA audiobooks to their patrons who preferred CDs.

In our commitment to offering choice in terms of reading formats and devices, in 2023 we introduced a new player called the Envoy Connect as a new way to read our audiobooks. We have also launched a new way to play CELA audiobooks on a smart speaker, particularly on an Amazon Alexa, which I'll describe in more detail later on. We will continue to add to our audiobook collection as well as to our other formats, including e-text or electronic text, braille, and printbraille.

## How to start: your library’s CELA account

00:05:47

How to start, first of all, your library's CELA account? All CELA libraries have a main account that they can use to order books for patrons, that they use to register patrons for CELA, and through which they can view their CELA usage statistics. There is the main CELA account that all CELA member libraries have. Some libraries also have a deposit account through which they received bulk shipments of DAISY audiobooks on CD. That was an optional account, and will be ending as of July 31st since we will no longer be producing or distributing CDs to patrons, or to libraries.

Some libraries also have what's called a Direct to Player account, which is also an optional account that you may be looking to use in the future, since you can use your Direct to Player account to transfer books from CELA's website onto various devices. As I mentioned, our deposit collections will be stopping as of July 31st, 2025. Libraries may keep their existing deposit collection CDs. We will no longer require statistics, obviously, for your deposit collection as of the end of July. We do offer CELA training guides and support for patrons, or libraries to transition to other devices.

## Direct to Player format

00:07:39

Now, I want to talk a little bit about the Direct to Player format. Really, the key to knowing our digital delivery options is to understand how the Direct to Player delivery option works. This is the easiest way to load books onto an Envoy Connect device, the EasyReader app, or straight to a Stratus 4M or Stream player. You simply choose the DAISY audio Direct to Player format in our catalog from the drop-down menu, and the book will be loaded on your bookshelf.

Once you have logged into your main CELA account at celalibrary.ca, you can find the Direct to Player bookshelf option by selecting the My Account tab, then any device you connect to will display the books. Please note, though, that the last read playing position may not be consistent across all devices with the same book. Since the different devices share the same bookshelf, you can have the same book on multiple devices.

Be careful if you delete it off the bookshelf in your CELA account, as it might disappear off of the other devices, unless you have actually downloaded it to the specific device. If you have the title on the EasyReader app and have downloaded the item, rather than streaming it, the book will stay on your device. You will need to delete the book from your Direct to Player bookshelf on the app.

We're now going to look at the most popular audiobook player options that will play CELA's books and magazines. The first device we're going to look at is the Envoy Connect.

## Envoy Connect

00:09:43

The new Envoy Connect device is another way for your patrons to access CELA books. Envoy Connect is an easy-to-use, portable, and affordable option for reading accessible audiobooks. It can be reloaded by downloading the books or magazines directly from the patron's CELA Direct to Player bookshelf with our software called CELA Connect.

Many public libraries are loaning out Envoy Connect devices, and loading books for people with print disabilities. This option seems to be becoming more popular with libraries that are looking for newer and less expensive ways to offer reading devices. The Envoy Connect can be purchased from CNIB Smartlife for $97.

(silence)

Choosing books and magazines. Before loading your Envoy Connect players, you will need to choose books and or magazines to add to your Direct to Player bookshelf in your main CELA account. Select the format DAISY audio (Direct to player), or DAISY text (Direct to player). Wait a few minutes and go to My Account, and then open your Direct to Player Bookshelf to check that the books or magazines have been added. You can also receive an email letting you know when the book is on the bookshelf. To set this up, all you need to do is go to My Account and select Communication Preferences.

The free CELA Connect software that you will use with the Envoy Connect device, you first need to install the free CELA Connect software on the library computers you will use to load the players. You can share your account login with staff, so this can be done on more than one computer. You can also load books or magazines onto more than one player. We'll describe, and show you how you load books onto your Envoy Connect in the video that we'll play on the next slide.

Before I play this video that will give you a demo of the Envoy Connect player and the CELA Connect software, I just want to mention that our demonstrator is using screen reading technology to operate her computer. You'll hear extra commands to use CELA Connect that aren't present if you're not using a screen reader.

### Envoy Connect and CELA Connect demonstration

00:12:50

**Ioana Gandrabur:** So, as you can see, here is the Envoy Connect player. It is quite small. It's about the size of a deck of cards. So it is very simple to put it in an envelope and send it by mail, for free, to CELA so that it can be reloaded and sent back to you. I will focus on the accessibility-specific features of this player.

First of all, all buttons are very clearly labeled and I can identify them by touch. Then, I will first play you some content so you can see the quality of the speaker, which I think is quite good given its size. And...

**User guide narrator:** Last updated, March 2023. What's in the box? Included in the box are the Envoy Connect player—

**Ioana:** So this is actually the user guide that is pre-loaded on every player. So, a user can receive it and right away learn how to use it simply by turning the player on.

The next feature that I want to show you is, I'm able, without seeing the LED button, to check the battery status. So if I press and hold the Rewind button...

(device beeps three times)

...we hear three beeps, so I know that the battery is fully charged. The last feature I want to show you is the solar panel. So, on the back, we have a solar panel that allows me to go off grid and go camping and still be able to charge my player and listen to my favourite books.

Let's move on now to the other method of adding and removing books on the Envoy Connect, which is the free app called CELA Connect.

We are now on the opening screen of the CELA Connect software. I will press Enter to connect to the library.

**Screen reader:** Enter. Status. Read only. Edit. CELA Connect. Envoy Connect.

**Ioana:** Enter again.

**screen reader:** Enter. Status. Read only. Edit.

**Ioana:** By the way, I'm using the JAWS screen reader that tells me everything that is on my PC screen. After this connection with CELA Library has been established, we will have a list of books that are currently loaded on the player that we can choose to remove, and then we will move on to the next step, which will be downloading a book from the CELA bookshelf.

**Screen reader:** CELA Connect. Select titles to remove. This is the list of titles on your Envoy Connect.

**Ioana:** Now I can tab over to the list of books.

**Screen reader:** List view not selected. “Tiohtià:ke.” DAISY—

**Ioana:** I have only one book, which I will press Spacebar and Select and press Enter.

**Screen reader:** Space. Enter. Status. Read only. Edit. Please—

**Ioana:** We are at the next stage, where we can choose a book to download. I will tab like previously.

**Screen reader:** List view. Not selected: “Leviathan wakes: Book one.” “A Suitable Boy.” “Wool...”

**Ioana:** And choose, let’s say...

**Screen reader:** I. “Indian in the Cabinet.”

**Ioana:** “Indian in the Cabinet.” I will press Spacebar and Enter.

**Screen reader:** Space. Check.

**Ioana:** Now we get a confirmation dialogue where we are asked to confirm whether we want to remove a book and download one book. Pressing Enter again.

**Screen reader:** Enter. Status. Read only. Edit. Please wait. Checking your bookshelf.

**Ioana:** After the book is downloaded, we will have a confirmation dialogue telling us that it is safe to unplug the player.

So now we have the confirmation message.

**Screen reader:** Message. Read only. Your content has been updated. You can now unplug the player.

**Ioana:** I will press Enter.

**Screen reader:** Enter.

**Ioana:** And we are back where we started.

### Loaning Envoy Connect devices

00:16:22

**Faline:** Loaning out Envoy Connect devices. We have received some helpful tips from libraries who have purchased several Envoy Connect players, and circulate them to their patrons. When you order the player, it comes with a micro USB cable, headphones, and a wrist lanyard. Libraries have recommended purchasing a storage case, so you can include all these items together. They also recommend purchasing additional micro USB cords as these can get lost, as well as charging plugs, so patrons can charge their players at home. The picture in the PowerPoint slide is a case that Kingston Frontenac Public Library in Ontario uses to lend out their Envoy Connect devices.

## Dolphin EasyReader application

00:17:17

The next device we're going to look at is the Dolphin EasyReader application. If you loan out tablets, you may wish to add the EasyReader app to the tablets. The app that works with our Direct to Player service, and is available for Apple and Android devices, as well as on desktops, or laptops is the Dolphin EasyReader app. The app is free, and you can search our catalog on the app, and add books and magazines to the bookshelf.

If you select books by logging into the CELA website, we recommend selecting the Direct to Player format for audio or text, since this will simply load the book straight onto the EasyReader app. If you want to have more options such as being able to sync books across all your devices with the app, you can pay for the premium edition which costs $49.99 Canadian per year. You can also access our books and magazines as ZIP files for DAISY Audio, several e-text formats, and electronic braille files.

Using the ZIP file will give you the option to read our books on many different apps including the Voice Dream app, Google Read & Write, plus, many more. Now, we're going to watch another demo of using the EasyReader app on an iPhone, and I'll just mention that the narrator will be using VoiceOver.

### EasyReader app demonstration

00:19:05

**Ioana:** I will now use VoiceOver, which is the screen reader for all iOS devices, and open the EasyReader app.

**Screen reader:** Braille screen input. E-A-S. EasyReader. Opening EasyReader. Portrait. EasyReader loading, ellipsis.

**Ioana:** Here I will open the side menu to show you how we can access the CELA library directly from this app.

**Screen reader:** Side menu. C-E-L-A library. Waiting for, ellipsis. C-E-L-A library.

**Ioana:** Here we have two options. We can either search or browse for a book that we can add to our bookshelf, or I can go to the bookshelf where I have already added books, either through this app or through the web interface.

**Screen reader:** Direct to Player bookshelf. Show results in Direct to Player bookshelf.

**Ioana:** This app can open either DAISY audio or DAISY text. And “DAISY” just means that this is the specialized format with enhanced navigation possibilities that I will show you in a minute. I will look for the book Denison Avenue that is already on my bookshelf.

**Screen reader:** Denison Avenue, Cristina Wong, DAISY-- Denison Avenue. Open button.

**Ioana:** I have already downloaded this book, so it shows me that I can open it.

**Screen reader:** One. “Gong Gong and Poh Poh—”

**Ioana:** So it remembered my previous position. I will now demonstrate the navigation possibilities.

**Screen reader:** Play. Book navigation. Button selected. Headings, button one, level one, two percent.

**Ioana:** So it tells me that I'm on the first heading and it is at level one. Incidentally, all headings are at level one on this book.

**Screen reader:** Preface, level one, two percent.

**Ioana:** I will click on preface.

**Screen reader:** Preface. Vertical scroll. A novel. Text settings.

**Ioana:** As you can see here, we can change the text size, the foreground colour, background colour, margins, line spacing, and much more. Let's return.

**Screen reader:** Vertical scroll bar. Five pages. 50—

**Ioana:** I will now demonstrate reading with the help of the TTS, text to speech.

**Screen reader:** Play.

**Synthetic voice:** Preface. Our story primarily takes place in Toronto's Chinatown Kensington Market.

**Ioana:** You can also change the speed and the quality of the voice in the audio settings of the app. So this gives you an overview of the EasyReader functionality for improved accessibility.

### Loaning tablets with EasyReader

00:21:38

**Faline:** If your library is thinking about loaning tablets to patrons with the EasyReader app, some things to remember, libraries can add the app to multiple devices. The bookshelf is shared, and the same books appear on every device with the app. You might also want to download the titles onto the device, so they can't be deleted off the device. Of course, you can only loan tablets with CELA materials to patrons with print disabilities.

## DAISY players

00:22:18

Next, we're going to talk about DAISY players. Many of you may have a HumanWare Victor Stratus, or a Victor Stream player that you might loan out to patrons. The Victor Stratus has a CD slot that can be used to play music, CDs, CELA DAISY CDs, or other audiobook CDs in your collection. Both of these players can be configured to connect to a local Wi-Fi connection, so books are loaded straight onto your player from your Direct to Player bookshelf. If you have a stable internet connection through Wi-Fi, then the Direct to Player service is a good option.

You can also load a book or magazine ZIP file by connecting the player to a computer, or by using an SD card. These players are sold through CNIB Smart Life, or through the manufacturer HumanWare for $655 for the Victor Stratus, and $595 for the Victor Stream.

### Configuring Wi-Fi DAISY players

00:23:35

If you haven't done so, you will need to configure your Wi-Fi DAISY players, so that you can transfer books from the CELA site directly onto the player. The first thing to do is determine if your player is Wi-Fi enabled. HumanWare Victor Stratus 4M or 12M, and Victor Streams are all Wi-Fi-enabled devices.

HumanWare Victor Classics, or Plextalk players are not Wi-Fi enabled. Libraries in Ontario and Alberta may have received a Victor Classic player from CNIB about 10 to 14 years ago. While these players can play CDs, they are not internet-enabled. If you need help configuring your player, you would get in touch with CELA's contact center. Their email address is [help@celalibrary.ca](mailto:help@celalibrary.ca).

## Voice control with Accessible Reading Canada

00:24:49

Now. I want to talk about another option for patrons for reading CELA's audiobooks. As we're saying farewell to older technology, we're also very excited to tell you that we have been planning for the future. Your patrons can now access books on an Amazon Alexa Smart speaker. We've been testing the ability to choose, operate, and hear CELA audiobooks on the new Accessible Reading Canada Skill. This Accessible Reading Canada Skill was recently launched. You can find more information about it, including upcoming webinars on the Accessible Reading Canada help page of the CELA website.

I'm now going to play an audio demo of our staff member, Ioana, opening the app using the menu options such as resuming a book. and going through the player options.

### Accessible Reading Canada demonstration

00:25:52

**Ioana:** Start Accessible Reading Canada.

(device chimes)

**Alexa:** Would you like to resume your most recent book in progress, access your books, or browse the library?

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Resume.

(device chimes)

**Book narrator:** Coming Together as Things Fall Apart by Astrid Taylor, narrated by Rebecca Mitchell.

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Next.

(device chimes)

**Book narrator:** Meanwhile, in the US, the new Repub—

(device chimes)

The New—

**Ioana:** Next.

(device chimes)

**Book narrator:** Chapter two. Barons or commoners?

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Previous.

(device chimes)

**Book narrator:** Meanwhile, in the US--

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Volume up.

(device chimes)

**Book narrator:** For a long time now, people—

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Stop.

(device chimes)

Start Accessible Reading Canada and bookshelf.

(device chimes)

**Alexa:** You have four books on your bookshelf. First book, The Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri. Would you like to start reading or skip to the next book?

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Help.

(device chimes)

**Alexa:** Your bookshelf is a list of books that you have chosen from our website, or that have been selected for you based on your preferences. You can find them on the CELA website by selecting the Direct to Player option for any audiobook. To navigate between the books on your bookshelf, say “previous” or “next.” To return to the main menu, say “main menu.”

(device chimes)

**Ioana:** Stop.

(device chimes)

**Alexa:** Got it. Goodbye.

## Transferring books

00:27:47

**Faline:** Now, a word about transferring books. This is a good option for patrons who don't have access to Wi-Fi or the internet at home. It's possible to transfer books onto a Victor Stratus 4 or 12M by putting books on a USB stick, or on an SD card. Some libraries also burn CDs for patrons from the CELA website, which is fine, as long as the patrons that you're lending the CDs to, have a print disability. With the Envoy Connect, you can use the free CELA Connect software on a library computer. You can also put books onto a micro SD card.

## Book clubs

00:28:49

In terms of book clubs, it's possible for libraries to add the same book to multiple Envoy Connect devices if you're loaning those out to patrons. You can also add books to DAISY players using an SD card, or the Direct to Player options. You might want to suggest to book club members that they register for CELA, so they have their own CELA account, and are able to request their own copy of a book club title to be downloaded to whatever device they are using.

If you have a book club member who needs a braille copy of a book, we would recommend that the person order that book at least four weeks in advance to make sure that they will get the braille copy, if they're wanting a physical braille copy in time, so they can read it for the next book club meeting.

## Encouraging patrons to switch to a new device

00:30:00

Then, in terms of a last word or tips about encouraging patrons to switch to a new device, if patrons wish to configure their own player, they only need to learn one new button, or they can get in touch with CELA's Contact Centre who can help them to configure their player, so that they'll be able to get books directly from the CELA website. You might want to remind family and friends of the patron that CELA books can be downloaded onto a USB stick, or an SD card, and added to the patron's DAISY player.

You can also promote the fact that patrons can send back their Envoy Connect devices post free to CELA to have us load books onto their Envoy Connect, and then send it back to the patron post free.

## We can help!

00:31:05

We can also provide further support to you as a public library staff member through CELA Member Services. Please call us to make changes to your account information if you need help with ordering books, or configuring your DAISY devices, as well as for any other help you need with the apps and devices that play CELA books.

The last item to mention is our monthly newsletter, which is called Open Book for Libraries, that provides news regarding new titles that we've added to the collection, any service announcements, and a list of the upcoming webinars for library staff for that month. We encourage you to subscribe if you haven't done so already.

To end the webinar, I just want to remind you that if you have a question about your library service with CELA, any of CELA Member Services staff can help you with your questions about changing your library profile, requesting a new service, et cetera. You can call us on our toll free number 1-855-655-2273, and then press 2 to get to CELA Member Services, or you can email us at members@celalibrary.ca Thanks for participating in the webinar today.