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State of Wisconsin

Assistive Technology Advisory Council

Web: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

Assistive Technology Advisory Council Quarterly Meeting

November 7, 2024

9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Join via [Zoom](#):

<https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1615297201>

Join via Phone:

Phone: 1-669-254-5252

Meeting ID: 160 921 1896

Meeting Minutes

A. Action Items

B. Motion Items

Motion Item 1: Motion made by Mike Hipple to approve the November 7, 2025 AT Council agenda and seconded by BJ Ermence. Motion carried.

Motion Item 2: Motion made by Calvin Richtig to approve the August 27, 2024, quarterly meeting minutes with the correction on the spelling of Rachel Holt's name. Motion seconded by Laurie Lane. Motion carried.

Motion Item 3: Motion made by Cassie Frost for the AT Council to draft and provide a letter of support for the requested increase in funding for Independent Living Centers contingent upon a reciprocal request from the AT Council to WCILC to draft a similar letter to support an increase in assistive technology funding should that be included in the 2025-2027 state budget. Motion seconded by Julie Bergen. Motion carried.

Motion Item 4: Motion made by Calvin Richtig to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mike Hipple. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:59 A.M.

A. Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome, Introductions, and Housekeeping

- Jim Denham called the meeting to order at 9:05 A.M.
- **Council Members Present:** Stacy Ellingen, Calvin Richtig, Julie Bergen, Dawn Merth-Johnson, Cassie Frost; Laurie Lane, Jim Denham, Debra Remmel, BJ Ermence, Mike Hipple, Jennifer Seale, Cortney Zurawski Rick Ziller, Cortney Zurawski, Lindsey Kreitzman.
- **Council Members Absent:** Deen Amusa, Jim Rau
- **Guests Present:** Dani Kaslow; MILC; Amanda Miller and Ashley Lien, CILWW; Rosary Greco; Jason Glozier, WCILC; Willie Gunther, ITAP.
- **DHS Staff Support Present:** Laura Plummer, Department of Health Services (DHS); Ashley Baker, Department of Health Services; Jason Anderson, Department of Health Services. Jenna Sturgis, Department of Health Services.

II. Review and Approve Quarterly Meeting November 7, 2024 Meeting Agenda.

- Motion made by Mike Hipple to approve the November 7, 2025 AT Council agenda and seconded by BJ Ermence. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 1.**

III. Review and Approve August 27, 2024 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

- Motion made by Calvin Richtig to approve the August 27, 2024, quarterly meeting minutes with the correction on the spelling of Rachel Holt's name. Motion seconded by Laurie Lane. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 2.**

IV. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Assistive Technology Users or on the State Plan on Assistive Technology, 2021-2023

- No public comment.

V. Assistive Technology Program Partner Updates

- Dawn Merth-Johnson from the Department of Public Instruction shared updates on the AT Forward project. The COP has grown from 511 members to 1343 members. The schedule of sessions is on the website and everyone is encouraged to attend the presentations. An AAC page has been launched on the AT Forward website. There have been over 415 badges issued with their micro-

credentials. The ATLC inventory is reviewing technology to keep things current. Presented at Closing the Gap in Minneapolis.

- Jennifer Seale from the Waisman Center shared information about their AAC partnership program with the Department of Public Instruction. She did a presentation at the Closing the Gap Conference as well. Ecco AAC will launch again next summer and the Waisman remains understaffed.
<https://ucedd.waisman.wisc.edu/aac-partnership-program/>
- Debra Remmel from DVR shared that there are some changes coming with management mostly related to retirements. There will be job postings.
- Calvin Richtig from Options shared information about the outdoor hike week-long event with track chairs and the terrain hopper. There were 61 attendees. Options hosted an adaptive curling clinic in Green Bay with a lower turnout than expected. Technology classes for seniors are being run by several staff in rural and tribal areas. WisTech funds were used to purchase some display booth kits so staff have a good range of equipment at the ready for booths and displays. The Park Accessibility Improvement Initiative has now submitted 6 reports for specific parks to increase accessibility. Possible collaboration with the local technical college for the LEND program.
- Amanda Miller from CILWW shared that they recently purchased an electric bike using WisTech funding as they work to expand with more recreational activities. Additional grants have been applied to for more bike options. WisTech helped them purchase a 3D printer and they have given away a few devices already. The annual FHNB event was successful at Lake Wissota. Staff are working with the University of Ottawa on a course on making prototypes for new ideas for assistive technology. The first device was a posterior walker. CILWW has done six library accessibility assessments.
- Laurie Lane from WisLoan shared that there are 47 outstanding loans for over \$600K. The defaults are much lower than before. The down payment grant was used to help provide \$92K for help with lowering the loan amounts. 19 people were helped. This grant also provided funding to each ILC to have a dedicated webpage for each related to WisLoan and Telework. WisLoan had a booth at the Self-Determination Conference. The Empower event for Independence First will have an AT and WisLoan presence.
- Jim Denham shared that the WI Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired hosted the art gallery night recently. The gallery is viewable on their website www.wcblind.org. The gallery should also be displayed in their building through the end of the year. Another event is the Access Technology class on November 21st and the topic will be how to use AI for everyday tasks.
- Cassie Frost had the opportunity to present at the Closing the Gap Conference. The topic was using iOS in an Escape Room. She also did a presentation on switch access in the classroom. Will be attending ATIA in January.
- Mike Hipple shared that the fall newsletter for WI AAC Network was sent out. Please consider joining USAAC or share information with families. I was unable to attend Closing the Gap. There is a movie coming out with a character that uses an AAC device. The movie is called Out of My Mind.

- BJ Ermence shared updates from the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. They had a recent meeting to work on their strategic plan. It should be finalized in December so she can share at a future meeting. She will be on the transportation committee for the Council. She will share information in the meeting for Auracast. It will provide BT feed directly to hearing aids.

VI. WisTech Program Updates and State Plan Timeline

- Laura Plummer provided an update on the Independent Living Supports Pilot program which includes that WisTech has received approximately 575 AT consult requests and have completed approximately 417 reports. This includes some requests where they were not applicable or the participants were not reachable. Some requests are also for married couples where they both qualify.
- Laura Plummer shared a brief update from the AT3 Leadership Symposium in Washington D.C.
- WisTech will be represented at the National Council for Independent Living Conference in July and at the Hearing Loss Association of America Convention in June.
- The State Plan for Assistive Technology reporting tool is currently under a public comment period with the Administration for Community Living. Once the comment period closes, ACL will update the form for submission. It is anticipated that submission will be in August or September of this year for the next three year plan.

VII. WisTech Program Updates

- The WisTech update included a review of the fourth quarter data, past events, upcoming events, and a recap of the WisTech partner funding requests for this past year.

VIII. Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers Presentation

- Jason Glozier from the Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers (WCILC) presented a request to the AT Council to draft a letter of support for their budgetary request for the 2025-2027 state budget.
- Motion made by Cassie Frost for the AT Council to draft and provide a letter of support for the requested increase in funding for Independent Living Centers contingent upon a reciprocal request from the AT Council to WCILC to draft a similar letter to support an increase in assistive technology funding should that be included in the 2025-2027 state budget. Motion seconded by Julie Bergen. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 3.**

IX. Other State AT Program Presentation

- Willie Gunther, CEO of the Illinois Assistive Technology program provided a presentation and discussion about their services and leveraged funding to expand programming that creates greater access for Illinois residents needing assistive technology devices and services.

X. 2025 Dates for the Assistive Technology Council

- Discussion of 2025 meeting dates to include February 5, April 22 or 29, August 28, and November 4, 2025.
- Discussion on holding one in-person that would also include a hybrid option. This will be reviewed in 2025 as planning is underway for the next cross council Engage for Change in person meeting.

XI. Assistive Technology Advisory Council Member Officer Elections, Appointments, and Vacancies

- No action needed.

XII. Adjourn

- Motion made by Calvin Richtig to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mike Hipple. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:59 A.M. **See Motion Item 4.**

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct the governmental business outlined in the above agenda. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and guidance to the WisTech Program and assure that it is in compliance with the provisions of the Assistive Technology Act (Tech Act) of 1998, as amended. Specifically, the Advisory Council will provide advice and guidance on the following:

- Submission of Wisconsin's State Plan for Assistive Technology (AT) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL);
- Monitoring the WisTech program according to the State Plan for AT;
- Developing and maintaining collaborations with other agencies, organizations, and bodies providing AT services and devices throughout the State; and
- Monitoring of program data and outcomes.

The Council is administratively attached to the Department of Health Services. If you need an interpreter, alternate formats, or other accommodations to participate, please contact Laura Plummer at 608-514-2513 or laura.plummer1@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

Phone: 1-669 254 5252

Meeting ID: 160 921 1896

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