

84.224A AT Act Supporting Material

The State-level Activities under Section 4 of the AT Act are:

- (a) state financing activities that assist individuals with disabilities to purchase or otherwise acquire AT;
- (b) device reutilization programs that support the exchange, repair, recycling or other reutilization of AT;
- (c) device loan programs that provide short-term loans of AT so that individuals can try out devices or fill a temporary need for a device; and
- (d) device demonstration programs where personnel familiar with AT demonstrate a variety of AT devices and services and provide information about AT vendors, providers and repair services.

The State Leadership Activities under Section 4 of the AT Act are:

- (a) training and technical assistance, which includes developing and disseminating training materials, conducting training and providing technical assistance to enhance the AT knowledge, skills and competencies of appropriate individuals;
- (b) public awareness activities designed to provide information on the availability, benefits, appropriateness and costs of AT devices and services, including a statewide information and referral system; and
- (c) coordination and collaboration of activities among public and private entities responsible for policies, procedures or funding for the provision of AT devices and services.

These activities must be available to individuals with disabilities in a comprehensive manner, meaning they must be equally available to all individuals with disabilities residing in the state, regardless of the nature of their disability, age, income level, location of residence in the state, or the type of AT device or service required.

Measurable Goals

As required by the AT Act, states must set measurable goals for addressing the AT needs of individuals with disabilities in the state within the domains of education, employment, telecommunications and information technology, and community living. Working with stakeholders, two performance measures and seven measurable goals were established. These were incorporated into the State Plan for AT requirements. The goals—four of which focus on “access” to AT and three of which focus on “acquisition” of AT¹—are described below.

Goals for Improving Access to AT

Device demonstrations and device loans improve access to AT because they provide individuals with information and experiences that enable them to make informed decisions about AT. Therefore, an appropriate goal is that targeted individuals and entities make a decision about an AT device or service based on the information they receive from a device demonstration or device loan program. A way to measure improvement in access to AT, then, is through an increase in the percentage of appropriate individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service as a result of the assistance they received. The access goals are as follows:

1. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service *for educational purposes* as a result of the assistance they received.
2. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service *for employment purposes* as a result of the assistance they received.
3. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service *for community living* as a result of the assistance they received.
4. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who accessed device demonstration programs and/or device loan programs and made a decision about an AT device or service *that meets an information technology/ telecommunications need* as a result of the assistance they received.

Goals for Improving Acquisition of AT

State financing systems and device reutilization programs are most likely to improve acquisition, since they reduce cost barriers that prevent individuals from obtaining AT. As a result, individuals and entities obtain AT devices or services from state financing systems or device reutilization programs despite the otherwise prohibitive cost of such devices or services. A way to measure improvement in acquisition of AT, then, is through an increase in the

¹States are not required to set goals related to acquiring AT that meets an information technology/ telecommunications need. Once an individual acquires AT that improves access to information technology/ telecommunications, it is actually used for employment, education or community living purposes.

percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from state financing activities or reutilization programs who would not have obtained the AT. The acquisition goals are as follows:

1. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from state financing activities or reutilization programs *for educational purposes* who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
2. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from state financing activities or reutilization programs *for employment purposes* who would not have obtained the AT device or service.
3. An increase in the percentage of appropriate targeted individuals and entities who obtained devices or services from state financing activities or reutilization programs *for community living purposes* who would not have obtained the AT device or service.

All states included these seven measures in their State Plans for AT. States will establish baselines during the first year of data collection, using the data collection instrument proposed herein. Once a baseline has been established, states will be required to identify long-term goals to be achieved by the end of the third year of their State Plan. States also must set annual goals that show progress toward the long-term goal.

Relevant Sections of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended

Section 4(d)(3)

(3) MEASURABLE GOALS- The application shall include--

(A) measurable goals, and a timeline for meeting the goals, that the State has set for addressing the assistive technology needs of individuals with disabilities in the State related to--

(i) education, including goals involving the provision of assistive technology to individuals with disabilities who receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.);

(ii) employment, including goals involving the State vocational rehabilitation program carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.);

(iii) telecommunication and information technology; and

(iv) community living; and

(B) information describing how the State will quantifiably measure the goals to determine whether the goals have been achieved.

Section 4(f)

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS-

(1) DATA COLLECTION- States shall participate in data collection as required by law, including data collection required for preparation of the reports described in paragraph (2).

(2) REPORTS-

(A) IN GENERAL- Each State shall prepare and submit to the Secretary an annual progress report on the activities funded under this Act, at such time, and in such manner, as the Secretary may require.

(B) CONTENTS- The report shall include data collected pursuant to this section. The report shall document, with respect to activities carried out under this section in the State--

(i) the type of State financing activities described in subsection (e)(2)(A) used by the State;

(ii) the amount and type of assistance given to consumers of the State financing activities described in subsection (e)(2)(A) (who shall be classified by type of assistive technology device or assistive technology service financed through the State financing activities, and geographic distribution within the State), including--

(I) the number of applications for assistance received;

(II) the number of applications approved and rejected;

(III) the default rate for the financing activities;

(IV) the range and average interest rate for the financing activities;

(V) the range and average income of approved applicants for the financing activities; and

(VI) the types and dollar amounts of assistive technology financed;

(iii) the number, type, and length of time of loans of assistive technology devices provided to individuals with disabilities, employers, public agencies, or public accommodations through the device loan program described in subsection (e)(2)(C), and an analysis of the individuals with disabilities who have benefited from the device loan program;

- (iv) the number, type, estimated value, and scope of assistive technology devices exchanged, repaired, recycled, or reutilized (including redistributed through device sales, loans, rentals, or donations) through the device reutilization program described in subsection (e)(2)(B), and an analysis of the individuals with disabilities that have benefited from the device reutilization program;
- (v) the number and type of device demonstrations and referrals provided under subsection (e)(2)(D), and an analysis of individuals with disabilities who have benefited from the demonstrations and referrals;
- (vi)(I) the number and general characteristics of individuals who participated in training under subsection (e)(3)(B)(i) (such as individuals with disabilities, parents, educators, employers, providers of employment services, health care workers, counselors, other service providers, or vendors) and the topics of such training; and
(II) to the extent practicable, the geographic distribution of individuals who participated in the training;
- (vii) the frequency of provision and nature of technical assistance provided to State and local agencies and other entities;
- (viii) the number of individuals assisted through the public-awareness activities and statewide information and referral system described in subsection (e)(3)(B)(ii);
- (ix) the outcomes of any improvement initiatives carried out by the State as a result of activities funded under this section, including a description of any written policies, practices, and procedures that the State has developed and implemented regarding access to, provision of, and funding for, assistive technology devices, and assistive technology services, in the contexts of education, health care, employment, community living, and information technology and telecommunications, including e-government;
- (x) the source of leveraged funding or other contributed resources, including resources provided through subcontracts or other collaborative resource-sharing agreements, from and with public and private entities to carry out State activities described in subsection (e)(3)(B)(iii), the number of individuals served with the contributed resources for which information is not reported under clauses (i) through (ix) or clause (xi) or (xii), and other outcomes accomplished as a result of such activities carried out with the contributed resources; and
- (xi) the level of customer satisfaction with the services provided.

Section 6(b)(5)

DATA-COLLECTION AND REPORTING ASSISTANCE-

- (A) IN GENERAL- The Secretary shall award grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements to entities to assist the entities in carrying out State assistive technology programs in developing and implementing effective data-collection and reporting systems that--
 - (i) focus on quantitative and qualitative data elements;
 - (ii) measure the outcomes of the required activities described in section 4 that are implemented by the States and the progress of the States toward achieving the measurable goals described in section 4(d)(3);
 - (iii) provide States with the necessary information required under this Act or by the Secretary for reports described in section 4(f)(2); and
 - (iv) help measure the accrued benefits of the activities to individuals who need assistive technology.

(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES- To be eligible to receive a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph, an entity shall have personnel with--

(i) documented experience and expertise in administering State assistive technology programs;

(ii) experience in collecting and analyzing data associated with implementing required and discretionary activities;

(iii) expertise necessary to identify additional data elements needed to provide comprehensive reporting of State activities and outcomes; and

(iv) experience in utilizing data to provide annual reports to State policymakers.

(c) APPLICATION- To be eligible to receive a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this section, an entity shall submit an application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

Section 7(d)

(d) ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS-

(1) IN GENERAL- Not later than December 31 of each year, the Secretary shall prepare, and submit to the President and to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate, a report on the activities funded under this Act to improve the access of individuals with disabilities to assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.

(2) CONTENTS- Such report shall include--

(A) a compilation and summary of the information provided by the States in annual progress reports submitted under section 4(f); and

(B) a summary of the State applications described in section 4(d) and an analysis of the progress of the States in meeting the measurable goals established in State applications under section 4(d)

(3).