

Technology Assistance Program

The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) established the Technology Assistance Program (TAP) to provide assistance to Virginia residents who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or speech-impaired in getting the telephone equipment they need to stay or become more independent. The TAP program has evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of consumers and fit within the Commonwealth's budget.

For example, let's say that your hearing loss is making it difficult for you to understand speech on a regular telephone. If you can provide proof of Virginia residency, documentation of your hearing loss (usually an audiogram), and if your monthly income meets the income guidelines, you could borrow an amplified phone for up to 30 days to see if it works for you. If you are satisfied with the phone after 30 days, it becomes yours.

Devices available through TAP include:

Text Telephones (TTYs)	Amplified Telephones
Voice Carry Over (VCO) Phones	Captioned Telephones
Hearing Carry Over (HCO) Phones	Personal Amplifiers
Visual Signalers	Audible Signalers

If you are not eligible for free equipment, you may still be able to get equipment through TAP at cost. Applications may be obtained through a Demonstration Site or an Outreach Specialist who can explain the process to you and assist you in filling out the application.

There is a network of Sites across the Commonwealth—like NVRC's Demo Room—that can demonstrate TAP equipment and help hard of hearing consumers choose the right device for their hearing/listening needs. NVRC is a Demonstration Site for the Northern Virginia area which includes Fairfax County, Arlington County, Loudoun County, Prince William County and the Cities of Fairfax, Falls Church, Alexandria, Manassas, and Manassas Park.



NVRC's Demonstration Room

For more information about this program or to set up an appointment to determine your eligibility, contact NVRC:

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Debbie Jones, Resource and Technology Specialist. During her 22 years at NVRC, Debbie has given hundreds of technology demonstrations to consumers, administrators, agencies, emergency personnel, educators and students. She is fluent in American Sign Language.

3/2017

Revised TAP Income Eligibility Guidelines (effective February 2017)

To be eligible for the TAP program, your family/household income must be below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

“Income” is defined as all income actually received by all members of a household. This includes salary before deductions for taxes, public assistance benefits, social security payments, pensions, unemployment compensation, veteran’s benefits, inheritances, alimony, child support payments, worker’s compensation benefits, gifts, lottery winnings, etc. The only exceptions are student financial aid, military housing and cost-of-living allowances, irregular income from occasional small jobs such as baby-sitting or lawn mowing, and the like.

A “household” is defined as any individual or group of individuals who are living together at the same address as one economic unit. A household may include related and unrelated persons. An “economic unit” consists of all adult individuals contributing to and sharing in the income and expenses of a household. An adult is any person eighteen years or older. If an adult has no or minimal income, and lives with someone who provides financial support to him/her, both people shall be considered part of the same household. Children under the age of eighteen living with their parents or guardians are considered to be part of the same household as their parents or guardians.

You may also qualify for TAP if you can provide documentation (in person, by mail or fax) that you are eligible for one of the following government programs:

- Medicaid
- Low income home energy assistance
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Federal public housing assistance or Section 8
- Food Stamps or Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Welfare to Work (WTW)
- National School Lunch Program’s free lunch program

If none of the above apply, please provide (in-person, by mail or fax) a copy of last year’s Federal IRS 1040 tax form(s) filed by you and members of your family/household, or send other evidence of your family/household income, such as recent Social Security Administration disability or retirement benefit statement(s) or other pension benefit statement(s).

***Veterans with proof of an Honorable Discharge (form DD214 or substitute) are considered automatically eligible for TAP and do not require review or documentation of income.**