# Assistive Technology Program – State only Fund

The purpose of this chapter is to inform staff about how we provide financial assistance for assistive technology services and devices for adults who are eligible for

* Adult Protective Services
* Older Americans Act programs
* Waiver services

These adults have **no other funding source** for the assistive technology request and live at home or in other settings.

#### Ask the Expert

If you have questions or need clarification about the content in this chapter, please contact:

Linda Garcia, Assistive Technology Program Manager - (360) 968-9745 - linda.garcia1@dshs.wa.gov

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## POLICY OVERVIEW

It is the Aging and Long Term Supports Administration (ALTSA) policy that the state-funded services under this program be consumer-driven and demonstrate respect for the rights of persons with disabilities to live as safely and independently as possible in their own community. **State Funds for this program are limited per fiscal year.**

Program funds cover expenses for assistive devices and services, which have no *other funding source*. The program targets to

* Increase the person’s functional independence;
* Maximize the person’s health and safety;
* Emphasize the central role of the individual in planning for and using the service or device;
* Increase the availability of assistive technology in rural areas and to individuals with limited English speaking abilities;
* Increase the likelihood that adults will stay in their own homes and communities.

## PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

**Assistive Technology (AT)** – devices and services that facilitate the ability of people by making the most of functional opportunities in all environments.

**Assistive Technology Devices -** any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off-the-shelf, modified or customized, that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. AT devices include, but are not limited to: environmental control devices, communication devices and DME equipment, minor vehicle modifications under $10,000. The modification to the privately owned by the individual vehicle must not cost more than the vehicle is worth.

**Assistive Technology Services** - services that assist persons with disabilities to select, acquire, or use assistive technology devices. AT services include, but are not limited to: OT and PT evaluations, short-term training, selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices. Because of the limited funding, services for this project are short-term, less than four months.

**Durable Medical Equipment (DME)** – equipment, that can withstand repeated use and which use serves a medical purpose when supplied to individuals with an illness, injury or disability. DME includes, but is not limited to wheelchairs, walkers, specialty beds, and mattresses.

**Non-Durable Medical Equipment** – single or multiple use supplies that are time-limited, such as diapers or catheter bags.

## PROCEDURES

The Assistive Technology (AT) Program – State only Fund may authorize the purchase of equipment/devices and/or services when there is *no other funding source* available.

### Determining Need and Eligibility

When determining need and eligibility for the Assistive Technology Fund, staff must:

1. Document the need based on input from the person with the disability, for specific assistive devices and services in CARE SER notes;
2. Explore all other funding sources **before** submitting the final request to the AT Fund. Other possible funding sources include:
3. Durable Medical Equipment (DME) – administered through the Health Care Authority;
4. Waiver services such as Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies, Environmental Modifications and Client Training (COPES only provides DME, and non-DME);
5. New Freedom Waiver;
6. Roads to Community Living and Washington Roads;
7. Community First Choice State Plan (PERS Units only available under Community First Choice State Plan);
8. [Community](http://adsaweb.dshs.wa.gov/docufind/LTCManual/NFCare/dischargeresources.htm) Transition or Sustainability Services - CTSS (WAC 388-106-0960, 0965.)

The AT Fund can purchase specialized medical equipment and supplies if the equipment is denied by the funding source or not a covered service under the state plan (see [Core Services, Chapter 7](http://adsaweb.dshs.wa.gov/docufind/CoreServices/)). The AT Fund will not supplement HCBS Waiver services such as Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies and Environmental Modification. The discharge allowance should be used first if an individual is leaving a nursing facility. Other possible funding sources include Medicare, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans Administration, Labor and Industries, and private insurance.

When determining need and eligibility outside of CARE for APS or Older Americans Act clients, staff must via secure email to AT Fund Program Manager:

1. Document the need based on input from the person with the disability, for specific assistive devices and services.
2. Gather any other pertinent information from other people involved in the individual’s life such as other caseworkers, family, medical providers, etc.
3. Explore all other funding sources before submitting the final request to the AT Fund.

### Service Authorization and Approval Requirements

1. Consult the AT Fund Program Manager, Linda Garcia, at (360) 968-9745, or email at linda.garcia1@dshs.wa.gov to see if there are available funds in the AT Fund or to discuss the client’s disability issues, resources and other potential funding sources. **Because funding is limited, do not start the process before you contact the AT Program Manager.**
2. Participants of the program may contact AT Fund Program Manager directly by email or by calling 360-968-9745 to discuss AT needs and resources.

To request approval for AT project services, staff must provide:

* The specific nature of the request;
* CARE Service Summary and Assessment Detail if available;
* The name of the service or device;
* The costs of the service/device, if known;

Email the request to Linda Garcia at ALTSA headquarters, at linda.garcia1@dshs.wa.gov.

AT Fund Program Manager will authorize approval, ordering and payment for the requests and services. ALTSA Headquarters fiscal staff will process reimbursements to the vendor. Northwest Access Fund (<http://www.nwaccessfund.org/>) is the contracted vendor who will assist the person with the disability to research, purchase the approved equipment, and provide training on how to properly use and maintain equipment.

### Summary

The Case Manager/Social Worker must supply the following information to the AT Fund Program Manager within 10 working days of discussion with the AT Fund Manager:

* The specific nature of the request;
* The name of the service or device;
* The costs of the service/device, if known;
* Specific information about the person with the disability, CARE documents if available.

AT Program manager takes all requests on a first come first serve basis. There are no waiting lists.

AT Program manager will deny requests upon depletion of the annual allocated funds.

Case management staff may submit additional AT Fund requests for the same client at the beginning of each state fiscal year.