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Purpose

Assistive Technology (AT) loan closets are programs that lend AT items to people with disabilities. This tip sheet can help you get started finding the

AT item that is right for you.

Assistive Technology (AT): *AT or adapted equipment means any item a person needs to keep up or do better in school or at work, or to help with daily activities. There are many kinds of AT items. They can help people walk, talk or hear, and more.*

What is an Assistive Technology loan closet?

Assistive Technology (AT) loan closets are programs that loan AT equipment to people with disabilities. These programs let you:

- Try items before buying your own.
- Have a backup when your item is in for repairs.
- Use an item while waiting for yours to be delivered.
- Use an item while going through the insurance coverage process.

How long may I keep the equipment?

Loan closets make short-term and long-term loans. The length of loan varies. Some loan programs let you use the item as long as you need it others have a set time period for loan. But they all expect you to return the item when you no longer need it.

How much does it cost?

Most loan closets do not charge a fee to borrow equipment. Some programs require a deposit. They return your deposit when you return the item. Some ask for a cash donation to help with program costs.

What kinds of equipment do they have?

Each loan program has different equipment. Typical items can include, but are not limited to: wheelchairs, commodes, canes, walkers, shower chairs, crutches and hospital beds.

There are also specialized loan closets. These programs loan items to people with specific disabilities or needs. These can include people who have trouble speaking or seeing.

How do I find a local program?

The Iowa Compass resource database keeps listings of many loan closets. Follow these directions when searching our website:

- Type your zip code.
- Type “Assistive Technology Loan Program” or “Loan Closet” in the “Search by Service Keyword” field.

- Call Iowa Compass at 800-779-2001 for help with your search.

Other groups may offer informal equipment loan programs. The groups listed below may have a loan closet in your community. Look for them online.

- VFW Posts
- American Legions

Get in touch with local churches or clergy to ask for their help. Your own church or its members may help you find AT items. They may ask members from other churches or community service groups. Remember that AT items are often stored away in garages and basements when no longer needed.

Crutches may be available at your local pharmacy at no cost.

When calling an local group, you should ask:

- Do they have an AT equipment loan program?
- Do they have the item you need?
- How long can you keep it?
- How much does it cost?

Disclaimer: This tip sheet is for information only. It cannot guarantee funding. Iowa Compass makes regular updates to give current and accurate information. We cannot be held liable for any outdated or incorrect information.

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