# 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 health care professional (e.g., physician, occupational therapist, physical therapist) 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 are tools and systems specifically designed to protect individuals from harm and ensure their well-being, particularly in situations where they may be vulnerable. 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.

## 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. All items must meet applicable standards of manufacture, design, and installation.

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
- Live or on-demand 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. As a first step to assess the person's interest, readiness, and need for Enabling Technology, the Innovation Coordinator will complete the ET Screening Tool with the person supported and their Circle of Support (COS).
2. The Innovation Coordinator will utilize the ET Screening Tool to inform the person-centered planning process, including the need for requests for new services, and

will affirm that the ET Screening Tool was used. The ET Screening Tool will be reflected in the PSCP. The ET Screening Tool will be uploaded into the individual case file for each participant.

1. This should be updated on an annual basis and reviewed prior to the next years PSCP and would become part of the person-centered planning tool. NOTE: Ensure these questions are considered either as part of the PSCP or Screening Tool.

3. If the results of the ET Screening Tool indicate the need for additional education and/or conversations about Enabling Technology, then the Innovation Coordinator may consider the following educational opportunities:

    1. Utilize the DDA Enabling Technology website to show Enabling Technology demonstration videos of devices and success stories of members using Enabling Technology; **AND/OR**
    2. Schedule an in-person/virtual technology demonstration from a Technology Vendor; **AND/OR**
    3. Schedule a tour at one of the Enabling Technology Model Homes for personal hands-on experience with technology solutions and devices (once the PSCP has been established and milestones have been selected); **AND/OR**
    4. Contact a DDA Technology Champion for consultation and further recommendations for educational opportunities; **AND/OR**

4. Following this additional education, the Innovation Coordinator will again complete the ET Screening Tool with the member and their COS.

5. When it is determined that Enabling Technology is requested by the person-supported, circle of support and provider agency, the provider agency will notify the Innovation Coordinator. The Innovation Coordinator will complete and submit the ET Referral Form to the DDA ET department at DDA.Enabling.Technology@tn.gov to start the person-centered planning process.

6. The DDA Tech Champ 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 Champ 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 Champ.
    2. The DDA Tech Champ will be responsible for leading the active facilitation up to and including sending the Invitation to the meeting.
    3. The DDA Tech Champ 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 Champ 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 DDA Tech Champ will be responsible for an Enabling Technology Plan (ETP) developed in conjunction with the person, their COS, and the Provider Agency.

7. 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 DDA Regional 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 request will be sent to the Regional Tech Champion for confirmation and approval 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.**

8. The DDA Enabling Technology 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 ET Tech Champion will approve/deny based on the following determinations. Please refer to the definitions at the top of the definition 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.

Enabling Technology: Enabling Technology solutions WILL be approved.

**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.**

9. 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.**

10. No less than once annually during the Annual PCSP review, the Innovation Coordinator 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 screening should be conducted **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 will continue to assist with the completion of the Enabling Technology Screening Tool. As requested by the person and/or their COS, the Innovation Coordinator shall make available to the person and their COS additional information about Enabling Technology

through videos, printed materials, online resources, and/or coordination of in-person visits to the Enabling Technology Model Homes.

11. 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.

12. 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 credentialing.

3. Reportable Event Management for Remote Support Providers: The requirements outlined below in relation to the One Reportable Event Management System are applicable when a person supported utilizes remote supports. Please refer to the REM Protocol for the specifics of REM.
   - Potential Findings of Neglect under the REM Protocol: Specific to the use of remote supports, the following are examples of behavior which could lead to a finding/substantiation for neglect by a staff or provider, after the completion of an REM investigation and in accordance with the REM Protocol:

- Failure to provide remote support as outlined in the person's PSCP and/or failure for local support to respond as outlined in the person's PSCP;
- Failure of the agency to provide a backup power source for remote supports;
- Failure of remote support staff to carry out stated required duties;
- Failure of agency staff to report on time for their assigned shifts (remote support staff will be responsible for reporting time in accordance with DDA requirements); and
- Failure of the provider to provide staff pursuant to original staffing requirements if the person requests that the remote support equipment be turned off or removed.
  - 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.

When an emergency occurs and the Emergency Remote Support Plan is implemented, the provider is required to submit a Reportable Event Form ("REF") to DDA's Central Office, as outlined in the REM Protocol. Additionally, the provider must provide the REF to the Remote Support Contractor by the next business day.

4. The Remote Support Contractor:
   - The provider agency will furnish a copy of any REF concerning any event of the types specified above to the Remote Support Contractor by the next business day.
   - Any Remote Support Contractor which is located out-of-state is considered to be providing supports in Tennessee.

  

- The Remote Support Contractor shall be notified by the provider's Event Management Coordinator (EMC) and shall have the right to participate in-person or telephonically in any Incident Review Committee meetings regarding an incident involving a member who was receiving remote supports at the time from that provider.
- The Remote Support Contractor will be notified that an investigation will be initiated by DDA. Providers and their subcontractors (vendors of remote supports) are expected to cooperate fully with the DDA investigator and to respect the investigative process.
- The Remote Support Contractors are expected to develop and maintain a Protection from Harm Policy for the safety and welfare of the members they support.

5. Provider Agency/DDA Requirements:
   - The provider agency is responsible for completion of an annual written analysis of trends and patterns related to reported events, as noted above, involving persons supported while remote supports were in use.
   - When an employee of a provider or its agent or volunteer is implicated in allegations of physical or sexual abuse, the provider is required to place that person on administrative leave while the investigation takes place or in a position that does not involve any direct contact with any person and/or any supervision, remote or otherwise, of any person served or supervision of other staff who provide direct care to the person, pending the completion of the investigation.

DDA will be responsible for the distribution of the Final Investigation Report to the provider and for the notification to the coordinator of the member of the investigative conclusions.  Upon receipt of the Final Investigative Report, the provider will share the investigative findings with the Remote Support Contractor, if applicable.

B. **Technology First Initiative**

As part of this Technology First initiative, Coordinators 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