



Rights to Area Agency Services

Know your Rights:

The Right to Assistive Technology (AT)

You have the right to:

- **Evaluation of your AT needs**
- **Assistance from the Area Agency in obtaining necessary AT services when available, including training in the use of AT**
- **Quality services**
- **A service agreement, and the services within the time frame stated in the agreement**

Did you know?

There's a lot of technology out there that can help you live and work more independently and successfully. Computers and handheld devices can help you communicate, learn faster, and remember things. There are gadgets to help you pull up zippers, open jars with one hand, and reach the top shelf. At work, there are ways to adapt tools so you can use them on the job. All sorts of equipment such as wheelchairs, lifts, grab bars, tub seats, and hearing aids, can make you more independent at home. As a client of an area agency, you can have access to the assistive technology you need to live your life.

Assistive Technology Evaluations

You have the right to an assistive technology evaluation by the area agency every year. The law says, "A comprehensive screening evaluation, coordinated by the staff of the area agency, shall determine the scope of the person's disability and the locus and nature of services to be provided and ***shall include an assistive technology evaluation both as part of the person's initial evaluation and at least on an annual***

basis thereafter when the person is screened for an assistive technology evaluation."*

Service Planning and Provision of AT, Related Services and Training

Your Client Centered Conference and Service Agreement must also include a discussion of the AT evaluation and the need for AT to help you be more independent with daily activities, work, and recreation, whether or not you are using AT now. The services you receive through the area agency should include the AT you need and the training and support to use and maintain the AT.

Gina uses her computer for many creative endeavors including writing and art. She can use the painting software to enlarge the image to work on fine details. The computer table is raised so Gina can fit her customized electric wheelchair underneath.



* RSA 171-A, Section 6(II)

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Disabilities Rights Center

18 Low Avenue
Concord, NH 03301
(603) 228-0432 or
(800)834-1721 (voice or TTY)
Fax: (603) 225-2077
advocacy@drcnh.org
www.drcnh.org

This brochure is not meant to be legal advice. For specific legal advice, you should talk to a lawyer.

Who will pay for my AT?

There are many sources of funding for AT, including Medicaid, the Area Agency, private insurance, Vocational Rehabilitation, and your local school district if you receive special education. Once your AT needs have been identified, the Area Agency is required to pursue these or other funding sources to pay for it.

What if the Area Agency and I disagree about my need for AT?

If you and the area agency disagree about your need for assistive technology, you have rights to appeal and get a fair and impartial decision (see www.drcnh.org/AACmhcrights.htm). If you have questions or concerns about your access to AT, call the Disabilities Rights Center at 1-800-834-1721.

Where can I go to find out more about AT?

The **DRC's website** has information about AT.
<http://www.drcnh.org>.



Brint brailles his business cards and uses AT to run his business, The Readery. He has computer software that reads text, a machine that reads currency so he can know how much a customer has handed him, and a new portable K-NFB reader that can read out loud CD and book covers, menus, and other print materials.



Sarah uses her mobile device to make calls, text, browse the internet, check her email, do online banking, and listen to music. She can easily reach her family and friends any time she wants. Mainstream technology is less stigmatizing and often very useful for improving skills and independence. Disability-specific mobile applications are available to assist with speech, learning, reading, memory, and other skills.

ATECH Services offers evaluations, consultations, training, as well as the Refurbished Equipment Marketplace, which has previously owned home medical equipment for sale. Your area agency can work with ATECH Services to evaluate your needs and find the technology you can use. <http://www.crotchedmountain.org/crotchedmountain/html/atechservices.htm>; Tel.: 603-226-2900 or 800-932-5837

Assistive Technology in New Hampshire, a program of the UNH Institute on Disability, has equipment loans, training, and more. <http://www.atinnh.org/>; Tel.: 603-862-4320 or 800-238-2048 (NH toll free).