



Policy No. 310	Subject: Rehabilitation Technology
Section: Services	Revised: 7/2022
Signature: Eric Evans, Bureau Chief	Version: FINAL

1. DEFINITIONS

- a. Rehabilitation technology: 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 that include education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, and recreation. The term includes rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology devices, and assistive technology services. (34 CFR 361.5(b) (45))
- b. Rehabilitation engineering: means the systematic application of engineering sciences to design, develop, adapt, test, evaluate, apply, and distribute technological solutions to problems confronted by individuals with disabilities in functional areas, such as mobility, communications, hearing, vision, and cognition, and in activities associated with employment, independent living, education, and integration into the community. (34 CFR 361.5(b) (44))
- c. Assistive technology device: means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. (34 CFR 361.5(b) (6))
- d. Assistive technology service: means any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device, including:
 - i. The evaluation of the needs of an individual with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the individual in the individual's customary environment;



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- ii. Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition by an individual with a disability of an assistive technology device;
 - iii. Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
 - iv. Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
 - v. Training or technical assistance for an individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives of the individual; and
 - vi. Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers, or others who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities, to the extent that training or technical assistance is necessary to the achievement of an employment outcome by an individual with a disability. (34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(iii))
- e. Vehicle modification: means a range of services provided by certified or accredited vendors who demonstrate the skills and expertise to: complete a pre-driving evaluation; assess and recommend structural modifications to vehicles; and install modifications to vehicles so that individuals who require rehabilitation technology to enhance mobility for employment can be successful in those goals. The services must be necessary and required to increase the individual's ability to participate in the IPE and achieve the employment goal. The services may be provided while the individual with a disability is participating in other vocational rehabilitation services.
- f. Home modification: means the alteration of an already existing living unit to make it usable or more usable by a person with a disability to achieve an employment outcome.
- g. Goods: means products or personal property other than money that is tangible or movable at the time of purchase, including specially manufactured goods.

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- h. Services: means work performed for the agency or its job candidates by a service provider.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES

IVRS rehabilitation technology services are available at any point in the rehabilitation process, except to those on the waiting list; however, rehabilitation technology services are available for students that require these services to participate in [Pre-Employment Transition Services](#). Rehabilitation technology services include, as appropriate, an evaluation of the ability of the individual to benefit from rehabilitation technology services.

Areas in which rehabilitation technology services may be of assistance include seating and positioning, augmentative communication, computer access, environmental controls, mobility equipment, and modification of the job site or home. IVRS does not fabricate or manufacture AT but may be able to assist in the development process.

3. AGENCY EXPECTATIONS

- a. The devices and related services shall be used as intended according to established state or federal health and safety standards as applicable.
- b. When individualized prescriptions and fittings for such devices are required, they shall be completed only by individuals licensed for such activity in the state. In the absence of a licensure law, such activity shall be performed by state recognized certified professionals.
- c. Job candidates should obtain insurance on devices, if they are not already covered under a homeowner, renter, vehicle, or medical insurance policy. IVRS does not pay for insurance premiums for these items. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that the equipment is well taken care of and to understand that IVRS does not replace items that have not been maintained properly due to misuse.
- d. If it is determined that a warranty makes sense for a rehabilitation technology item purchased, the IVRS counselor may consider this type of purchase.



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- e. IVRS staff should complete the Assistive Technology Specialist Request Form and then submit it to the Assistive Technology Counselor Specialist if they would like the assistance of the AT Counselor Specialist in a particular case. For home and vehicle modifications over \$5,000 or those complex in nature that require additional guidance, it is required to complete this step.
- f. Modifications to homes and vehicles can be provided only when needed to assist a job candidate to achieve the employment goal identified in the [Individualized Plan for Employment \(IPE\)](#).
- g. IVRS will not fund rehabilitation technology which is the responsibility of another entity (i.e. educational institutions, employers, etc.) under ADA, IDEA, or other laws or regulations. Consultation, planning and assessment services may be provided. A search for comparable services and benefits must be conducted per guidelines listed in that policy.
- h. Some job candidates may require an assessment to determine the appropriateness of a particular good or service within the scope of this policy. These assessments are authorized under the Assessment category and the R-406 Financial Inventory is not required.
- i. The [R-406 Financial Inventory](#) is required for all goods as defined above, that fall within the scope of this policy. Additionally, IVRS uses Medicaid rates for rehabilitation technology goods when applicable, and Medicare rates when Medicaid rates are not available. If IVRS maintains a master agreement for a selected vendor, the rates within the master agreement are utilized. The R-406 Financial Inventory is not required for any services as defined above, listed within the scope of this policy.
- j. Staff must abide by rules for purchases as outlined in the [Purchase Principles](#) policy and [Procurement Policy](#).

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- k. Training on the use of modifications are considered rehabilitation technology training and are funded as such. For driver's training that does not include training on the use of modifications or assistive technology, refer to the [Other Training](#) policy.
- l. IVRS will work to arrange for service animals when needed at the job site. IVRS does not typically support payment for the service animal directly, but would support the training of a service animal by a certified trainer (when applicable), if the service animal is needed in order to support the employment goal. Occasions which may require consideration of purchasing a service animal would be an exception.
- m. Agency Expectations Specific to Hearing Aid Purchases:
 - i. When a job candidate requests IVRS assistance towards the purchase of a new hearing aid(s), IVRS staff should document in the case notes (if not already included) the job candidate's barriers to communication related to employment. The job candidate's current status with communication abilities (e.g. currently wears hearing aid(s), use of AT, use of interpreter) should also be documented.
 - ii. The [R-406 Financial Inventory](#) is required for all hearing aid purchases.
 - iii. IVRS staff utilizes the Medicaid threshold for hearing aids for vocational purposes.
- n. Agency Expectations Specific to Vehicle Modifications:
 - i. Modifications to a vehicle are only provided when public transportation, including paratransit, is not available and the modification will allow the individual to achieve the employment goal.
 - ii. If the job candidate will be driving the vehicle, a pre-driving evaluation is required if the individual has not driven a modified vehicle previously. If the job candidate's physical or cognitive functioning has changed substantially since the job candidate last drove a modified vehicle, then a pre-driving evaluation again is required. If for any reason the counselor or the job candidate is unsure of the job candidate's physical or cognitive ability to drive, a pre-driving physical is required. If a vendor indicates a new

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evaluation is necessary prior to working on the vehicle, then a pre-driving evaluation is required. If the job candidate is a passenger only, the pre-driving evaluation is not required.

- iii. Before a behind-the-wheel evaluation is performed, the job candidate must obtain a driver's license or driver's permit. Usually it is recommended that the job candidate's physician provide a release to resume driving. Once the license/permit is obtained, then a behind-the-wheel evaluation is required to determine the application of the pre-driving assessment skills. Successful completion of any training using a modified vehicle is necessary before the purchase of the recommended modifications when the job candidate has not used the modifications previously.
- iv. The use of the [Vehicle Modification Checklist](#) is required.
- v. The [R-406 Financial Inventory](#) is required for all vehicle modifications. IVRS staff and the job candidate must discuss the financial costs and develop a plan on the vehicle maintenance and repair and other costs (e.g. insurance).
- vi. IVRS will only assist with modifications to vehicles that are owned by the job candidate or the job candidate's family. Proof of ownership must be provided. When the modification is to a family vehicle it will only be performed when the vehicle is the primary mode of transportation for the job candidate for employment purposes and services under the IPE.
- vii. The job candidate must produce proof of insurance to assure repairs will be covered in the event of an accident.
- viii. Only vendors that provide a warranty are used when repairing modifications previously installed on the job candidate's vehicle.
- ix. Modifications can only be provided by vendors who agree to adhere to the guidelines of the [National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association \(NMEDA\) Quality Assurance Program \(QAP\)](#).
- x. Any necessary vendor travel related to vehicle modifications is issued according to the [State of Iowa expenditure allowances](#) and authorized under the Rehabilitation Technology service category. Any necessary travel by the job candidate is covered under the [Transportation](#) policy.
- xi. For vehicles that are not new, the vehicle to be modified must be inspected by a qualified mechanic and certified that the condition of the vehicle,

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including (but not all encompassing) power train, brakes, electrical system, body and safety features warrant modification of the vehicle. During this inspection, the mechanic will need to determine if there are any recalls on the vehicle and those will need to be corrected before the vehicle modification occurs. The [Mechanical Evaluation for Vehicles](#) must be completed. A list of [state-approved vendors](#) is available and is searchable via city. Proof of license and registration is required.

- xii. Best practice is that invoices are itemized, with parts and labor separated out.
- o. Agency Expectations Specific to Home Modifications:
 - i. When a job candidate expresses an interest in a home modification, the use of the [Home Modification Checklist](#) is required.
 - ii. Home modifications are only done when necessary to support and derive full benefit from other rehabilitation services. The R-406 Financial Inventory is used to determine the job candidate's financial participation. The IVRS maximum participation is \$5,000 without an exception.
 - iii. IVRS does not fund home/new building purchases, maintenance, or repair. Modifications of the home must be disability-related and relevant to the vocational goal. Repair of the home for the modification to be made is the responsibility of the home owner. Land may not be purchased with VR dollars.
 - iv. IVRS does not modify properties that are not owned by the job candidate or the job candidate's family without an exception approved by the RSB Bureau Chief.
 - v. If IVRS is modifying a job candidate's home for purposes of operating a small business open to customers and vendors, this constitutes a project of public interest and therefore is subject to the [Build America, Buy America Act \(BABAA\) regulations](#), even though it is a private home. Home modification projects to a job candidate's home for personal and private use do not constitute an infrastructure project and therefore the BABAA regulations do not apply.

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4. EXCEPTIONS

- a. Paying more than \$5,000/home for home modifications.
- b. Paying to modify a second living unit.
- c. Modifying a property that is not owned by the job candidate or the job candidate's family. This requires approval of the RSB Bureau Chief.
- d. Purchasing services to repair a home or vehicle. Ownership of these items typically makes the responsibility of maintenance and repair that of the owner.
- e. Replacing equipment previously purchased by IVRS over the life of the same case of the job candidate.
- f. IVRS paying more than the Medicaid or applicable Medicare rate.
- g. The purchase of a service animal.
- h. Exceptions to meet the individual disability or vocational goal needs of the job candidate may be considered if it falls outside of policy.

5. APPLICABLE FORMS/DOCUMENTS

- a. [Assistive Technology Specialist Request Form](#)
- b. [Comparable Services and Benefits Policy](#)
- c. [Home Modification Checklist](#)
- d. [IVRS Driver Assessment Process Manual](#)
- e. [Mechanical Evaluation for Vehicles](#)
- f. [Procurement Policy](#)
- g. [Purchase Principles Policy](#)
- h. [Request for Exception to Policy](#)
- i. [R-406 Financial Inventory](#)
- j. [Vehicle Modification Checklist](#)

6. TRAINING

- a. [Rehabilitation Technology Policy Changes Training](#)