



## Vision

- ◆ Screen magnifiers
- ◆ Screen readers
- ◆ Video magnifiers
- ◆ Reading systems
- ◆ Braille embossers
- ◆ Braille translation
- ◆ Accessible media players

## Hearing

- ◆ Amplified phones
- ◆ Amplified ringers
- ◆ TTYs
- ◆ Specialized alarms
- ◆ Signal systems
- ◆ Specialized software

## Mobility

- ◆ Voice recognition software
- ◆ Touch screens
- ◆ Head / eye controls
- ◆ Word prediction software
- ◆ Specialized keyboards, mice and other input

*This fact sheet and others can be found at [www.mdeid.org](http://www.mdeid.org) and [www.mdworkforcepromise.org](http://www.mdworkforcepromise.org).*

*Questions?*

*Contact the Maryland Department of Disabilities.*

# Assistive Technology

## What Is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology, also called AT, is a tool or machine that helps you live or work more on your own. Activities that you may not be able to do on your own right now may be possible with assistive technology. The tools allow you to carry out housekeeping, self-care tasks, work tasks, as well as talking, learning, and participating in free-time activities. Some tools are complex and would require a commitment from you to learn how to use them.

AT for self-care might include eating and drinking tools, bathing aides, or motorized scooters. Office tasks can

be made easier with the use of special software, adjustable desks and chairs, special keyboards and mice, Braille, and reading systems. AT that helps you talk with others includes speech machines, TTYs (teletypewriters), picture boards, and talking notepads. AT for learning consists of games, software, tools and tapes that teach reading, writing, and math. See the sidebar on this page for a few examples of AT for vision, hearing, and mobility disabilities.

An assessment helps determine what AT is best for you. See the back of this fact sheet for information on what to

## Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MD TAP)

**MD TAP** is a program of the Maryland Department of Disabilities. MD TAP teaches people about using assistive technology. MD TAP can also show you AT machines and tools to help you find the one that best meets your needs. Having this support to find and try AT is important to help you go to work.

### Assistive Technology Loan Program

Because the cost of AT may be more than you

can afford, MD TAP and the Maryland Department of Disabilities run the Assistive Technology Loan Program. This program gives low-interest loans to people who live in Maryland. Other people, including your family, can help you in asking for the loan.

You can receive a loan application by calling MD TAP. Not everyone gets a loan. However, this loan program has fewer rules than regular bank

loans, making it easier for more people to receive loans.

Loan amounts range from \$500 to \$50,000, and you can use the loan to buy many kinds of AT. The loans can be used for more than just AT. You can buy training to use the tools, extended warranties, and maintenance plans.

The website for MD TAP is [www.mdmap.org](http://www.mdmap.org). Other contact information for MD TAP and the AT Loan Program is listed in

# Additional AT Funding Options

In addition to the AT Loan Program, you have other choices to help you purchase assistive technology tools and machines.

## Place of Employment

Your place of employment pays for AT when it is a reasonable accommodation for which you are eligible. It may be helpful to give your supervisor information about tax credits and incentives that can help with the cost. Ask for the fact sheet entitled *Tax Incentives/Credits* which outlines these incentives for businesses.

## Vocational Rehabilitation

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) may be able to buy AT for you if it will increase your ability

to go to work or to keep working. To be most effective, AT should be considered early in the process. Your counselor will talk with you about your needs and arrange for an assessment either through the Workforce Technology Center Rehabilitation Technology Services or through an approved community AT provider. This will give you an opportunity to try different types of technology to figure out what will work best for you. Training and follow-up evaluations should be provided. You must meet eligibility requirements to receive services from DORS.

## Social Security Work Incentives

If you receive Social Security disability

benefits, you might be able to use Work Incentives to help you buy AT. These work incentives are not easy to understand. You should make sure that you talk about them with an expert. Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) projects have staff trained specifically on SSA Work Incentives. Contact information for WIPAs is listed in the resource section of this fact sheet. You can learn more about SSA's work incentives in the fact sheet entitled *Think You Can't Work? Think Again*.

## U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

The VA may buy AT if you are a Veteran with a disability. See the resource section of this fact sheet for contact

# AT Assessment: Things to Consider

## What tasks are difficult for you?

- ◆ Will the use of AT help you complete these tasks more independently? Will you be able to use the AT in different places (work, home, social situations)?

## What have you tried before?

- ◆ What ways of doing things have you tried? What materials, equipment, or tools have you used in the past?

## How involved will you be in the process?

- ◆ Will you be part of the decision making to figure out what AT you should try? What do you hope the AT device will do for you? Will you have a chance to try it before buying it?

## How will you know if the AT device is a good fit for you?

- ◆ Will you be trained on the new AT device? Will you actually use it? Will the AT device help you meet your goals?

# Resources

## Maryland Service Providers

*Maryland State Dept. of Education  
Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)*

Voice: (410) 554-9442 / (888) 554-0334

TTY: (410) 554-9411

Email: [dors@maryland.gov](mailto:dors@maryland.gov)

Website: [www.dors.maryland.gov](http://www.dors.maryland.gov)

## Maryland Technology Assistance Program

*Maryland AT Loan Program*

Voice: (800) 832-4827

TTY: (866) 881-7488

Email: [mdtap@mdtap.org](mailto:mdtap@mdtap.org)

Website: [www.mdtap.org](http://www.mdtap.org)

## Additional Information

*AT: LAST, Inc.*

MD Assistive Technology Cooperative

Voice: 410-381-2667

Email: [info@matcoop.org](mailto:info@matcoop.org)

Website: [www.matcoop.org](http://www.matcoop.org)

*Benefits InfoSource Main Office*

Voice: (301) 277-2839 / (888) 838-1776

TTY: Use Maryland Relay 711

Website: [www.innow.org](http://www.innow.org)

*Disability.gov*

[www.Disability.gov](http://www.Disability.gov) is a website that has information on assistive technology for individuals with disabilities.

## Family Center on Technology and Disability

Voice: (202) 884-8068

Email: [fctd@aed.org](mailto:fctd@aed.org)

Website: [www.fctd.info](http://www.fctd.info)

## Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

Voice: (800) 526-7234

TTY: (877) 981-9403

Email: [jan@askjan.org](mailto:jan@askjan.org)

Website: [www.askjan.org](http://www.askjan.org)

## Learning Independence Through Computers (LINC)

Voice: (410) 659-5462

TTY: (410) 843-0219

Website: [www.linc.org](http://www.linc.org) *Maryland Department of Disabilities*

Voice / TTY: (410) 767-3660

Voice / TTY: (800) 637-4113

Email: [mdod@maryland.gov](mailto:mdod@maryland.gov)

Website: [www.mdod.maryland.gov](http://www.mdod.maryland.gov)

## Maryland Disability WorkFORCE Promise

Voice: (301) 662-0099

TTY: (301) 662-4853

Email: [info@mdworkforcepromise.org](mailto:info@mdworkforcepromise.org)

Website: [www.mdworkforcepromise.org](http://www.mdworkforcepromise.org)

## U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Voice: (800) 827-1000 (National Office)

Website: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)