

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Rehabilitation Technology Guidance Document

2025

Rehabilitation Technology Services

The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) Rehabilitation Technology Services aim to optimize employment and independence for individuals with vision and other disabilities, support DBVI and VRCBVI staff, and serve current or prospective employers.

Rehabilitation Technology Services aim to increase public awareness of assistive technology and its proper use to improve employability of persons with vision or multiple impairments.

Rehabilitation Technology Services develop individualized solutions using current and appropriate assistive technology, techniques, and practices.

Rehabilitation Technology Services collaborate with other DBVI teams to help persons with vision and multiple impairments achieve maximum independence.

Rehabilitation Technology Services include the following responsibilities.

1. **Technical Support**

Members of the Rehabilitation Technology Services staff provide technical support to customers, DBVI field staff, VRCBVI staff, college and university professionals, and current and prospective employers of individuals with vision impairments and persons with multiple impairments.

Responsibilities in this regard include conducting extensive customer evaluations, developing conceptual solutions, and translating these solutions into effective workstation design or restructuring. Support includes installation of the assistive technology; follow-up with the customer, vocational rehabilitation counselor and employer as needed; and repair or replacement of malfunctioning assistive technology equipment.

2. **Rehabilitation Technology Specialists provide on-site consultation to employers on equipment modification, selection, installation, and use of assistive technology.**

3. **Coordination of Services and Technology**

The Rehabilitation Technology Services staff provides training to agency

staff in the effective use of the assistive technology as needed. The Rehabilitation Technology Services staff researches new assistive devices and trends; specialists develop, build, test, and implement custom solutions when off-the-shelf tech is unsuitable

DBVI Rehabilitation Services provide technical resources to committees, ensuring awareness of current techniques and technology; staff assist in public info programs about abilities of persons with impairments.

Prioritization criteria for Rehabilitation Technology Services referrals are as follows.

1. Individuals receiving Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 2. DBVI Personnel Referrals
 3. DBVI Operational Team Consultation
 4. Individuals receiving services through other DBVI programs
 5. Outside Consultations
 6. Special Events
-

Referral process for open non-VR and closed cases

1. The rehabilitation technology specialists' primary responsibility is to service individuals with an open VR case. Secondary to that may be attention to individuals who have an open RT case on a very limited case by case basis, and only as time permits. Generally, the rehabilitation technology specialists in the regional offices should not spend more than approximately 5% of their time over a one-year time period.
2. If a non-VR case requires more time than available, the specialist provides the case manager with alternative resources.

3. The contact and referral procedure between the RT case manager and the rehabilitation technology specialist will follow the same guidelines as those for VR Referrals.
4. Rehabilitation technology staff are not responsible for closed cases; technicians may assist over the phone when possible.
5. On a case-by-case basis, specialists may assist with closed cases if: a. assistive tech issue; b. employment is at risk; c. staff has time; d. not a long-term repair; e. system is delivered and picked up from HQ or regional office.

Guidelines for Equipment Recommendations and Customer Informed Choice

1. If a client requests a specific device, the specialist must assess if: a. it better meets needs; b. it has a unique feature; c. it's necessary for a task; d. it's recommended by the college or university.
 2. If yes to any, purchase is justified.
 3. If none of the above answers are yes, and that the individual simply wants a certain brand of computer because of its name, or it has extended features that are not necessary, the rehabilitation technology specialist does not have to purchase what the individual has requested. If the rehabilitation technology specialist prefers a specific brand or model of a computer or device based on its reliability, compatibility, tech support history, warranty, and cost effectiveness, then the rehabilitation technology specialist may stand behind that recommendation.
 4. It is not necessary for the rehabilitation technology specialist to recommend multiple brands and models of computers. Individuals may make an informed choice about whether to go with the recommended equipment or purchase another model instead.
-

DBVI Technology Tutor Network Purpose

Tutorial training assists customers in achieving vocational goals, focusing on developing computer or assistive technology skills as needed.

DBVI has set minimum requirements for contracted technology service providers.

Only tutors approved by TTN and on the DARS vendor list will teach assistive technology and software.

DBVI may contract with TTN-approved tutors for community-based training on assistive and mainstream tech, including application for approval with device descriptions, recommendations, and proficiency interview. Approved tutors are limited to devices they qualified on; DBVI may terminate if expectations are not met. Tutors must assure student info is used only for training and not released elsewhere.

Tutor Qualifications

Tutors must:

- a. train users in communication devices and software;
- b. have experience with assistive tech;
- c. work effectively with vision-impaired individuals;
- d. communicate effectively orally, in writing, and via ASL if applicable;
- e. pass a TTN proficiency interview on relevant devices and software;
- f. configure assistive tech to meet student performance needs.