

DDS Supportive Technology for Vision Loss and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

Addressing Needs: Vision Loss and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

WHY? Individuals with vision impairment, legal blindness, combined vision and hearing loss or deaf blindness may face daily challenges when accessing media, news, and information; communicating with others; and when engaging in activities of daily living, leisure, travel, and/or employment.

Assistive Technology Consultation/Evaluation

HOW? Taking into consideration your visual, hearing, and tactile abilities, a licensed or certified professional (ATP, OTR/L, PT, or SLP) through the DDS Supportive Technology Services works to find Assistive Technology (AT) solutions to everyday challenges that your vision loss or combined vision and hearing loss bring.

- Evaluations are initiated by referral from your DDS Service Coordinator.



WHERE? The evaluation takes place wherever you will use the AT and often involves consultation with a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist for the Blind (COMS), Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT) and/or Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT):

In the Home

cooking, eating, laundry, clothing management, organizing, identifying products/colors, lighting, positioning, navigation/orientation, media access, communication

In the Day Program

access to leisure and learning activities, eating, positioning, navigation/orientation, communication

In the Community

shopping, navigation/orientation, accessing transportation, reading signs and labels, identifying products/colors, communication

In the Workplace

computer access, text to speech, navigation/orientation, positioning, lighting, communication

Devices, Products, Software and Apps

WHAT? Supportive Technology for individuals with vision loss or combined vision and hearing loss comes in many forms including specialty devices, products, software, and apps. Each is designed to enable visual information to be received auditorily, tactually, and/or with attention to independence and safety.

DDS Supportive Technology for Vision Loss and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

Technology for Vision Loss and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss includes, but is not limited to:

- Smart devices (lighting, thermostat, voice assistant)
- Tactile (bump dots, writing guide)
- Talking products (time, weight, calculator, smart speaker, AI assistant)
- Text to Speech or Braille (apps, wearables, handheld, screen reader)
- Magnification (handheld, electronic, eyewear, large-print keyboard)
- Identification devices, voice assistant, apps (color, people, money, items)
- Communication (cell phone, iPad, watch, captioning, Braille)
- Navigation/Orientation (GPS, voice assistant, apps, long cane via COMS)
- Safety and Ease of Use Products (kitchen, bathroom, staircases)
- Organization (labelers, lighting)



Results

WHEN? The evaluation produces recommendations for devices and products to meet your unique needs and goals. DDS may cover the cost of items that you cannot afford, aren't covered by your insurance, and/or aren't available from APH Quota*:

- AT Support will set up and provide you with education and training for your assistive technology.
- COMS, CRVT, and/or CLVT may also assist in training and/or encourage use of devices, products, apps during lessons and/or services.

Additional Resources for Vision Loss and Combined Vision and Hearing Loss

Orientation and Mobility/Vision Loss Services / MCB DDS Partnership

<https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/orientation--mobilitylow-vision-services.html>

Tech Access: <https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/tech-and-access.html>

*American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota Account (APH):

<https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/aph-federal-quota-account.html>

“Focus” Website for Vision and Vision Loss Services and Resources:

<https://www.focusonvisionandvisionloss.org/>

<https://www.mass.gov/lists/idd-blindness-and-vision-impairment>

Questions about these Additional Resources? Please Contact:

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