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Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS)

VATS Programs and Services

Most of us use Assistive technology (AT) in our daily lives, everything from glasses or screen readers to highly sophisticated computers that make it possible to activate most of the functions in your home by voice command. The Virginia Assistive Technology System (VATS) can help you learn about the range of available technology, select the most appropriate device, receive training on how to use the selected device, and find resources to pay for the device.

The mission of the Virginia Assistive Technology System is to ensure that those who need assistive technology get the appropriate and affordable piece of equipment or device. We value inclusion and believe that the correct equipment is important to that end. Whether you want to be more successful at school, live more independently in your community, or wish to work, assistive technology can be the solution.

How can we help you?

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT) DEVICE DEMONSTRATION AND LOAN

Demonstration: VATS has an extensive library in Fairfax, Virginia that is open to any Virginian with a disability, their family members, and any service provider who works with individuals with disabilities. This library is a free resource. Anyone can make an appointment to visit the library to have a hands-on demonstration of a specific device or software. If you are unable to travel to the library, an assistive technology specialist can arrange to meet you at a more central location.

Loan: Individuals or organizations can borrow equipment in the library on a short-term basis (generally 1-4 weeks) based on need and availability. We recommend that an individual participate in a short demonstration or training of an assistive

technology device prior to or at the same time as the loan.

*In addition to the main AT library, VATS maintains partnerships with several disability service organizations to provide statewide access to equipment for training, demonstration and/or loan.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY (AT) DEVICE EXCHANGE AND REUSE

Exchange: The Virginia Reuse Network's (VRN) Equipment Exchange is a way to help Virginians with disabilities, family members, healthcare professionals, and others have access to gently used assistive technology (AT) that might otherwise be un-used or discarded. Virginians may use the VRN Equipment Exchange to offer gently used equipment for sale or donation. VATS collects equipment requests and sends them out to a larger network across the state using an email distribution list. Virginians can also request equipment using an online form on this website under the "Equipment" / "Equipment Exchange" tab. Requests may include any type of AT that helps Virginians with disabilities overcome barriers or improve their health and safety!

Reuse: In addition to the Equipment Exchange, the VRN supports full service durable medical equipment (DME) reuse sites across the state for persons with limited resources or gaps in insurance. Services are available for adults and children depending on the provider. These programs are full service sites where DME is collected, sanitized, refurbished, matched and re-distributed to a qualifying Virginian with a disability. For more information on full service DME programs, contact the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment & Endowment (F.R.E.E.) www.free-foundation.org or Children's Assistive Technology Service (CATS) www.atdevicesforkids.org

Information and Assistance

INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE / TRAINING / TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE / PUBLIC AWARENESS

By contacting the statewide toll free number: (800) 435-8490, Virginians can access the entire array of services to include Information and Assistance, Training, Technical Assistance and Public Awareness. Callers can access specific information on assistive technology products, funding options, and resources. VATS connects

callers with a professional who can answer inquiries and guide you to the best assistive technology resources in your community!

TRANSITION SERVICES

VATS supports the transition of individuals with disabilities of all ages between home, school, community and employment.

How can I pay for Assistive Technology?

There are many resources available to pay for Assistive Technology. If you are a client of one of the State Disability Agencies and need AT to function independently at work, at home or in your community, that agency may pay for what you need. If you have private health insurance that will cover the cost of medical equipment, you can submit a claim to them. If you are on Medicaid and you need AT for medical conditions, Medicaid will purchase the device(s) you need.

If you do not qualify for any of these resources, you can apply for a loan from the Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority. The Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority provides loans to purchase assistive technology, including vehicles and home modifications, with longer repayment terms, low monthly payments, and low interest rates. See www.atlfa.org for more details.

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