ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR PEOPLE WITH IDD

Assistive technology (AT) is an umbrella term that includes assistive, adaptive, and rehabilitative devices for people with disabilities. AT is any hardware, software, device or tool designed to help a user increase, maintain or improve their functional capacities. AT can be as low-tech as a magnifying glass, or as high-tech as computer software. There are many different types of AT and adaptive equipment available to help people with disabilities participate in the classroom, workplace and in their communities.

EXAMPLES OF ASSISTIVE TECH.

- SCREEN READERS
- SPEECH TO TEXT
- GLASSES
- CLOSED CAPTIONS
- SWITCH BUTTONS
- FLASHING BULBS
- TOUCH SCREENS
- EYE GAZE DEVICES

WHERE ASSISTIVE TECH. IS USED

AT devices improve the user's functional capacity while:

- AT HOME
- AT WORK
- AT SCHOOL
- IN THE COMMUNITY
- WHEN COMMUNICATING

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN LEGISLATION

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** Requires that AT devices and services be made available to any student with a disability if stated in their IEP. This also applies to children receiving early intervention services, if required in their IFSP.
- **The Assistive Technology Act:** Provides federal funding to states for assistive technology centers, protection and advocacy services, and low-interest loans and financing options for assistive technology.
- **The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Titles I, II, and III explain the requirements for reasonable accommodations or modifications in the workplace, public entities, and private entities, respectively. Reasonable accommodations and modifications could include things like ergonomic keyboards, screen magnifiers, or assistive listening systems; all examples of assistive technology.

OBTAINING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

AT HOME/IN THE COMMUNITY

Individuals Under 21:
AT devices and modifications can be accessed through Family Support Services by calling PerformCare at 1-877-652-7624.

Individuals Over 21:
The need for AT will be determined using the New Jersey Comprehensive Assessment Tool (NJCAT) and the Person Centered Planning Tool (PCPT). The Support Coordinator will add AT to the Individualized Service Plan (ISP) and help the individual select a provider agency.

AT SCHOOL

The IEP Team should meet to discuss how AT would help the student achieve their educational and related service goals, and access extracurricular activities. Parents can request an assistive technology evaluation, which will determine the need for AT.

Districts may also be required to provide an AT device for home use, which is decided on a case-by-case basis.

AT WORK

Individuals registered with DVRS: Meet with your DVRS Counselor about what barriers exist at your job and the types of AT that could be used to remove those barriers.

Individuals not registered with DVRS: Employees can request AT devices as reasonable modifications under the ADA as long as they have disclosed a disability to the employer and the modification would not cause undue hardship to the employer.

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RESOURCES

THE RICHARD WEST ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ADVOCACY CENTER (ATAC)
A program of Disability Rights New Jersey (DRNJ), ATAC serves as New Jersey's federally funded assistive technology project through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. It assists individuals across New Jersey in overcoming barriers in the system and making assistive technology more accessible to individuals with disabilities throughout the state of New Jersey.
at4nj.org

ADVANCING OPPORTUNITIES
- **The Assistive Technology Center:** A statewide resource helping people with disabilities, their families, teachers, and employers identify and learn to use the technology that will be most effective in meeting their goals. assistivetechnologycenter.org
- **The Technology Lending Center:** A free service for New Jersey residents with disabilities, partially funded by ATAC. Offers short-term AT trial loans and includes free shipping and return. bit.ly/ATlending

FAQ FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN EARLY INTERVENTION (EI)
The PACER Center answers questions that many families face about assistive technology while applying for or receiving EI services.
bit.ly/pacerfaq

CENTER FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION STUDIES (CATIES)
A research and service initiative of The College of New Jersey's School of Education dedicated to improving the educational experiences of children with disabilities by linking faculty and staff expertise with the needs of NJ's educational community. They offer AT evaluations, augmentative communication evaluations, and functional behavior assessments.
caties.tcnj.edu

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AT FROM NJ SERVICE SYSTEMS

- **DDD SUPPORTS PROGRAM MANUAL**
  - bit.ly/SupportsProgram
- **FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES FROM PERFORMCARE**
  - bit.ly/CSOCsupport
- **DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (DVRS)**
  - bit.ly/nj-dvrs
- **NJ DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**
  - bit.ly/njdoetech
- **COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAM POLICY MANUAL**
  - bit.ly/CCPpolicy

December 2021