

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

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Representative Dan Saddler

House Majority Leader • Serving Chugiak-Eagle River & Peters Creek

Memorandum

To: Senator Donald Olson
Co-Chair, Senate Finance Committee

From: Representative Dan Saddler —DRS
House Majority Leader

Date: May 6, 2024

Re: HB 219 Responses to Finance Committee Questions

Please find attached further details about the funding and activities of the nonprofit Assistive Technology of Alaska, provided by Mystie Rail, the executive director. She compiled this information in response to the committee members' questions asked during the May 1 hearing of House Bill 219 in the Senate Finance Committee.

Please contact either me or my aide, Melodie Wilterdink, at (907) 465-3783 if we can provide additional information.

Data and Budget Information for FY23 – Total Budget: \$891,852

Alaskans Served through the AT Act

Demonstration

Participants	671
Devices	542

Loans

Participants	100
Devices	308

Reuse & State Financing

Participants	62
Devices	2,742
Dollars saved	\$415,470

Training & Education

Participants	634
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Outreach

Participants	27,110
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A Section 4 AT Act Program must provide an assurance that the funds received through the grant will be used to supplement, and not supplant, funds available from other sources for technology related assistance, including the provision of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.

“Funds made available through a grant to a state under this section shall not be used for direct payment for direct services or an assistive technology device for an individual with a disability.”

Budget

All AT Act funds are direct costs, which are costs that can be identified specifically with a particular award, project or program, service, or other organizational activity or that can be directly assigned to such an activity with a high degree of accuracy. Direct costs include, but are not limited to, salaries, travel, equipment, and supplies directly benefiting the grant-supported project or program.

Federal Assistive Technology Act \$466,491

All AT Act actual expenditures for each fiscal year award is expensed and reported by:

A minimum of 60% funding is to be expensed for:

- All State-Level Activities (State Financing, Reuse, Device Loan, Device Demonstration).

No more than 40% funding is to be expensed for:

- All State Leadership Activities (All other activities including Training, Technical Assistance, Public Awareness, Information and Assistance, etc.)

5% of the 40% funding is to be expensed for:

- Transition Training and Technical Assistance which will be a duplicate number that is included in the State Leadership Activities total.

FY23 AT Act Budget Breakdown

Personnel	294,262
Travel	5,360
Contractual	126,768
Supplies	3,851
Office Equipment	7,465
Demo/Loan Equipment	9,709
Other	19,076
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	466,491

akRelay

\$114,000

Free specialized telecommunication equipment for individuals that are Deaf, hard of hearing or speech disabled. Includes amplified phones, TTYs and accessories. In addition, through akRelay, qualified individuals can receive an iPad instead of a phone so they can make Video Relay calls or for the speech disabled to utilize speech-generating applications.

akCanConnect

\$37,442

Available for anyone that is deaf-blind or has a progressive vision and progressive hearing impairment. Once an applicant has been verified to qualify for the program, an AT Specialist will provide an evaluation, purchase telecommunication equipment and train the individual free of charge.

AgrAbility

\$16,336

We have partnered with the UAF Cooperative Extension Office on a USDA funded program called AgrAbility. AgrAbility offers the following services at no cost to customers:

- Conducting on-site assessments to identify barriers to completing tasks both in the agricultural workplace and the home.
- Recommending appropriate assistive technologies (equipment/tools/devices), modified work practices, and/or other possible solutions to overcoming disability-related limitations.
- Providing access to informational materials on a variety of topics related to disability and agriculture.
- Providing education/training opportunities through workshops, conferences, seminars, and on-line programs.

TechAbility

\$157,007

Free "lifetime loans" of low to mid-tech assistive technology for Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority beneficiaries to overcome their barriers to independence. Equipment available through this program are low-cost and easily accessible, such as jar openers, magnifiers, smart home hubs, etc. Assistance will be provided to ensure consumers have the opportunity to implement the equipment and successfully enhance their quality of life.

Fee-For-Service

\$70,000

Fee-for-service activities include an individualized assessment that involves a systematic process in which our Assistive Technology Specialists that works one-on-one with a professional organization's client to help them determine:

- What assistive technology will best fit their client's needs
- Who is responsible for the funding of that equipment
- What follow-up tasks are needed for successful implementation of the assistive technology recommended

- Provided with an assessment or consultation is a detailed report professionals can refer to when making a justification for funding, seeking clarification in the assistive technology recommended, and for use in the future if their client's needs change