



RI Division of Developmental Disabilities Technology Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) (Updated June 2023)

1. Who is eligible to apply for this fund?

- You must be receiving funded services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) with a current Individual Support Plan (ISP) in place.

2. Where can I find more information about the Technology Fund including the Technology Request Form?

- On the BHDDH Technology Fund website: <https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/initiatives/technology-fund>.
- The Request Form is available in English, Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL).
- Contact your DDD Social Case Worker if you need more support.

3. How much can I spend?

- There is no defined minimum or maximum amount you can request. However, the fund holds 2 million dollars which is intended to be shared across approximately 4000 people.
- You are encouraged to identify technology that best meets your accommodation needs.

4. Do I need a technology goal in my ISP to access the Technology Fund?

- You do not need a goal specific to technology in your ISP.
- You do need to be able to use the technology requested to meet a goal in your ISP.
 - If you already have a goal where the technology supports your progress, you do not need to write a new goal.
 - Or you may need to update your ISP to reflect your need/intended use of technology. Contact your plan writer/support coordinator to amend your ISP.

5. When do I have to submit my Technology Request Form?

- You can submit your Technology Request Form any time before the end of each submission and it will be reviewed in the quarter in which it is received. Request deadlines are May 31, 2023, August 31, 2023, November 30, 2023, February 28, 2024, and May 31, 2024. You will be notified the month following your submission, in June 2023, October 2023, December 2023, March 2024, and June 2024 respectively.

6. Who can submit the Technology Request Form?

- You can submit your Technology Request form, with or without support, or someone can submit it on your behalf, such as your support coordinator or family member.

7. I self-direct my services, is there anything I need to know about accessing the Fund?

- You access the Fund like everyone else by filling out and submitting the Technology Request Form.

8. What if I don't know who my Social Caseworker is?

- You can call the DDD main phone line at (401) 462-3421 and someone will help you.

9. How will I know if my request has been approved? Will you send me the technology?

- You will be contacted by mail and/or email from your Social Caseworker to let you know if your request was approved.
- DDD will work with your Provider Agencies/Fiscal Intermediaries to purchase the technology.

10. What happens if my Technology Request Form is not approved?

- You will be contacted by your Social Caseworker and receive feedback about why your request is not being approved. You may choose to resubmit your request, based on the feedback.

To avoid delay of approval, fill out all the details requested in the request form.

Common issues that could delay your request:

- A lack of detail about the exact items you are requesting to purchase, including the device model and an itemized cost.
- Not listing the specific ISP goal/s where technology will be used to support you to work towards your goal, and detailed information on how the technology will be used to support your life.
- A lack of detail about accommodation need that explains why you need more than the base model of a device. For example, you might need a larger screen because of your vision needs.
 - The base model is the least expensive model. **For example**, if you requested an iPad Pro, but did not justify the reason you need the larger model, you will only be approved for the base model: 10inch iPad, Wi-Fi 64 GB \$329.00, AppleCare \$69.00, Smart Cover \$49.00. Total: \$492.15
- You asked for subscription services. The Technology Fund can purchase a device with cellular capacity but cannot pay for a subscription/monthly fee. If requesting cellular capacity, provide justification of the need.
- You requested gaming equipment. The Technology Fund will not pay for gaming and entertainment equipment unless there is a clear connection to an ISP goal, and that goal is not isolating a person from community options/connections.
- Your request meets the criteria for approval. However, before your request is processed, the review committee wants to make sure you are aware that there are other pathways to pursue

the hardware/software you requested through other funds (for example, Medicaid funds can cover items recommended by Speech Language Pathologist).

- Your request describes use of the device solely for employment goals and could be purchased through other sources (for example, ORS or a self-employment mini grant).

11. I'm not sure what technology to purchase, where do I start?

- The Tech Fund was created to give you access to general technology, for example smart devices and touch screen tablets. There are many options available, you need to explore what is right for you based on your ISP goals.
- You can explore your options online, using searches on the internet (ex. technology used by people with disabilities, or independence through technology), you can go into stores that sell technology and talk to salespeople, speak to your family, peers, your provider, and your social caseworker.
- Forums on the Technology Fund will include information on what technology people are using and how they are using it to meet their goals.

12. Does the Technology Fund pay for assessments or training?

- No, it is only for you to receive Technology hardware or software.

13. When will the next Technology Fund Forum be?

- The Technology Fund Forums will be held in August 2022, October 2022, January 2023, and April 2023. Once this Forum is scheduled, meeting information will be made available on the Technology Fund website and in the DDD Newsletter.
- You can sign up to receive the DDD Newsletter at:
<https://bhddh.ri.gov/developmental-disabilities/newsletters-forums-and-events>

14. What happens if I miss the deadline to submit a Technology Request Form?

- Requests will be reviewed on a Quarterly basis. If you miss the deadline for the current Round, your request will be reviewed by the Tech Review Committee during the following quarter.

15. I will need help to learn the technology I purchase. My staff needs to learn how to support me using it. How do I do this?

- Your Support Coordinator / Plan Writer can work with you to identify a training plan. DDD is working with the Sherlock Center and Advocates in Action to develop a library of training tools that includes short videos and clear visually-based training documents.

16. What's the difference between assistive technology and technology?

The definition of assistive technology (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. For a long time, assistive technology focused on specialized tools and devices. Now with touch screen tablets, and smart devices created

for the entire population, technology is becoming more accessible for everyone. Many of these new devices meet the definition of AT.