

AT for Seniors in the Workplace- Services

HOW TO UTILIZE YOUR STATE AND LOCAL RESOURCES TO INCREASE SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT

JAMES A. WHITNEY, OTD - ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CLINICIAN

Objectives

- Speaker Introduction
- ❖ Define terms like assistive technology, disability, ageism, and "reasonable accommodation," to set the stage for the rest of the presentation.
- *Become familiar with legislation that is in place to protect the rights of seniors with and without disabilities.
- ❖Information on Services / Resources in the state of MD to assist the aging population gather the resources they need for successful employment
- ❖ Conclusion Information on how to contact MDTAP / our partners

A little about me...

James Whitney, OTD → james.whitney1@maryland.gov

I hail from Salisbury, MD

Graduated from Salisbury University with Bachelor's in Psychology and a Minor in Sociology

Graduated with my Doctorate in Occupational Therapy from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Began working with the Maryland Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP) as an AT clinician.

I love empowering individuals to increase their quality of life by becoming more independent and successful in engaging in meaningful activities through the use of Assistive Technology.







So, why are we here?

The number of Americans over the age of 65 is projected to double from 2010 (N=40.2 million) to 2050 (N=88.5 million). (Harada, C.N., Natelson Love, M.C., Triebel, K.L., 2013)

Individuals with disabilities / impairments CAN be a productive and valuable employee!

Our aging adults who choose to work are legally allowed to do so with or without the use of reasonable accommodations.

One or two disabilities / impairments does not negate the multiple skills an individual has.

It is not easy for employers to find good workers - Employers may not know that you are entitled to reasonable accommodations that facilitate your ability to complete your job and just need to know what you need.

Why are we here? Continued...

Older workers remain a vital segment of today's workforce.

Some individuals have retired from one form of work and chosen to switch careers or work parttime to earn extra money and maintain insurance benefits, keep active, learn new skills, or socialize.

With the aging of the baby boomer generation, the average age for workers will increase, and the likelihood that more employees will be managing a disability increases.

Please keep in Mind...

Aging, by itself, is not an impairment, but a person who has a medical condition (such as hearing loss, osteoporosis, or arthritis) often associated with age - has an impairment on the basis of the medical condition. If that impairment substantially limits a major life activity, the person may be entitled to accommodations under the ADA.

For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier.

For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.

- IBM training manual, 1991

What Is Assistive Technology?

Devices

 "any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities" (AT Act of 1998, as amended)

Services

• "any services that directly assist an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device" (AT Act of 1998, as amended)

Definition of "Disability" Under the ADA

A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working... the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

PUBLIC LAW 110-325 Sec.4(1)

Let's Talk About Ageism:

What is it?

• Prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age.

Examples:

- Losing a job because of your age
- Not getting hired because the employer wanted a younger-looking person to do the job
- You were fired because your boss wanted to keep younger workers who are paid less.

Negative Psychological Effects of Ageism:

Older adults can internalize ageist beliefs and begin to believe and behave as though they are no longer independent, healthy, vibrant adults. (Levy, 2009; Levy & Banaji, 2004).

Older adults exposed to negative age stereotypes in laboratory studies demonstrated worse memory, handwriting, and self-confidence and have appeared to age "instantly" – moving in a stereotypically older manner (Levy & Banaji, 2004; Meisner, 2012)

Negative Physiological Health Consequences of Ageism:

Research suggests that ageism may be associated with short- and long-term physiological health consequences .

Levy and Colleages (Levy, Hausdorff, Hencke, & Wei, 2000; Levy et al., 2008) documented heightened cardiovascular stress responses among older adults subliminally exposed to negative stereotypes of aging compared to those exposed to positive stereotypes.

• Frequent elevation of blood pressure and heart rate can lead to hypertension and may contribute to or exacerbate other chronic health issues such as heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, obesity, and diabetes. (Go et al., 2013; Julius, Valentini, & Palatini, 2000; Lago, Singh, & Nesto, 2007)

LEGISLATION



The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967

SEC. 623. [Section 4]

It shall be unlawful for an employer-

- (1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual or otherwise discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's age;
- (2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual's age; or
- (3) to reduce the wage rate of any employee in order to comply with this chapter.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The ADA protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in <u>employment</u>, <u>access to State and local government services</u>, <u>places of public accommodation</u>, <u>transportation</u>, and other important areas of American life.

- Title I applies to Employment
- Title II applies to State and local government services and programs
- Title III applies places of public accommodations (businesses that offer services to the public)

Title I of the ADA: Employment

Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits private employers, State and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from -- discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

The ADA covers employers with 15 or more employees, including State and local governments. It also applies to employment agencies and to labor organizations.

https://www.ada.gov/ada_title_I.htm

In short:

The ADA protects you from discrimination in all employment practices, including:

- job application procedures
- hiring
- firing
- training
- pay
- promotion, benefits, and leave.

You also have a right to be free from harassment because of your disability, and an employer may not fire or discipline you for asserting your rights under the ADA.

Most importantly, you have a right to request a reasonable accommodation for the hiring process and on the job.

What Constitutes a "Reasonable Accommodation"?

Any change or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that would allow you to apply for a job, perform job functions, or enjoy equal access to benefits available to other individuals in the workplace. There are many types of things that may help people with disabilities work successfully.

Accommodations are sometimes referred to as "productivity enhancers". Reasonable accommodations should not be viewed as "special treatment" and they often benefit all employees.

Examples of "Reasonable Accommodations"

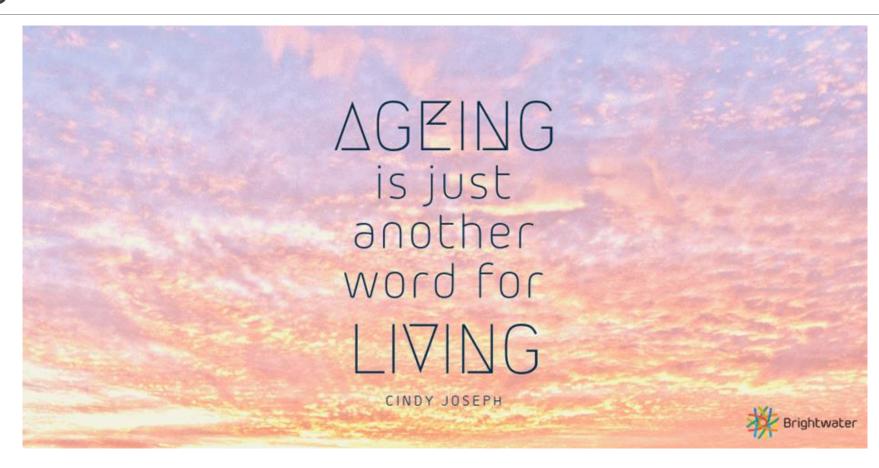
According to Cornell Law - 42 U.S. Code § 12111 - The term "reasonable accommodation" may include—

making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities; and

job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, *acquisition or modification of equipment or devices*, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

Between the ADA and the ADEA you have a legal right to NOT be discriminated against on the basis of age and/or disability in the workplace.

Aging and Disability – how it ties together



MD Services / Resources for Individuals with Disabilities

Survey

Are you familiar with or have you used the services of the Maryland Assistive Technology Program?

Answers:

- Yes
- No
- Yes but unclear of what your services include

About the Maryland Assistive Technology Program (MDTAP)

We provide statewide access to assistive technology (AT) through equipment demonstrations, loans, reuse, financing, and training.



www.mdtap.org

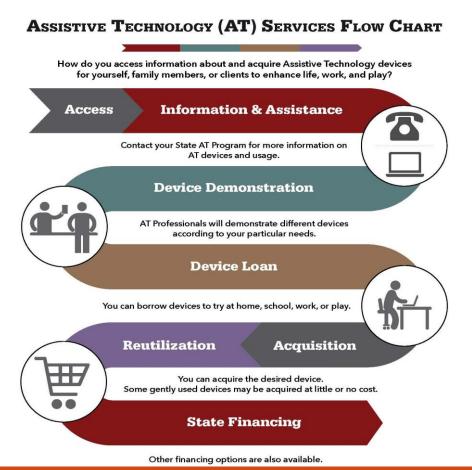


AT Services Flow Chart

Reach out to us by phone call, email, or our online form (www.mdtap.org) to get started!

We can offer direct assistance or refer you to another resource that may be able to help you if the request is out of our scope of practice!

 We can conduct an AT Consultation to find out more about the individual and their needs etc.



- We can demonstrate AT devices to show the individual how they work and what to expect while using them
- If all parties agree, then we can move forward with a 30- day loan of the device for the client to take home and use in their natural setting (school, work, home, etc.)
- We can also assist with price comparison shopping and finding a proper vendor if the client likes the AT device enough to make their own purchase.

WhAT We Do in Maryland

- Maintain 4 (four) Regional Offices & Libraries across the state (Central Baltimore, Southern Maryland, Western Maryland, and Eastern Shore) services include trainings, demos, loans, outreach
- Host 4 (four) additional Community AT Libraries across the state
- AT demonstrations and customized consultations with on-staff AT Clinicians In-person and Virtually!
- Issue short-term device loans, up to 4 weeks at a time
- Host in-depth AT sessions exploring a variety of AT topics In-person and Virtually!

Interactive Assistive Technology Access Map

More of WhAT We Offer

Virtual AT Library

Home Modifications Directory

Loan Closet Directory

Schedule of Webinars



Assistive Technology Loan Program (ATLP)

Mission: The Assistive Technology Loan Program helps Maryland residents with disabilities and their families qualify for low-interest loans to buy equipment that will help them live, work, and learn more independently.

Who Can Apply?: Anyone who intends to use the loan to buy assistive technology for a Maryland resident with a disability. That includes people with disabilities, family members, friends, etc.

Will Everyone Be Able to Get a Loan?: No. You must have a good likelihood of repaying the loan (income / debt ration, stability in residence/job, and credit history).

How Much Can Be Borrowed?: From \$500 - \$50,000.

What type of Equipment Can Be Purchased With a Loan From ATLP?

A wide variety of assistive technology. "Assistive Technology" is any device that helps a person with a disability live more independently and productively. It includes:

- Home modifications
- Adapted vehicles
- Scooters and wheelchairs
- Braille equipment
- Hearing and vision aids
- Augmentative communication devices
- Environmental control units
- Computers and adaptive peripherals
- Many other devices

Link to Survey for ATLP

Centers for Independent Living

The Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are seven regional non-profit organizations that work with MAP to provide services that promote independent living for all individuals with disabilities, regardless of age.

CILs are designated and operated by individuals with disabilities. Common services available through your local CIL include:

- Peer support and mentoring individuals with disabilities
- Independent living skills training
- Assistance for teens and young adults with disabilities to transition to independence
- Advocacy
- Assistive Technology

Connect with your Local MAP Office

The Aging and Disability Resource Center (ARDC), know locally as Maryland Access Point (MAP), were established as the single entry point for individuals seeking long term support services. Maryland's 20 local MAP sites provide individual, person centered counseling to consumers seeking information, referral and program support for long term services.

In most cases, the Area Agency on Aging is the lead organization in the MAP structure. MAP partners include local health and social services departments, Centers for Independent Living, behavioral health agencies, and other organizations through which people seek assistance.

Click **HERE** for a link to Maryland's 20 different access points.

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)

Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) are local agencies that assist and support older adults, family caregivers, and adults with disabilities. AAAs are the lead agency for Maryland Access Point and you can find MAP located within each AAA and, in some areas, at local senior centers.

Planning Assistance: To understand your options and develop an action plan for services that meet your goals and needs

Access: Work with MAP staff to complete applications for available public or private pay services, navigate the public long term care system, get information and referrals to health and social services providers, and connect with necessary services

Community Services: Senior center activities, meals in a social, group setting, adult day care, nursing facility ombudsman, elder abuse prevention, legal assistance, employment counseling and referrals, and health and fitness programs

In-home services: Chores, personal care, home-delivered meals, home repair and home modifications to support independent living

Caregiver Support: Respite, counseling, and education programs

Find your local AAA office

Hearing Health Collaborative

This program is relatively new that brings together the expertise of <u>Access HEARS</u>, <u>HASA</u>, and <u>Baltimore City's</u> <u>Health Department</u> to address age-related hearing loss in Baltimore.

Access HEARS, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization whose mission is to connect individuals with hearing loss to the solutions they need to age well.

Founded by leading hearing experts and entrepreneurs at the Johns Hopkins University, the social enterprise employs an evidence-based program to deliver services directly to the community. Access HEARS offers its clients a low-cost, in-person or virtual service delivery, teaching them how to use high-quality listening devices while providing them with ongoing support to ensure their success.

- Low cost over-the-counter hearing devices
- Medicaid covered hearing aids
- •Free Case management services

For more information Contact Diamynn Hill at (443)-863-9931 or email at dhill@hasa.org.

<u>Superear</u> - \$69.95

Sound amplification device

- Help you get the most out of lectures, meetings, conversations, etc.
- Comes with earbuds and headphones
- Can help you gain 50+ decibels and pick up sounds up to 100 yards away
- Multi-element high sensitivity microphone
- Battery powered (AAA)
- Clip on pouch to clip it onto belt loops or anywhere that is a good spot to maximize sound reception and portability.



Sound World Solutions: Sidekick \$399.00

Bluetooth wireless personal sound amplifiers:

- Fits sort of like a hearing aid
- Can be used right out of the box. Can adjust the volume and choose between 3 listening modes to suit your hearing needs.
- Multilingual
- Bluetooth pairing capabilities to your iPhone, Android, or desktop computer and use it for:
 - incoming/outgoing phone calls
 - listening to music/audio
- Has a free Customizer app that allows you to customize your hearing settings directly from the app.



Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) - Workforce Development & Adult Learning

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is available to:

- •Job seekers ages 55 older who are:
 - Unemployed
 - Meet established low-income guidelines
 - And desire an opportunity for training and employment.

Individuals are given a training assignment that most closely matches their personal goals for employment. Training assignments are coordinated with non-profit or government agencies, also known as host agencies, and are limited to 20 hours per week, at the established minimum wage hourly rate. Applicants are not required to have previous work experience.

Seniors Service America Inc. -> Center for Workforce Inclusion

Provide a range of services including skill assessment, training, and post-placement mentoring.

This programs exist to serve low-income, older job seekers with a focus on communities who have been traditionally underserved by workforce programs such as:

- Veterans
- Women
- •And job seekers who were formerly incarcerated.



Video on CFWI

Telecommunications Access of Maryland/ Maryland Accessible Telecommunications

This program is there to help you get the telecommunications equipment needed to independently make or receive phone calls.

The Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT) program offers a wide variety of solutions and tools—from amplified phones to Braille TTYs to tablets—to support day-to-day communications.

How the program works:

- 1.) Apply

- 2.) Schedule free personalize Eval.3.) Get a solution that is right for you4.) Start using your new equipment!

MAT Application – Online Form

MAT Application – For Print



call at 800-552-7724 or 410-767-6960 (Voice/TTY) or 443-453-5970 (Video Phone) to request an application by mail.

Blind Industries and Services in MD (BISM)

Blind Industries & Services of Maryland is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing career and training resources to blind residents of Maryland.

They offer training in:

- Braille
- Cane travel
- Independent Living
- Assistive Technology

Video on BISM

DORS Blindness and Vision Loss Program (OBVS)

This program is for individuals whose primary disability is vision loss.

OBVS rehabilitation counselors, rehabilitation technologists, case managers and rehabilitation teachers are specially trained to help people who are blind, vision impaired or deaf-blind with planning for employment and independence. OBVS can also assist individuals over age 55 who have <u>independent living goals</u>.

OBVS Programs and Services Include:

Career guidance & assessment
Assistive technology
Vocational or academic education
Independent living skills training
Orientation & mobility
Job placement

<u>Contact your local DORS offices</u> to request services. If you are eligible for services, you will be assigned a counselor or teacher who works in your community.



Lydia participated in several OBVS programs, which helped her get a job at the <u>Social Security</u>

<u>Administration</u> in Baltimore, where she has been successfully employed for many years, and has received a number of promotions.

Maryland's American Job Center > Workforce Development and Adult Learning

Maryland American Job Centers provide a full range of assistance to job seekers and businesses (free of charge). The Centers are part of Maryland Jobs Now (MJN), a network of high-performing, results-oriented workforce organizations investing in employment and training strategies, services, and initiatives, helping job seekers and businesses succeed. Staffed with qualified professionals who can assist with numerous employment-related services, the Centers stand ready to serve Marylanders with high-quality services and programs.

<u>Job seeker</u> services include career exploration assistance, referrals to training programs, placement services, résumé preparation assistance, and workshops to enhance job seeking skills and work readiness. Applicants have access to computers with Internet access, printers, photocopiers, fax machines, telephones, and a variety of job search resource materials.



Client Assistance Program

Having a problem with a DORS service? Contact the Maryland Client Assistance Program (CAP).

CAP will help you with concerns or difficulties you may have when applying for or receiving services funded under the federal Rehabilitation Act.

Rehabilitation Act services include vocational and independent living services through the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), as well as services through Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

Their staff can provide you with information and advocacy assistance to help resolve your concerns about rehabilitation services.

CAP staff have detailed knowledge about the DORS program and the federal and state laws and policies that regulate it. They will try to resolve disagreements at the local office level, but will assist you in appeals requests and court actions, if necessary.

Contact CAP at:

Voice: 410-554-9361

Toll-free: 1-800-638-6243

Fax: 410-554-9362

E-mail: cap.dors@maryland.gov

MD Department of Aging

This is a great overall resource with a variety of information on different services and programs that are offered for seniors in the state of MD. Check out this website for a more comprehensive list of what is offered

Maryland Durable Medical Equipment Reuse Program (DME)

- •They work directly with the Maryland Senior Centers
 - Continuing education
 - Transportation opportunities
 - And more!

Survey

Have you used employment services in MD in the past 5 years for the purpose of finding employment?

- -yes
- -No
- I have used MD services but not for employment.

AT Devices That May Promote Successful Employment...



Kinesis Freestyle2

\$99.00

https://kinesis-ergo.com/shop/freestyle2-for-pc-us/



Vertical Mice

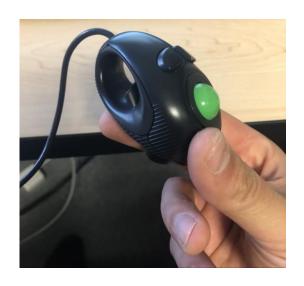
 May make it easier to operate if user has limitations on pronating forearms

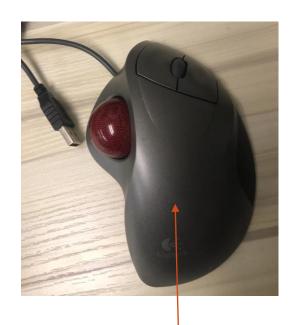


- Keeps forearm and wrist in more neutral rest position which minimizes muscle use.
- Avoids forearm and wrist pronation (rotating of the wrist counterclockwise) that compresses the median nerve and can lead to carpel tunnel
- Keeps bulk of the underside of your wrist off the desk, further reducing pressure to that area.













Logitech
Trackball
Mouse:
\$34.06

BIGTrack 2: \$85.00



Magnification

These can be low-tech like a classic handheld magnifier(see image right)

Or they can be high-tech like a Video Magnifier or CCTV

These give you the ability to Zoom in and out, change the contrast, and take a still frame photo so you don't have to keep the device held up against whatever it is you may be observing.

Can be used for reading text or for working with

Fine motor skills and small objects!







<u>Visomed Biconvex Hand-</u> held Magnifier – 3x \$17.00



Topaz EZ HD D

Magnifier - \$2,495.00

Other OCR Devices

OrCam MyEye - \$4,250.00

OrCam Read - \$1,990.00

<u>OmniReader</u> - \$2,495.00







ClearSounds Quattro 4.0 Pro Plus Amplifier - \$229.95

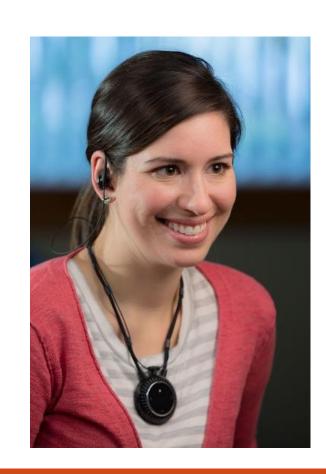
Streams and amplifies sounds

Works for most listening environments

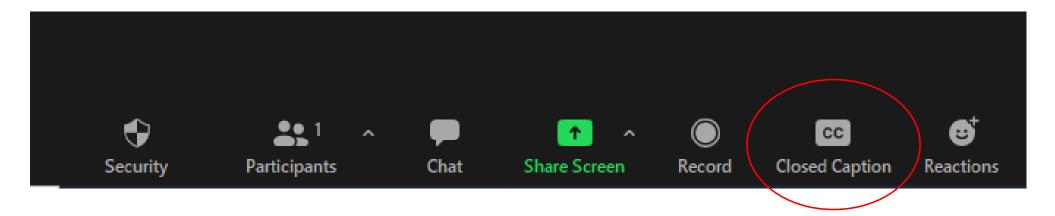
Can be used with regular headphones (if user does not have hearing aids or cochlear implants)

Microphone can detach from the neck loop and be placed closer to the sound source that you want to hear

Can be paired via Bluetooth to tablet, office phone, cell phone, TV, headphones, etc. to amplify those sounds better.



Adding Captioning to a Meeting







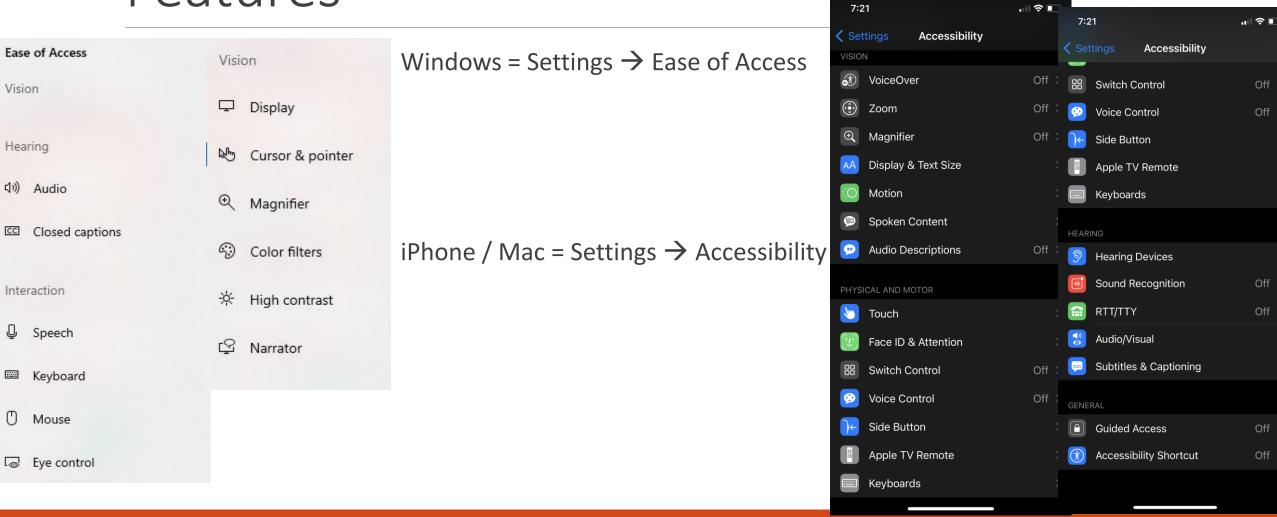








Built-in Accessibility / Ease of Access Features



Conclusion

No matter what your disability or impairment there are services in the state of MD that are there to assist you with a multitude of resources including:

- •Identifying the Assistive Technology that could promote successful employment
- Locating funding to assist you in making purchases of AT
- Receiving job training
- Locating available employment opportunities
- Post-placement mentoring
- •And much more!

Not Sure Where to Start?

You can reach out to us at MDTAP and we can direct you to the right place or click on the hyperlink on any of the slides in this PowerPoint for a direct link to the organization presented on that slides website!

Want More Info? Contact Us!

Central Office

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Maryland Technology Assistance Program 2301 Argonne Drive, T-42
Baltimore, MD 21218
(800) 832-4827 (voice)
(866) 881-7488 (TTY)
(410) 554-9237 (fax)

MDTAP.General@maryland.gov (e-mail)
www.mdtap.org (web)
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Eastern Shore Regional Office & Loan Library

Bay Area Center for Independent Living, Inc.

909 Progress Circle, Ste. 300

Salisbury, MD 21804

443-260-0822 (voice)

443-260-0833 (fax)

http://bayareacil.org/ (web)

Southern Maryland Regional Office & Loan Library

Southern MD Center for Independent Living

38588 Brett Way, Suite 1 Mechanicsville, MD 20659 301-884-4498

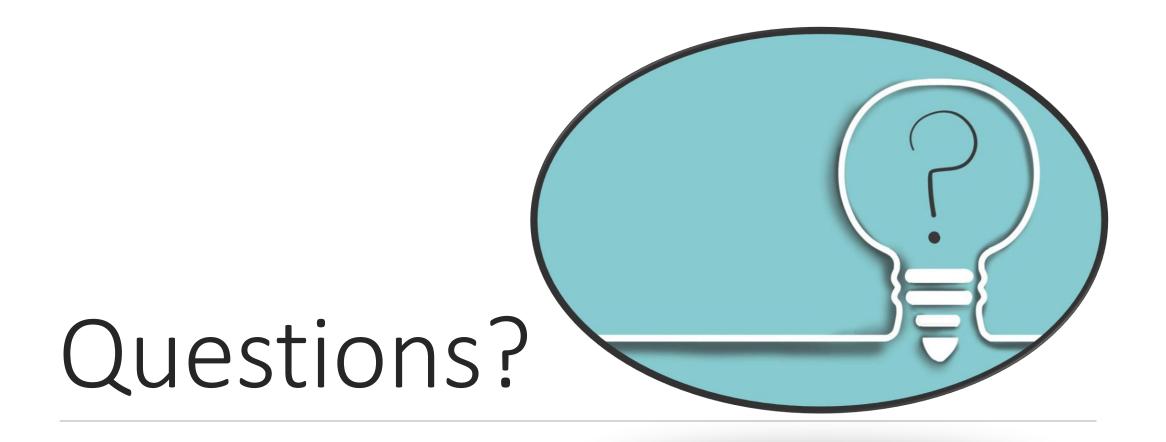
info@smcil.org www.smcil.org

Western Maryland Regional Office & Loan Library

Resources for Independence

735 E Oldtown Rd, Cumberland, MD 21502 301-784-1774

www.rficil.org



Pasupathi M., & Löckenhoff C.E. (2004). Ageist behavior. In Nelson T.D., (Ed.), *Ageism:* Stereotyping and prejudice against older persons (pp. 201 – 246). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

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Meisner B.A. (2012). A meta-analysis of positive and negative age stereotype priming effects n behavior among older adults. *The Journal of Gerontology, Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 67 (1), 13 – 17.

Federal Register, August 19, 1991, p. 41272

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Levy B.R., Ryall, A.L., Pilver C.E., Sheridan P.L., Wei J.Y., Hausdorff J.M. (2008) Influence of African American elders' age stereotypes on their cardiovascular response to stress. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, 21 (1), 85 – 93.

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Julius S., Valentini M., Palatini P. (2000). Overweight and hypertension: A 2-way street? *Hypertension*, 35 (3), 807 – 813.

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http://mdod.maryland.gov/mdtap/Pages/MDTAP-Home.aspx

https://aging.maryland.gov/accesspoint/Pages/map-directory.aspx

https://aging.maryland.gov/accesspoint/Pages/About-Us.aspx

https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/age-discrimination-employment-act-1967

https://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-net/cil-center-and-association-directory-results/MD

http://accesshears.com/

http://accesshears.com/2020/07/newly-created-hearing-health-collaborative-brings-together-the-expertise-of-access-hears-hasa-and-baltimore-citys-health-department-to-address-age-related-hearing-loss-in-baltimore/

https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/scsep.shtml

https://www.centerforworkforceinclusion.org/

https://dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/CAP.aspx

https://doit.maryland.gov/mdrelay/Pages/Equipment.aspx

https://aging.maryland.gov/Pages/ProgramsAndServices.aspx

https://aging.maryland.gov/accesspoint/Pages/Area-Agencies-on-Aging.aspx

https://www.centerforworkforceinclusion.org/

https://www.dllr.state.md.us/county/

Image Retrieval

https://dors.maryland.gov/resources/Pages/CAP.aspx

https://doit.maryland.gov/mdrelay/Pages/Equipment.aspx