I. DEFINITION

“The term ‘rehabilitation technology’ (RT) means the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies, or scientific principles to meet the needs of and address the barriers confronted by individuals with disabilities in areas which include education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, independent living, and recreation. The term includes rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology devices, and assistive technology services.” Sec. 7 (32) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; 29 U.S.C. 705 (32).

II. SCOPE OF SERVICES

A. Rehabilitation technology services may be provided when an agreed upon competitive integrated employment goal has been identified on an IPE and such rehabilitation technology is necessary for the consumer to participate in planned vocational rehabilitation services and subsequently enter or maintain competitive integrated employment.

Rehabilitation technology services can be provided as part of trial work experiences or when the consumer is in eligible status, if required for assessing the feasibility of an employment goal.

LRS can provide the following rehabilitation technology services:

1. Rehabilitation Engineering
2. Assistive Technology Services
3. Assistive Technology Devices

B. Provision of Rehabilitation Technology is not contingent upon consumer participation in the cost of such services, except in the case of hearing aids. Rehabilitation Technology (RT) is exempt from an exploration of comparable services/similar benefits. However, if an exempted service is known to be readily available from an alternative source at the time the service is needed to accomplish a rehabilitation objective in the consumer’s IPE/Plan, the Counselor must use that source.

C. Counselors should provide guidance and counseling to consumers encouraging responsible ownership behavior and routine maintenance to ascertain increased longevity of their Assistive Technology device (AT).
D. If the consumer expresses a possible need for Assistive Technology or if the Counselor determines that a need may exist, the Counselor may choose to complete the Rehabilitation Technology Screening form (RS-34).

E. Routine maintenance (including repairs and replacement parts) will not be provided once the consumer is employed. Regional Managers may approve exception upon request.

III. REHABILITATION ENGINEERING

A. Rehabilitation engineering services are provided only by licensed professional engineers or engineers supervised by a licensed professional engineer.

B. A rehabilitation engineer’s services should be considered when any of the following apply:
   1. The service includes design or modification of a product.
   2. The problem is complex.
   3. Available equipment is very costly.
   4. Safety and materials strength are vital factors.

IV. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Assistive Technology Services directly assist an individual in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. This can include any of the following:

A. Evaluation/assessment of the needs of the consumer, including a functional evaluation of the consumer in their customary environment.

B. Services related to selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices.

C. Services related to coordinating and using other therapists and interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs.

D. Services related to training or technical assistance in the use of assistive devices for the consumer, or where appropriate the consumer’s family.

E. Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by individuals with disabilities.

F. Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities.
V. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY DEVICES

An Assistive Technology Device (ATD) is any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, or fabricated, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. The Counselor is responsible for reviewing with the consumer LRS guidelines for using assistive technology purchased by the agency, as outlined under the IPE/Plan. Counselors may authorize an AT assessment, or attain recommendations from the appropriate professional(s). (See Chapter 5 for approved vendors)

Examples of assistive technology devices include, but are not limited to the following items:

A. Aids for Daily Living are self help aids for use in activities such as eating, bathing, cooking, dressing, and toileting.

B. Augmentative Communication devices are devices that provide a means for expressive and receptive communication for persons with speech disorders.

C. Computer Adaptations include items such as output devices (voice, Braille), alternate access aids (head sticks, light pointers), alternate keyboards, switches, or special software that enable a person to use a computer.

LRS will purchase the necessary evaluation, computer and computer adaptation required as an accommodation. Computers, if required to accommodate a consumer’s disability, are considered to be assistive technology devices; otherwise; they should be considered to be occupational equipment.

1. The Counselor should document the following:
   a. The need for any special adaptive equipment such as software or specialized keyboard.

   b. How setup of the equipment, any training needed to use the equipment or software purchased, and ongoing technical assistance will be provided.

D. Assistive Technology as a Job Accommodations

1. Physical/Tangible items, such as adjustable tables;

2. Minor worksite modifications that are removable by the consumer to use at other jobs may be considered.
   a. LRS cannot fund construction or permanent alterations to a business facility.

   b. LRS should provide consultation and alternative resources to employers for worksite modifications, as proposed in a worksite evaluation, when they cannot be funded by LRS.
E. Wheelchairs and Other Seating Systems

1. Wheelchairs
   a. A wheelchair can be purchased if the Counselor determines that it is needed to achieve an employment goal on an IPE/Plan. However, wheelchairs or powered and/or manual mobility systems will not be replaced if less than five (5) years old. Regional Managers are delegated the authority to make an exception to this timeline if there is a documented medical necessity related to a progression or change in the consumer’s medical condition.

   b. The Counselor must obtain a prescription from a licensed physician or licensed nurse practitioner and an assessment from an occupational or physical therapist.

   c. Upon receipt of a prescription for a mobility system, Counselors must authorize a seating and positioning assessment with an approved AT evaluator who is independent of the provider.

   d. The Counselor will review the evaluation/assessment recommendations with the consumer and determine the need for the suggested device(s) and/or service(s) as well as to ensure they meet the needs and choices of the consumer.

2. Other Seating Systems – can include specialized office seating and similar devices.

   Seating and positioning assessment services can only be provided by occupational or physical therapists licensed to practice in Louisiana.

F. Aids for Persons with Impaired Vision include items such as magnifiers, Braille or speech output devices, eyeglasses and canes.

Eyeglasses:

1. If vision, with best correction, does not result in any serious functional limitations (i.e. mobility, communication, etc.), then the purchase of prescribed eyeglasses/contact lenses is regarded as physical restoration and therefore, is subject to financial need.

2. If, with best corrections, significant functional limitations exist, then prescribed eyeglasses/contact lenses should be regarded as assistive technology. Medical verification of functional limitations is generally found on medical eye reports.
3. LRS shall not authorize or provide services for:
   a. General routine visual examinations on a recurring basis, or
   b. General routine maintenance or repair of existing eyeglasses or other corrective lenses or visual devices.

   NOTE: Conditions of the eye that are correctable to normal vision (20/20) by ordinary eyeglasses or contact lenses do not constitute a physical or mental impairment for purposes of vocational rehabilitation services eligibility.

4. See Purchasing Guidelines for Rehabilitation Technology regarding purchasing eyeglasses.

5. **Bioptic Telescope**
   a. A consumer who wants to use bioptic telescopic lenses to drive must have a prescription and recommendation from an eye doctor that specializes in low vision. LRS can provide that assessment.
   
   b. The consumer must pass the classroom portion of driver’s education prior to LRS assistance with the behind the wheel portion of the driver training.
   
   c. The consumer must participate in 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training from a driver education or pre-licensing training program approved by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections.
   
   d. The consumer must pass a comprehensive driving skills test over a route specifically designed to test the consumer’s competency using a Bioptic telescopic device through the Office of Motor Vehicles.

   Individuals who undergo the appropriate assessment, and who will be utilizing their bioptic lenses for purposes other than driving, do not have to meet the above listed criteria. Some other uses include, but are not limited to, vocational uses where the individual frequently needs to use both near and distance vision.

G. Aids for Persons with Impaired Hearing include items such as hearing aids, text telephones, and visual alerting systems. (See Section 412.05)

H. Orthotic and Prosthetic Services

1. The Counselor must obtain a prescription from a licensed physician or licensed nurse practitioner and attach it to the AWARE case record.

2. Counselors are not required to obtain competitive price quotes for orthotic or prosthetic services. A written price quote must be obtained from the Orthotist/Prosthetist and can serve as the actual assessment.

Resources:

UNO, Training, Resource, and Assistive-Technology Center, Lakefront Campus, P.O. Box 1051, New Orleans, LA 70148, (504) 280-5700 (voice and TTY); Fax (504) 280-5707.

LATAN has regional staff who can provide information, training and hands-on demonstrations of specific devices to help determine the needs of the consumer.

Louisiana Assistive Technology Access Network (LATAN)

AT Demonstration Center
10988 N. Harrell's Ferry Rd., Ste 5,
Baton Rouge, LA 70816
(225) 925-9500
1(800) 270-6185

Baton Rouge Office
3042 Old Forge Road, Suite D;
P.O. Box 14115
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4115
1-800-270-6185 (V/TT)
(225) 925-9500
(225) 925-9560 (Fax)
https://www.latan.org/

Shreveport Office
8028 Shreve Park Dr.
Shreveport, LA 71129
(318) 841-1548


Georgia Tech Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access
http://www.catea.gatech.edu/about.php

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)
https://askjan.org/
- Frequently Asked Questions
VI. PURCHASING GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY

A. Rehabilitation Technology

Rehabilitation Technology, which includes Rehabilitation Engineering, Assistive Technology Devices, and Assistive Technology Services, is exempt from both exploration of comparable services/similar benefits and application of any budget surplus, except hearing aids\(^1\) that has been identified on the RS-14 (Refer to Part 411). However, if an exempted service, such as an assistive technology device, is known to be readily available from an alternative source (e.g., health care benefits, such as Medicare or Medicaid) at the time the service is needed to accomplish a rehabilitation objective in the consumer’s IPE, the Counselor should use those sources if it would not delay services.

B. Purchase of Rehabilitation Technology Devices/Services

The Counselor will review the evaluation/assessment recommendations and determine the need for the suggested device(s) and/or service(s).

1. The Counselor must meet with the consumer to outline the specifications the vendor must comply with to meet the needs and choices of the consumer.

A state contract search is not required for consumer purchases. However, if a Counselor chooses to purchase the device or service from a state contract the Counselor is not required to obtain price quotes.

Division of Administration State Contracts website:
https://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/eCat/dsp_eCatSearchLagov.cfm

2. If the Counselor chooses not to use the State Contract to purchase the device or service and the device or service/or total of all the devices/services needed exceed $5,000.00 the Counselor or the Counselor’s Associate must:
   a. Request price quotes from at least three vendors.
   b. Quotes cannot be split to circumvent state purchasing regulations.
   c. Telephone quotes are not acceptable.
   d. The request for the price quote may be faxed to the vendor and vendor may fax back the quote.

\(^1\)Per the Administrative Procedures Act [R.S. 49:953(B)] Louisiana Rehabilitation Services invoked Emergency Rulemaking that placed Hearing Aids under a Financial Needs test effective 12/7/2007.
e. The price quotes must include the following:
   i. Any features, drawings, and performance specifications.
   ii. Indicate the award as “all or none” or “as a package” if multiple items are involved.
   iii. Request for warranty information.
   iv. Date by which item(s) must be delivered.
   v. A request to include delivery and set-up costs (if applicable) in the price quote.
   vi. Any particular specification relative to consumer choice:
       For example, the vendor will be responsible for the cost of pick up and delivery, cost of adjustments, cost of repairs, etc. that could be require after delivery.
   vii. The closing date and time for receipt of the quote.

f. If a consumer chooses a vendor outside the Region when Regional vendors are available, LRS shall limit travel payment to the amount paid for local travel, with the consumer assuming the extra cost. ‘Local’ should be defined as two hours or less travel time.

g. If the Consumer chooses to use the Vendor submitting the lowest price estimate, then the Consumer need not participate in the cost of services for the purchase of assistive technology devices.

h. If the Consumer chooses to use a Vendor other than the one submitting the lowest quote, then the Consumer must pay the difference in cost between the lowest quote and the quote submitted by the chosen Vendor.

C. Orthotic and Prosthetic Services

Participating vendors may charge no more than current Medicare allowable rates (“L” Codes). If the vendor quote exceeds either the Medicare allowable rate or the “maximum fee” schedule listed under VI-C, the Counselor must provide a written rationale for the excess, obtain approval of the District Supervisor and the Regional Manager, and submit a request for an exception to the LRS Director. The Program Coordinator for Rehabilitation Technology is available for technical assistance if the Counselor, District Supervisor, or Regional Manager has questions regarding AT.

Louisiana Worker’s Compensation rates should be used for pedorthic services (specialized foot care orthotics), which were not included in the current Medicare schedule published by the Health Care Financing Administration.

https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/DMEPOSFeeSched/DMEPOS-Fee-Schedule
D. Computers/Mobile Computing Devices

1. LRS will not enter into a contract for cellular/data/internet services on behalf of a consumer. The consumer will be responsible for the provision of such services.

2. The consumer is responsible for the maintenance and/or repair of any computer equipment or mobile computing devices purchased by LRS.

3. LRS will not purchase extended warranties on any items.

4. Once employed, the employer should provide reasonable accommodations per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). LRS may consider providing computers, mobile computing devices, or software when the following are met:
   a. The requested items are required due to the client’s disability to enable them to perform the essential functions of their job; AND
   b. It is documented that it would create an undue hardship on the employer to provide the needed accommodation(s).

E. Wheelchairs, Cushions, Scooters, and other Seating and Positioning Equipment

Counselors are not required to obtain price quotes for wheelchairs, cushions, scooters, and other seating and positioning equipment. If the mobility system is a powered mobility system, the Counselor should ascertain if the consumer can transport the system to and from work. The consumer may choose any LRS-approved vendor who complies with LRS’ purchasing guidelines as follows:

LRS-approved vendors must provide seating and positioning assistive technology devices at a discount of fifteen percent (15%) below each manufacturer’s suggested retail price (MSRP). Vendors must provide a copy of the related MSRP list(s) with each price quote. Counselors can use the LRS Quotation form.

F. Purchase of Eyeglasses

The purchase of eyeglass frames may not exceed $125.00. Eyeglass lenses are payable at actual cost.

G. Bioptic Telescope

Bioptic Assessment: $315.00

Bioptic Driver Training: $125 per hour for the mandatory 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training. Vehicle rental fees associated with the provision of the 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training will not be authorized.
H. Plan and Draft Authorization

1. Exception Requirement: If the cost of any single item or service/device will exceed the assistive technology services and devices fee schedule as listed below, the Counselor must request an exception. This should include:
   - A written rationale for the excess in AWARE case notes;
   - A completed Exception Request Form
   - Obtain review and recommendation by the District Supervisor, the Regional Manager, and
   - Submit to the Director for consideration of approval of the exception.

2. The completed IPE/Plan must be submitted to the District Supervisor for approval unless Counselor is on Independent Status. Upon approval of the IPE the RCA/Counselor will enter the Authorization(s). Chapter 4, Part 411.1 for further instructions on Secondary Approval requirements.

3. If the total of all items/services on any IPE/Plan is equal to or greater than $75,000, it shall be considered “high cost.” In these instances, all Counselors must have the IPE/Plan approved by both the District Supervisor, and Regional Manager.

I. Method of Payment

Prior to the Counselor/Counselor Associate authorizing payment to the vendor/provider after actual delivery of item(s)/services the following must be met:

1. The provider must provide an invoice in order to receive payment. If the provider/vendor does not have an invoice, the provider may use LRS’ form RS-22 Standard Invoice.

2. The Consumer must verify that services were secured as outlined on the invoice. The Consumer can either write anywhere on the invoice that the goods and/or services have been received or submit in writing (e-mail acceptable), a note to the Counselor indicating that the goods/services have been received. By doing so the Consumer is requesting LRS to make payments to the provider.

3. Vendor/Provider submits invoice to LRS for payment as outlined in A-B above.

4. Counselors are authorized to withhold payment for services until A-C above are received. If there are disagreements or evidence of significant departures from the original agreements then an administrative review of the case will be conducted to determine the appropriate, legal resolution.
## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES/DEVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>MAXIMUM COSTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Vision Aids/Adaptive Equipment</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthotics and Prosthetics</td>
<td>Current Medicare allowable rate (“L” code) <a href="https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/DMEPOSFeeSched/DMEPOS-Fee-Schedule">https://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Payment/DMEPOSFeeSched/DMEPOS-Fee-Schedule</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Services Repairs</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheelchairs, Cushions, Scooters, and other Seating and Positioning Equipment</td>
<td>15% below MSRP (Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology that meets the definition of and is also used as Occupational Equipment</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation Technology Assessments</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assistive Technology</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Services Training</td>
<td>$75.00/hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Services – Driver Training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sedan</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioptic Lens Driver Training(^2)</td>
<td>$3,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistive Technology Services not elsewhere identified</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^2\) No vehicle rental fee associated with the provision of the 30 hours of behind-the-wheel training will be authorized.