Assistive Technology (AT) enhances the lives of people with disabilities. AT promotes greater independence by helping people perform tasks that they may otherwise be unable to do. AT is any item, piece of equipment, software program, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities.

AT can help someone at work, school, in the community and at home. AT can be as simple as a magnifier to help you read or cutting-edge like a digital communication device. For example:

- AT can be low-tech: communication boards made of cardboard or fuzzy felt, fidget items, walking canes, pencil holders, etc.
- AT can be high-tech: special-purpose computers, power wheelchairs, etc.
- AT can be hardware: prosthetics, mounting systems, and positioning devices.
- AT can be computer hardware: special switches, keyboards, and pointing devices.
- AT can be computer software: screen readers and communication programs.
- AT can be inclusive or specialized learning materials and curriculum aids.
- AT can be specialized curricular software.
- AT can be Durable Medical Equipment or Medical Supplies: wheelchairs, walkers, oxygen (continued on next page)
equipment, hospital bed, feeding tube or catheterization equipment, etc. AT can be much more — electronic devices, braces, educational software, power lifts, eye-gaze and head trackers, specialized transportation and much more.

Assistive technology helps people who have difficulty speaking, typing, writing, remembering, pointing, seeing, hearing, learning, walking, and many other things. Different disabilities require different assistive technologies.

AT can be provided to you at work or school but navigating health insurance and benefits programs or requesting job accommodations can be tricky. One of DRWV’s federally funded programs is Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT). DRWV can assist people who need AT or related services by providing information & referrals, direct advocacy or legal representation. If you want more information or have been denied access to assistive technology, please call DRWV at 800-950-5250.

**Additional Resources:**
Job Accommodation Network [https://askjan.org/](https://askjan.org/)
West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services [https://wvdrs.org/](https://wvdrs.org/)
The West Virginia Assistive Technology System (WVATS) [http://wvats.cedwvu.org/](http://wvats.cedwvu.org/)

*Information in this article gathered from: [www.atia.org](http://www.atia.org)*