

1) BABYNET SERVICE GUIDE: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY - CFR 303.12(d)(1)

- a) Definition: Assistive technology means any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf or modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve the developmental capabilities of children with disabilities.
 - i) Part C of IDEA deals only with assistive technology that is directly relevant to the developmental needs of the child. Assistive technology devices must assist the child in accomplishing IFSP goals/objectives within their current everyday activities and routines.
 - ii) IDEA specifically excludes services that are surgical in nature and devices necessary to control or treat a medical condition.
 - iii) Equipment/devices must be developmentally appropriate to be considered eligible for funding.
- b) Assistive technology service means a service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Assistive technology services include:
- c) The evaluation of the needs of a child with a developmental delay, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's natural environment with family input;
- d) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices for children with developmental delays;
- e) Creating, selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing or replacing assistive technology devices;
- f) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices such as those associated with existing IFSP and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- g) Ongoing training or technical assistance for a child with developmental delays and that child's family or caregiver;
- h) Ongoing training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing BabyNet Services) or other individuals who provide services to or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of children with disabilities.

2) QUALIFICATIONS:

- a) Assistive technology assessments and services are conducted by SC Licensed/certified therapists and Licensed audiologists.
- b) All evaluation, assessment and IFSP services must be provided:
 - i) By qualified personnel having a contract with BabyNet;
 - ii) According to discipline specific practice act required by all licensed professionals and BabyNet Policies and Procedures even if not reimbursed directly by BabyNet.

3) PROCEDURE:

- a) An assistive technology assessment must be performed if the IFSP team (including the parent and appropriate professionals) feels that a device may be needed to achieve an IFSP outcome or goal. Information for the AT assessment may be available within current evaluation, assessment and intervention information.
- b) The need for assistive technology devices or services must be assessed functionally within the context of the child's current everyday activities and routines and included in the IFSP as an intervention in order to request funding.
- c) Assessments must include:
 - i) Child's name, date of birth and diagnosis;
 - ii) Brief description of child's current functional level (depending on details provided, more information may be requested);
 - iii) Explanation regarding how the device, including each individual component, will be used during the child's everyday routines and activities and how it relates to goals on the IFSP; and how it will be used to achieve the goals.
 - iv) Description of options available in the child's Natural Environment(s) that were tried and list results...
 - v) Indicate all other pieces of assistive equipment the child currently has, including equipment that is on order or being considered.
 - vi) The South Carolina Assistive Technology program should be considered as a resource prior to requesting equipment from BabyNet. The South Carolina Assistive Technology Program (SCATP) is a federally funded

program concerned with getting technology into the hands of people with disabilities so that they might live, work, learn and be a more independent part of the community. As part of a national network of technology-related assistance programs, their goal is to enhance independence, productivity and quality of life for all South Carolinians through access to assistive technology devices and services. They provide an [equipment loan](#) and [demonstration program](#), an [on-line equipment exchange program](#), [training](#), technical assistance, [publications](#), an [interactive CDROM](#) (SC Curriculum Access through AT), an [information listserv](#) and work with various state committees that affect AT acquisition and IT accessibility. They link people with technology and work with consumers, service providers, state agencies and policy makers. They can be contacted by phone at 803-935-5263 or at www.sc.edu/scatp.

4) OBTAINING EQUIPMENT:

- a) The provider identifies an AT need through evaluation or ongoing assessment and informs the BabyNet Service Coordinator of the need. The BabyNet Service Coordinator convenes an IFSP meeting and if the IFSP team agrees with need, the AT is incorporated into the IFSP. The team will review the assessment and ensure all required components are included. All other sources of payment should be investigated and attempted prior to considering BabyNet payment for services (Medicaid, Private Insurance, Children's Rehabilitative services, SC Assistive Technology Program, etc.).
- b) The BabyNet Service Coordinator will add the AT on BabyTrac with a Planned Begin Date of the date of the IFSP Review where the AT was identified as a need. Frequency, Duration, and Intensity are the same as the Early Intervention service most closely related to AT need. Setting is 'Home' as this is where the device will be most frequently used.
- c) The BabyNet Service Coordinator compiles current (within 60 days) necessary documentation:
 - i) Assistive Technology Request Form (Appendix, Form BN022);
 - ii) IFSP section 10A Child and Family Centered Goal, all pages related to AT and present levels of development.
 - iii) Physician's order/prescription (when applicable).
 - iv) Assessment reflecting developmental need, identifying goals and objectives with the utilization of the recommended equipment/service.
 - v) Picture (if available) and description of item including manufacturer pricing.
 - vi) If mail order, include a completed order form and copy of pages that list product(s) and prices.
 - vii) Completed BabyNet Service Fund Authorization form.
- d) BabyNet reserves the right to request the substitution of a less expensive item of comparable function if a substitution is deemed appropriate. Service Coordinators must utilize BabyNet contracted vendors in order to maximize SC Medicaid and private insurance and ensure that BabyNet is the payer of last resort. Items that are specifically fitted for an individual child must be acquired through BabyNet contracted providers. "Off the shelf" items can be purchased through non-contracted providers such as internet companies or vendors.
- e) The request, including copies of all required information will be sent by mail, email, fax or other means to the First Steps BabyNet Consultant. BabyNet Supervisor is required to sign the AT request form ensuring that information is complete.
- f) First Steps BabyNet Consultant reviews the required information and determines if the request is consistent with policy guidelines, as well as reviews other payment options considered. If additional information is required, the First Steps BabyNet Consultant will email the child's BabyNet Service Coordinator requesting additional information. If the requested item does not exceed 500.00, the First Steps BabyNet Consultant can approve the request. If the item exceeds 500.00 the First Steps BabyNet Consultant will confer with designated professional discipline and determine approval or denial. Once request has been approved or denied, the First Steps BabyNet Consultant will respond to the BabyNet Service Coordinator by email within 10 days of the decision. If the item is approved for purchase, the First Steps BabyNet Consultant will add the Actual Begin Date on BabyTrac as the date the AT is approved by BabyNet Central Office. BabyNet Service Coordinator will then forward packet (including the email approval) to Jasper to process the order.
- g) First Steps BabyNet consultant will document the date of receipt, consultative input (if appropriate) and disposition of request.
- h) If the request is not approved, the First Steps BabyNet consultant will notify the BabyNet Service Coordinator of the review decision and enter an end date in BabyTrac. BabyNet Service Coordinator must inform the family of the review decision.
- i) Fiscal Agent will process the AT order and return a copy of the 3203 to the BabyNet Service Coordinator with the order date noted.

- j) The BabyNet Service Coordinator will follow up with the family to ensure the item has been received within 30 days after the order was placed.

5) SERVICES:

- a) Listed below are items that are generally found appropriate by BabyNet upon submission of required information. Whether or not an item is covered depends upon the specific needs of the child and the justification for the device. The list below is not exhaustive.

Adaptive Switch*	Hearing Aids
Adaptive Clothing*	Reciprocating Walking Brace
Adaptive Eating Utensil*	Specialized Walkers
Adjustable Prone Board/Stander	Speech Prosthetic Device
Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)	Tricycle Adaptation Kit
Artificial Voice	Two-Handled Cup*
Bath Seat	Velcro*
Battery Device Adapter*	Wedge
Communication Board/materials	Weighted Spoon*
Corner Chair	Weighted Vest*
Gait-trainer	Wheelchair

*Typically not covered by insurance or Medicaid.

6) SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- a) Assistive technology assessment services rendered by other qualified providers should be billed under the service description for the specific discipline.

7) LIMITATIONS:

- a) The following are examples of devices or services that are generally not considered AT through BabyNet.
 - i) Equipment/services that are prescribed by a physician which are primarily medical in nature and not directly related to a child's developmental needs. Examples include but are not limited to helmets, oxygen, feeding pumps, heart monitors, apnea monitors, intravenous supplies, electrical stimulation units, etc.
 - ii) The request must be received by the First Steps BabyNet Consultant at least 10 working days prior to the child reaching 33 months of age. No approval will be given for children who have reached 33 months of age, as equipment requested after this time would not be available long enough to achieve identified outcomes.
 - iii) Equipment/services for which developmental necessity and relationship to achieving the IFSP outcomes are not clearly established by the IFSP team;
 - iv) Equipment/services covered by another agency, third party payer or Medicaid;
 - v) Equipment/services that are not included in the IFSP;
 - vi) Typical equipment, materials and supplies related to infants and toddlers utilized by all children and which require no special adaptation. Examples include clothing, diapers, cribs, high chairs, car seats, infant swings, typical baby/toddler bottles, cups, utensils, dishes, etc. Toys that are not adapted, used by all children and are not specifically designed to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities include such examples as building blocks, dolls, puzzles, balls, and other play materials;
 - vii) Standard equipment used by qualified personnel in the provision of BN Services (regardless of the service delivery setting), such as therapy mats, tables, desks, etc.;
 - viii) Replacement equipment if original item has not been returned to BabyNet;
 - ix) Devices considered duplicative in nature generally promoting the same outcome or objective with currently provided assistive technology devices or services.
 - x) The following AT is generally not covered.

Ball Bath	Car Seat
Batteries (except hearing aids)	Sensory Tunnel
Bolster	Stroller
Boppy Pillow	Swing
Computer/Software	Theraband
Exersaucer	Thera-putty

Highchair
Regular Baby Walker
Eyeglasses

Therapy Ball
Trampoline
Weighted Blanket

8) Returning Equipment:

- a) If an item is received and is determined by the IFSP team to not meet the child's needs, the item is to be returned so that appropriate equipment can be obtained.
- b) The provider contacts the BabyNet Service Coordinator about scheduling an IFSP meeting to discuss the appropriateness of the device;
- c) If determined by the IFSP team, equipment in question is returned to the vendor by the BabyNet Service Coordinator;
- d) If a replacement item is needed, the BabyNet Service Coordinator obtains the following information:
 - i) a. Assistive Technology Request form indicating new equipment and a comment about equipment returned;
 - ii) b. If new item is significantly different from item returned, a new physician's order (when applicable) should be obtained;
 - iii) c. Picture and description of new item including manufacturer pricing;
 - iv) d. Verification from the vendor of return and funding status of the original item;
 - v) e. If mail order, include a completed order form and copy of pages that list product(s).