

Ohio Early Intervention

**Using Assistive Technology in
Activities and Routines: Introduction
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

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Q: How Should Assistive Technology (AT) be documented on the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)?

A: Adaptations that make a task easier or simpler to accomplish are often noted as strategies within IFSPs. Adaptations relate to modification of the environment, the design of the activity, and the materials used. Adaptation strategies may involve adapting or repurposing a common household item or toy to help a child engage more easily. Examples include rolling up a towel to help a child remain properly positioned, or cutting out pictures from snack boxes to use as communication aids.

When Early Intervention (EI) providers find themselves facing issues that are beyond the scope of this type of everyday problem solving that occurs as a part of early intervention service delivery, the IFSP team should to consider adding AT as a service, device, or tool. Please see the Assistive Technology Guidance Document at <https://ims.ocali.io/storage/ocali-ims-sites/ocali-ims-oei/documents/EI-AT-Policy.pdf>.

When the EI service of Assistive Technology is placed on the grid as an early intervention service, it will typically occupy two lines on the IFSP. The first line will indicate the purchase of the device, and the second line will identify the provider who will deliver the required training or technical assistance (TA) to the family about how to use the device. The frequency of the TA will be specific to the needs of the family, and the team will determine who the best person is to provide the TA. Since the EI service is the same, the TRS for the second line will be the purchase date of the Assistive Technology Device. Here is an example of the grid:

EL service Type	Method	Location	How often	Session length
Assistive Tech	D/P	H	1 X	15 mins
Assistive Tech	D/P	H	2 X	15 mins

Provider agency	Funding source	Projected start date	Projected end date	Outcome number
XYZ AT Services	Ins/ POLR	8/20/20	9/20/20	1
CBDD	CBDD	10/1/20	11/1/20	1

Q: How is assistive technology funded?

A: AT is funded consistent with Ohio’s system of payments. Potential funding sources include county boards of developmental disabilities, private insurance, Medicaid, and payor of last resort (POLR). If no funding source other than POLR is available, the EI service coordinator will contact the EI resource coordinator. The Early Intervention service coordinator (EISC) should be prepared to discuss the developmental necessity, the equipment or services described, pricing requests, quantity, and duplication.

Q: Will the state begin buying Bumbo seats and corner chairs as assistive technology for children?

Determining whether a piece of equipment meets the definition of assistive technology under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must occur on an individual basis and be based on the child’s needs, the family’s concerns, resources, and the IFSP outcomes. Some devices might be therapeutic or make caring for the child easier or safer but do not contribute to enhancing or maintaining the child’s functional capabilities. Consequently, these may not be AT but may be appropriate for the EISC to support the family in acquiring these devices outside of EI. To be considered an assistive device, the equipment must aid the child’s participation and maintain or increase independence in routines and activities resulting in accomplishment of IFSP outcomes. It is not the intention that the state will start paying for Bumbo seats, bath chairs and other items that can be bought off the shelf and used with typically developing children. This could still be a strategy and will be documented as such on the IFSP.

Q. I think it would be helpful in the FAQs to give some examples of how the typical toys that are used as AT could be documented on an IFSP. Especially if there is not financial assistance to be used to purchase. I think we use a lot of these as strategies, but they are not documented on the IFSPs.

Universally designed devices used with all children, with and without disabilities, at a particular age (e.g., booster seat, suction bowl, safety plugs in outlets) are not considered assistive technology. (Thomas Jefferson University, 2011). A no-tech device is not considered AT under IDEA part C unless it is something unique and specific to the child’s disability and not something commonly used by most parents. Please see the Ohio Early Intervention Assistive Technology Guidance Document <https://ims.ocali.io/storage/ocali-ims-sites/ocali-ims-oei/documents/EI-AT-Policy.pdf>