

PROCEDURE FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE REQUESTS

OVERVIEW:

This defines the policies related to Information and Assistance (I&A) requests as well as the procedures to process these requests. Information and Assistance includes provision of information and supports to individuals and provision of referrals to other entities.

POLICY

I&A's can be provided by VATP staff to any Vermonter with any need regarding assistive technology.

I&A's can take place through phone, email, in-person, or a virtual online meeting. Materials may be provided via any of these methods as well as through mail.

VATP staff will conduct I&A's within their scope of knowledge and make appropriate referrals when necessary.

I&A's are assigned through a central referral system. They are entered onto an Excel sheet with tabs assigned to each tryout center. I&A's are assigned regionally by the AT Services Coordinator.

The current I&A sheet is stored on the state network, accessible via in office or VPN connection. A Vermont.gov account is required for either method.

AT Specialists must update the sheet or ask someone else to paste in the update if unable to within two business days. This is imperative to the process.

For extended absences of 5 days or greater, AT Access Specialists will work with their supervisor to determine I&A coverage.

VATP staff is responsible for entering completed I&A's into www.vt.at4all.com for federal data reporting purposes. This data must be entered for each federal fiscal year before reporting can occur.

PROCEDURE

1. Request for an I&A comes to VATP.
2. Consumer information and request details are added to the I&A Spreadsheet. If the request came from the Centralized Referral system, the AT Services Coordinator assigns the request to the appropriate staff member.
3. VATP staff member responds to the I&A within 2 business days. If unable to complete the I&A within that time frame, the assigned AT Specialist is responsible for ensuring the consumer has been informed that the request was received.
4. VATP Staff member updates the I&A spreadsheet whenever they contact the consumer.
5. VATP staff may determine that an I&A is best completed through the provision of another VATP Program function (demonstration, equipment loan, public awareness, reuse, alternative financing, or technical assistance) and the appropriate policy and procedure for that service should be followed.
6. If the I&A request cannot be resolved by the ATP staff member assigned, that staff member will inform the consumer that they will be referred to another staff member or outside entity.
 - Transfer of an I&A to another tryout center happens for various reasons such as vacation times, lack of available equipment, areas of expertise, etc. If the entire I&A is transferred to another tryout center before it is completed, the AT Services coordinator or AT specialist must enter a note reflecting the transfer on the original tryout center sheet. Paste a copy of the transferred I&A on the tryout center sheet that is receiving the I&A.
 - If another tryout center will be sending out a loan for a completed I&A, please note which AT specialist is the contact in the AT4ALL "Manager Notes" for that loan.
 - If VATP staff determine that the consumer needs to be referred to an outside source, staff must provide all contact information including: phone, email, website, and, if available, catalogs, brochures.
 - Referrals can be made to any applicable local or national supports including vendors, service providers, trainings, or agencies.
7. Completed I&A's should be logged at www.vt.at4all.com