

Medicaid Alternative Pathways to Independence (MAPs)

Enabling Technology Service Definition and Utilization Protocol

Outcome Area:

Home, Work, and Community

Service Area:

Independence Coaching, Employment Innovation, and Community Navigator

Definitions:

Assistive Technology: Assistive Technology is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is specifically designed to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities and assist individuals in carrying out activities of daily living. These technologies may include mobility aids, communication devices, and adaptive equipment which:

- (1) Increases the ability to perform activities of daily living (e.g., adaptive eating utensils and dishware; an adaptive toothbrush); or
- (2) Increases the ability to communicate with others (e.g., a hearing aid, an augmentative alternative communication device or system; an adaptive phone for individuals with visual or hearing impairments); or
- (3) Increases the ability to perceive or control the environment within the home (e.g., a smoke alarm with a vibrating pad or flashing light).

Assistive technology must be medically necessary and must be recommended by a qualified healthcare professional (e.g., physician, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech language pathologist) for approval.

Enabling Technology: Enabling Technology refers to innovative technology solutions used to support individuals to envision and attain new levels of desired independence. Enabling Technology includes assistive devices, applications, smart home technology, and remote support systems and services that advance a goal-oriented and self-directed approach to personal development, acquisition, accessibility, and control. These technology solutions are used to solve a problem or create new opportunities-and empower-individuals to manage their lives with greater autonomy.

Enabling Technology must be reviewed and recommended by a DDA Enabling

Technology Regional Coordinator (DDA Tech Champ) for approval.

Safety Devices: Safety devices protect individuals from harm and ensure their safety, particularly in situations where they may be vulnerable. For individuals with ID/DD, safety devices might include home security systems, fire extinguishers, safety ladders, helmets and gloves, certain kitchen utensils, first aid kits, etc. This list includes examples of safety devices but is not comprehensive. These devices help to monitor the individual's environment and provide immediate assistance or intervention in case of emergencies, enhancing their overall safety and security.

Business Expenses: A business expense is any cost that a company or person spends to start their business or to keep their business running. These are things you need to buy or pay for in order to do your job or operate your business. Technology related business expenses might include software subscriptions, any hardware (e.g., laptops, monitors, printers, etc.) that is needed to do the job, or repairs and upgrades to existing technology used for work.

- **Vocational Rehabilitation** (VR) helps people with disabilities who want to start their own business. VR counselors work with individuals to create a business plan that fits their goals and helps them overcome challenges. They also offer training to build business skills, provide financial support for appropriate business expenses, and connect individuals with mentors and business networks to help their business succeed.

Description:

Enabling Technology is equipment and/or **methodologies** that, alone or in combination with associated technologies, provide the means to support the individual's increased independence in their **homes, communities, and workplaces**. The service covers purchases, leasing, shipping costs, ongoing utilization of devices/maintenance, and as necessary, repair of equipment required by the person to increase, maintain, or improve his/her functional capacity to perform daily tasks that would not be possible otherwise.

Enabling Technology includes remote support technology systems in which **remote support staff and/or coaches and/or natural supports can interact, coordinate supports**, or actively respond to needs in person when needed. Remote support systems are real-time support systems which **often** include two-way communication. These systems use wireless technology, and/or phone lines, to link an individual's home to a person off-site to provide up to 24/7 support. The systems

include the use of remote sensor technology to send “real-time” data to remote staff or families who are immediately available to assess the situation and provide assistance according to an individual's person-centered plan.

Persons enrolled in MAPs will have up to \$2,500 annually to cover approved Enabling Technology equipment and associated services to support the accomplishment of their independence goals. At the conclusion of their participation in MAPs (up to 3 years), persons supported will assume ownership of all Enabling Technology equipment/devices and all recurring Enabling Technology costs/leased equipment costs will become the responsibility of the person supported.

Enabling Technology is an available support option for all aspects and places of a person's supported life in MAPs. It is expected that Enabling Technology will be evaluated within every identified service milestone.

Enabling Technology Examples:

Examples of how people can use Enabling Technology at home, at work, and in their community include, but are not limited to:

Home

- Motion sensors
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
- Bed and/or chair sensors
- On demand or motion activated live audio and/or video technologies
- Pressure sensors
- Stove guards
- Live web-based remote supports
- Automated medication dispenser systems
- Mobile software applications using digital pictures, audio, and video to guide, teach, or remind
- GPS guidance devices
- Wearable and virtual technologies
- Software to operate devices for environmental control or to communicate with other smart devices, paid or natural supports at home, at work, or any other place of personal import.

Work

- **Pre-Employment**
 - Digital Career Exploration:
 - Self-directed or guided exploration of jobs and job tasks via a computer environment or a smart device's software application using digital pictures, audio, and video to enable participants and

job developers to identify jobs that match the individual's job interests.

- Digital tools for interest/skill exploration, member background information, and scenario activities to identify skill sets, learning styles, and support needs.
- Virtual Reality: Jobseekers can experience first-hand the pros and cons of various occupations by seeing, hearing, and feeling what they are like.
- Online tools for job hunting such as job boards
- Job interview tasks & tips, conditions for success, job/skill evaluations, and scenario activities.
- **Job Training/Coaching**
 - Remote Coaching
 - Includes support provided to the person and their supervisor or co-workers, either remotely (via technology) or face-to-face.
 - A device that otherwise meets the requirement for two-way communication. Individual interaction with the staff person may be scheduled, on-demand, or an on-time response to an alert from a device in the remote support equipment system.
 - Mobile technologies, video modeling, task prompting software applications, GPS-based applications; wearable technologies; virtual, augmented, mixed reality systems.
 - Fading
 - A mobile technology that offers long-term support on the job, in lieu of paid support, that may encompass job tasks, social behavior, or communication.
 - The use of enabling and/ or mobile technologies to support fading may cover a wide array of person-centered needs that include attendance, punctuality, self-managing breaks, interpersonal skills, appearance, communication, sequencing job tasks, etc.

Community

- Mobile Technologies that increase independence by teaching safe travel skills and guiding people during community travel to work or other places important in their lives, by walking or using public transportation.
- Mobile software applications using digital pictures, audio, and video to guide, teach, or remind.
- GPS guidance devices
- Wearable and virtual technologies
- Software to support communication with people along a person's routes or destinations.

Enabling Technology Utilization Protocol for MAPs

This Protocol describes the mandatory person-centered planning and assessment process for the integration of Enabling Technology as part of the person's support services. This Protocol also explains the steps required to request authorization for Enabling Technology and to implement necessary Enabling Technology solutions when those are requested by the person.

1. Enabling Technology is a pivotal support tool for MAPs Participants. Enabling Technology is an expected component of every MAPs Participant's services if they choose to use this support. PSCP Planning meetings, Monthly Check-Ins and the regular provision of services reinforce the importance of technology and offer opportunities to MAPs Participants to learn and engage technology.
2. During the completion and annual review of a MAPs Participants Person-Supported Collaborative Plan (PSCP), after Milestones have been identified, the MAPs Provider will utilize the DDA Enabling Technology Screening Tool & Referral Form to survey participants for the need for Enabling Technology, modifications to existing Enabling Technology, or additional education regarding Enabling Technology in light of their selected Milestones on their PSCP.
3. Results from the completed DDA Enabling Technology Screening Tool & Referral Form are automatically sent to the regional DDA Tech Champions and to the MAPs participant's Innovation Coordinator.
4. Based on the results of the DDA Enabling Technology Screening Tool & Referral Form the DDA Tech Champions will notify the participant's Innovation Coordinator of availability.
5. The DDA Tech Champions will be responsible for the facilitation of the Enabling Technology person-centered planning and assessment process with the person supported, their COS, the provider agency, and the assigned Innovation Coordinator. The DDA Tech Champion and Innovation Coordinator will work collaboratively to ensure all parties receive a meeting invite. The ET person-centered process should include:
 1. The IC will be responsible for coordinating schedules with the Participant, Stakeholders, Providers, and other needed parties. Upon receipt of the referral, the DDA Tech Champion will send the IC their availability for facilitation meetings. The IC will be responsible for identifying a mutually agreeable date for all members and send that to the DDA Tech Champion.
 2. The DDA Tech Champion will be responsible for leading the active facilitation up to and including sending the Invitation to the meeting.
 3. The DDA Tech Champion will be responsible for the person-centered planning and ET assessment to ensure the integration of Enabling Technology in a person-centered way that will help to increase independence while also ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of the person;

4. The DDA Tech Champion will be responsible for coordination with chosen Technology Vendor(s) for Enabling Technology recommendation(s) that support the person's priorities, preferences, and concerns; and;
5. The MAPs Provider Agency will be responsible for an Enabling Technology Plan (ETP) developed in conjunction with the person, their COS, the DDA Tech Champion, and the technology provider agency, as needed.
6. Upon completion of the Enabling Technology person-centered planning and assessment process, the Provider Agency will be responsible for submitting the Enabling Technology pre-claim authorization request along with these supporting documents:
 1. Enabling Technology Plan; and
 2. Quoted invoice from the Technology Vendor(s)

Note: Enabling Technology will require a service approval process to be implemented by the Innovation Coordination Agency in conjunction with review by Regional DDA Tech Champions. Upon verification of intention to implement Enabling Technology solutions, the identified equipment and intended cost solution for implementing ET will be submitted to the Innovation Coordinator for review. Once the Innovation Coordinator has confirmed validity, the link to the pre-claim will be sent to the Regional DDA Tech Champion for confirmation and approval of devices and solutions sent back to the Innovation coordinator for final review. Upon final approval, the request will be sent back to the provider agency to secure equipment and request reimbursement from DDA.

7. The DDA Tech Champion will approve all Enabling Technology Plans and ensure invoices are accurate based on the technology requested throughout the Enabling Technology procurement process. This review will include an assessment of the type of ET request being made. Based on the specific nature of the request, the DDA Tech Champion will approve/deny based on the following determinations. Please refer to the definitions at the top of the Enabling Technology Service Definition and Utilization Protocol for detailed descriptions of each of these categories of devices.

Safety Items: These items will NOT be approved using the Enabling Technology Budget. If the desired item is determined to be a safety item in nature, that request will be denied.

Assistive Technology: Assistive technology devices WILL be approved as long as the requested device is confirmed through an assessment and confirmation from a healthcare professional (OT, PT, SLP.) Without confirmation from a healthcare professional that he identified

device/solution is appropriate and safe for the participant, the request will be denied.

Business Expenses: These items will NOT be approved using the Enabling Technology Budget. If the desired item or items is for the purpose of starting or maintaining a personal business, Vocational Rehabilitation Services should be pursued.

Enabling Technology: Enabling Technology solutions WILL be approved.

The MAPs program serves as a **payer of last resort** for enabling technology supports. Whenever possible, individuals should first use **private insurance, Medicaid, or other health-related coverage** for devices that meet a medical or clinical need. For technology that is required specifically for **employment or self-employment**, individuals should pursue **Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)** funding when eligible. MAPs resources may be used only after all other appropriate funding sources have been explored and determined unavailable.

Enabling Technology Recurring Costs Protocol

Enabling Technology solutions that require a recurring cost can be utilized within the Enabling Technology annual budget. These solutions will be approved by the DDA Tech Champion on a case-by-case basis.

Recurring Enabling Technology solutions will be paid for by the provider agency and reimbursed through the post-claim approval and invoicing process used for all other milestone reimbursement payments.

Note: Recurring costs can be covered throughout the duration of the MAPs program. However, once the participant completes MAPs services, the participant and/or circle of support will be responsible for those recurring costs.

8. Post-claim approval for Enabling Technology purchases will require the Provider Agency to submit formal proof of purchase of equipment (receipts, invoices marked as paid).

Note: The date of the Post-Claim Approval will confirm which budget cycle the expense is credited within. Providers are encouraged to collaborate with the Innovation Coordination Agency to ensure those approvals occur within the targeted budget cycle.

9. No less than once annually during the Annual PCSP review, the MAPs Provider Agency shall conduct a review of the person's current Enabling Technology solutions and services with the person supported and their COS. If the member or COS has indicated a change in their desire or understanding for technology, a new DDA Enabling Technology Screening Tool & Referral Form should be completed **as needed** to reflect these changes. Any revisions, updates, or additions to the Enabling Technology services should be documented in the Enabling Technology Plan.
 1. For any person supported not currently utilizing Enabling Technology services, the Innovation Coordinator and the Provider will continue to monitor for opportunities to make available information about Enabling Technology through videos, printed materials, online resources, and/or coordination of in-person visits to the Enabling Technology Model Homes.
10. For purposes of payment of Enabling Technology services, these services must be included in the Enabling Technology Plan. This includes payment for apps on smart devices, which require pre-approval and will be paid by the provider agency or contracted third-party vendor. The purchase of computer/mobile applications ("apps"), and other Enabling Technology, not included in the Enabling Technology Plan will not be reimbursed.
11. Training requirements:
Refer to MAPS Training Matrix.

A. Special Considerations for Providers of Remote Supports

1. Individual Response Plan: Each person supported receiving remote support will have identified within their PSCP the risks for the person and the support needed to minimize those risks. In addition, the staffing plan will also include the following:
 - A safety plan with mitigation of hazards and response-necessary situations. (Examples may include: a designated smoking area, use of household appliances, basic first aid, response to smoke detectors/fire alarms, severe weather warnings, securing their home, when and who to call for help);
 - Supervision requirements and safety plans for any potential time spent without direct supervision;
 - Information relevant to self-administration of medications.
 - Identification of key contacts (which should also be posted in the home and programmed in staff telephones); and
 - Confirmation that the person and staff are trained on how to respond to the identified risks.

2. Provider Oversight: Each contracted provider shall develop a plan to ensure regular oversight for remote support sites, to be approved by DDA during reapplication.
3. Reportable Event Management for Remote Support Providers: Remote support providers shall comply with all requirements for reporting abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other reportable events involving individuals receiving services, as outlined in the Reportable Event Management Operational Protocol.
4. Emergency Remote Support Plans: Providers providing remote support services shall have policies and procedures in place for a response to emergency situations, referred to as an Emergency Remote Support Plan. The policies and procedures for an Emergency Remote Support Plan shall include:
 - Procedures ensuring that: (i) the person supported will be placed out of immediate harm as soon as possible; (ii) the provider will contact the local 911 emergency service if medical attention is required; and (iii) the provider will contact law enforcement for the jurisdiction where the person is located, the Department of Children's Services (DCS), the DDA Abuse Hotline, and/or Adult Protective Services (APS) if needed and as applicable to the emergency situation.
 - The identification of a designated alternative staff for the person and a procedure for contacting the alternative staff designed by the provider/Remote Technology Vendor when a response is required.
 - A minimum of two backup supports identified (natural support and/or paid staff) for each person if a response is required.
 - Details on the type of response required, including response time specific to the individual as defined in the person's PSCP. Response types can include face-to-face and/or telephone responses, depending on the person's particular needs at that time and to assure health and safety; and
 - The identified point of contact for the provider.

B. Technology First Initiative

As part of this Technology First initiative, MAPs Providers must ensure that Enabling Technology solutions are considered first as an option for services and support plans for MAPs Services and Milestones. All Coordinators will assist the individual and their support team with prioritizing Enabling Technology as a possible solution when considering any direct supports and services to promote independence, reduce the risk of future reliance on direct supports, empower personal growth, and provide additional opportunities for self-determination. This Technology First Initiative is not a "technology-only" strategy but aims to help persons supported learn more about how Enabling Technology can be utilized to improve their quality of life and experience new levels of desired independence.

C. Appeals

In the event an appeal is filed for denial of Enabling Technology by a person

enrolled in MAPs, appeals will be handled through the MAPs Appeal Process.

D. **Contacts:**

- DDA: DDA.Enabling.Technology@tn.gov