



National Assistive Technology Act Data System
State Plan - Full Report
Montana 2021

General Information

Statewide AT Program (Information to be listed in national State AT Program Directory)

State AT Program Title	MonTECH
State AT Program URL	http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/
Mailing Address	29 McGill Hall
City	Missoula
State	Montana
Zip Code	59812
Program Email	montech@ruralinstitute.umt.edu
Phone	4062435751
TTY	

Lead Agency

Agency Name	MonTECH at Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities, University of Montana
Mailing Address	29 McGill Hall, University of Montana
City	Missoula
State	Montana
Zip Code	59812
Program URL	http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/

Implementing Entity

Does your Lead Agency contract with an Implementing Entity to carry out the Statewide AT Program on its behalf? N/A	
Name of Implementing Agency	MonTECH at Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities
Mailing Address	29 McGill Hall, University of Montana

City	Missoula
State	Montana
Zip Code	59812
Program URL	http://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/

General Information (Continued...)

Program Director and Other Contacts

Program Director for State AT Program (last, first)	Kimmel, Molly
Title	Program Director
Phone	4062435769
E-mail	molly.kimmel@mso.umt.edu
Program Director at Lead Agency (last, first)	Kimmel, Molly
Title	Program Director
Phone	4062435769
E-mail	molly.kimmel@mso.umt.edu
Primary Contact at Implementing Agency (last, first) - If applicable	Kimmel, Molly
Title	Program Director
Phone	4062435769
E-mail	molly.kimmel@mso.umt.edu

Person Responsible for completing this form if other than Program Director

Name (last, first)	
Title	
Phone	
E-mail	

Certifying Representative

Name (last, first)	Kimmel, Molly
Title	Program Director
Phone	4062435769
E-mail	molly.kimmel@mso.umt.edu

Module A: Change in Lead Agency or Implementing Entity

Does your Lead Agency contract with an Implementing Entity to carry out the Statewide AT Program on its behalf (From General Information)?

No

The lead agency and implementing agency create and sign a contract every year to ensure appropriate implementation of the AT Act responsibilities. The two agencies are in regular contact throughout the year sharing information bi-directionally.

2. Is the Lead Agency named in this State Plan a new or different Lead Agency from the one designated by the Governor in your previous State Plan?

Yes

a. Explain why the Lead Agency previously designated by the Governor should not serve as the Lead Agency.

The prior lead agency, Montana's Department of Health and Human Services, has been a pass-thru for MonTECH, the implementing agency for several years. The State has determined that redesignating the University of Montana/MonTECH as the Lead Agency will improve efficiency in managing MonTECH's budget and other administrative tasks. DPHHS, the University of Montana, and MonTECH agree that this change is in the best interest of all stakeholders for the AT program and believe there will be minimal impact to the well-established working relationships between the two agencies. This change is scheduled to take place effective Oct 1, 2022.

b. Explain why the Lead Agency newly designated by the Governor should serve as the Lead Agency.

The University of Montana has served for several years as the Governor-designated Implementing Entity for MonTECH. MonTECH has a strong history of delivering services for individuals with disabilities across the lifespan and has built effective collaborations statewide with partners who benefit from AT. There will be no disruption to services during this transition and MonTECH will be able to carry out the required activities in a timely and more efficient way moving forward.

3. Is the Implementing Entity named in this State Plan a new or different Implementing Entity from the one designated by the Governor in the previous State Plan?

No

Module B: Advisory Council

1. How many representatives of the designated State agency for Vocational Rehabilitation are members of the advisory council? 1
2. How many representatives of the designated State agency for Vocational Rehabilitation for individuals who are blind are members of the advisory council (when there is such a separate VR agency for individuals who are blind)? 1
3. How many representatives of a state Center for Independent Living are members of the advisory council?. 1
4. How many representatives of the State workforce development board established under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are members of the advisory council? 1
5. How many representatives of the State educational agency are members of the advisory council? 1
6. How many additional representatives of other agencies and/or organizations are members of the advisory council? 1
 - 6.1 Description of additional representatives of other agencies and/or organizations are members of the advisory council.
Representative from the Montana Center for Inclusive Education at Montana State University-Billings
7. How many individuals with disabilities who use assistive technology or their family members or guardians are members of the advisory council? 7

Advisory Council Calculation

Description	Number
Individuals with disabilities that use AT or their family members or guardians on the advisory council	7
Total number of individuals on the advisory council	13
Percentage	53.85%

8. In accordance with section 4(c)(2) of the AT Act of 1998, as amended our state has a consumer-majority advisory council that provides consumer-responsive, consumer-driven advice to the state for planning of, implementation of, and evaluation of the activities carried out through the grant, including setting measurable goals. This advisory council is geographically representative of the State and reflects the diversity of the State with respect to race, ethnicity, and types of disabilities across the age span, and users of types of services that an individual with a disability may receive. Yes

Module C: Actual Expenditures and Budgeted Allocations

1. Actual Expenditures Carryover Year Close-out

In the following table provide the actual expenditure data for the closed-out carryover fiscal year AT grant award (liquidated the previous December 31). Please note, this data is for a specific year AT Act grant award amount, NOT any specific 12 month period of time as funds from a grant award can be obligated over more than that initial 12 month period.

For the State Plan submitted in the spring of 2022, you will report the closed-out grant award for FY19. The grant began 10/1/2018 with the first year ending on 9/30/2019, the first carryover year ended on 9/30/2020 and the second carryover year ended on 9/30/2021 with the 3 month liquidation period ending 12/31/2021.

Actual Expenditures for Closed-out Carryover Year Award	Final Expenditures	Percentage	Requirements
a. All State Level Activities	\$296,069.76	64.00%	The AT Act required state level expenditures to be at least 60% of grant award. If flexibility is claimed, at least 70% is required.
b. All State Leadership Activities	\$166,539.24	36.00%	
c. Total Expenditures	\$462,609.00		
d. Total Award	\$462,609.00		
e. Lapsed Amount	\$0.00	0.00%	
f. Transition Training & Technical Assistance Set Aside	\$9,992.35	6.00%	The AT Act requires at least 5% of state leadership expenditures to be spent on transition activities.

Module C: Actual Expenditures and Budgeted Allocations (Continued...)

2. Actual YTD Expenditures and Budgeted Allocations for Preceding Year Award

In the following table provide year-to-date (YTD) obligated and liquidated expenditure data for the preceding fiscal year AT grant award along with planned budget allocations for the unobligated remainder of that award. Please note, this data is for a specific year AT Act grant award amount, NOT any specific 12 month period of time as funds from a grant award can be obligated over a 24 month period.

For the State Plan submitted in the spring of 2022, you will report the closed-out grant award for FY20. The grant began 10/1/2019 with the first year ending on 9/30/2020, the first carryover year ended on 9/30/2021 and the second carryover year ended on 9/30/2022 with the 3 month liquidation period ending 12/31/2022.

The total grant award for was **\$473,440.00**

Actual & Planned Immediate Preceding Year Award Expenditures	YTD Obligated not Liquidated Expenditures	YTD Liquidated Expenditures	Planned not yet Obligated Expenditures	Total
All State Level Activities	\$0.00	\$303,001.60	\$0.00	\$303,001.60
All State Leadership Activities	\$0.00	\$170,438.40	\$0.00	\$170,438.40
Total	\$0.00	\$473,440.00	\$0.00	\$473,440.00
Transition Training & Technical Assistance	\$0.00	\$10,226.34	\$0.00	\$10,226.34

Module D: State Level Activity Summary

1. Which State Financing Activities do you conduct?

- Financial Loan

2. Which Reutilization Activities do you conduct?

- Device Exchange
- Device Reassignment or Open Ended Loan

3. Do you conduct Short-term Device Loans?

Yes

4. Do you conduct Device Demonstrations?

Yes

Module E: Financial Loan

1. Select the one option that best describes who conducts this activity.

Both the Statewide AT Program and other entities/contractors (Both)

2. Select the one option that best describes from where this activity is conducted.

One central location (Central)

3. Do you charge a fee for this activity? (This fee is separate from and addition to the financial loan made.)

No

4. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

- Have written agreement with this entity
- Provide financial support to this entity

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module E: Financial Loan (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

5. This activity offers the following types of assistance. (select all that apply – at least one is required)
Identify all types of loans the Statewide AT Program offers, regardless of whether any loans of that type are currently outstanding.

- Revolving loans

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 6. The lowest interest percentage for loans as established by the policies of the activity. | 0.0000% |
| 7. The highest interest percentage for loans as established by the policies of the activity. | 3.5000% |
| 8. The lowest loan amount (in dollars) provided as established by the policies of the activity. | N/A |
| 9. The highest loan amount (in dollars) provided as established by the policies of the activity. | \$50000.00 |

10. Describe the activity.
MonTECH partners with Rural Dynamics, Inc., a statewide financial wellness non-profit housed in Great Falls, MT, to administer the Montana Assistive Technology Loan (MATL) program. MATL offers revolving loans to people looking for affordable ways to finance assistive technology (AT). This financial loan is 0% interest for AT under \$1,500 and 3.5% interest for AT between \$1,500-\$50,000. MATL offers Montanans with disabilities, or their family members, the ability to purchase AT for a variety of needs, including but not limited to: • Hearing & Vision Equipment • Daily Living and Self-Care Equipment • Communication Devices • Home & Building Access and Modifications • Electronic Devices • Vehicle Loans & Modifications • Scooters, Wheelchairs, etc. • Adaptive Recreation Equipment MATL's application is available online and in print and the MATL Disability Resource Coordinator is available to assist throughout the application process. Once submitted, a loan committee votes to approve or deny the application. Anyone not eligible for a loan is offered financial wellness counseling and a debt management program to help them get in a better fiscal position to apply again. MonTECH and Rural Dynamics work together on outreach across the state.

11. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://matl.ruraldynamics.org/>

Module H: Device Exchange

1. Select the one option that best describes who conducts this activity.

The Statewide AT Program (State AT)

2. Select the one option that best describes from where this activity is conducted.

One central location (Central)

3. Do you charge a fee for this activity?

No

4. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module H: Device Exchange (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

5. Select the option that best describes what happens when a device is exchanged. (select all that apply)

- The transaction is direct consumer-to-consumer

6. Describe the activity.

MonTECH's exchange program enables Montanans to electronically post, sell, giveaway, and purchase from others. Gently used assistive technology and adaptive equipment is available. We publicly describe this as the "Craigslit" of AT equipment specially designed to help people live full lives at home, work, school, and in the community. The program is facilitated completely online and via consumer-to-consumer communications.

7. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/community-buy-sell/>

Module I: Device Refurbish and Reassignment and/or Open-ended Loan

1. Select the **one option** that best describes who conducts this activity.

The Statewide AT Program (State AT)

2. Select the **one option** that best describes from where this activity is conducted.

One central location (Central)

3. Do you charge a fee for this activity?

No

4. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module I: Device Refurbish and Reassignment and/or Open-ended Loan (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

5. Select the option(s) that describe how a reutilized device is provided to a recipient. (select all that apply)

- Device is loaned for as long as the recipient needs it with no ownership transfer

6. Describe the activity.

Many of MonTECH's seating, mobility, and positioning devices, along with older technology/equipment and DME, are available as longer-term loans (up to 1 year) or open-ended loans (as long as needed) in order to meet the needs of Montanans with disabilities. No fee is charged for this service and equipment are simply barcoded differently to indicate the longer term loan.

7. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/equipment-loans-reuse/>

Module J: Device Loan

1. Select the one option that best describes who conducts this activity.

The Statewide AT Program (State AT)

2. Select the one option that best describes from where this activity is conducted.

A combination of a central location and regional sites (Combination)

3. Do you charge a fee for this activity?

No

4. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module J: Device Loan (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

- Have written agreement with this entity

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

5. Select the option that describes how the majority of devices loaned are delivered to and returned from a borrower. (select one)

The majority of devices are shipped via mail or other delivery service

6. Describe the activity.

MonTECH operates a short-term equipment loan program, which includes nearly 3,000 AT devices and computer hardware or software products available for a 30-day free loan to anyone in the state with a disability. Equipment can either be picked up at one of the two physical office locations or is shipped across the state (return shipping label provided with initial shipment.) All loans are facilitated via a user-friendly online system where people can browse inventory, create and manage loan accounts, and make electronic requests to borrow items online. Consumers can also borrow equipment by contacting the program via telephone, e-mail, or by visiting the office. Five additional locations across the state house adaptive bikes purchased and managed by MonTECH. The loans go through the MonTECH system, but pick up and drop off occur at each community site. This is also free service.

7. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/equipment-loans-reuse/>

Module K: Device Demonstration

1. Select the one option that best describes who conducts this activity.

The Statewide AT Program (State AT)

2. Select the one option that best describes from where this activity is conducted.

A combination of a central location and regional sites (Combination)

3. Do you charge a fee for this activity?

No

4. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

- Receive financial support from this entity

Module K: Device Demonstration (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

- Receive financial support from this entity

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

5. Describe the activity.

MonTECH provides free device demonstrations of adaptive equipment and assistive technology (AT) for individuals and groups to trial numerous AT options. Demonstrations are available at the Missoula or Billings office as well as statewide by phone or video conference. If needed, demonstrations can be arranged by other means. We encourage the team approach so involving parents, caregivers, therapists, teachers, etc., whenever possible. We tailor the demonstration to the individual needs of the whole person. We will try numerous options until we find the best fit. We provide people the opportunity to explore a wide range of devices and compare similar devices. Referral to other agencies are made when necessary to ensure the individuals' needs are met completely. Monthly staff meetings focus on inventory acquisition and we purchase devices for our inventory based on need or request and so that we have a variety of options. When a more formal assessment of AT recommendations is required, MonTECH does offer fee-for-service evaluations. Typical clients who receive evaluations include Vocational Rehab clients, VA clients, and students from a variety of school districts. The fee is \$125 an hour, plus any travel costs. The individual and referring agency receive a formal report and 2 free hours of training.

6. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/demonstration-and-training/>

Module L: Training

1. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

- Receive financial support from this entity

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

- Receive financial support from this entity

Module L: Training (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

- Receive financial support from this entity

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

2. Provide a short description of at least one and no more than three planned training activities. One of the activities described must be planned Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility training that will provide the required ICT Training performance measures. If the Statewide AT Program is meeting the transition requirements of the AT Act through training, please describe that planned activity. If the Statewide AT Program sponsors or co-sponsors a statewide conference please include that event as one you describe.

Planned ICT Accessibility Training (required)

Our Accessibility Media Specialist and our Assistive Technology Specialist have created a 3-part training on making Word, PowerPoint, and PDFs accessible. This course is offered yearly to Montana's UCEDD staff and is a requirement for all MonTECH employees. This same training is available to any local or state organization for our usual training fee (\$125/hour with the first hour free).

Planned Transition Training or Other Training Activity (optional)

MonTECH provides demonstrations on the topic of transition for youth, their families, and special educators every fall at the annual Montana Youth Transition Conference. Dozens of youth and educators participate in this annual training/conference event.

Planned Statewide Conference or Other Training Activity (optional)

MonTECH will continue to host a one-day training on the topic of augmentative and alternative communication, bringing in national speakers to provide valuable information and skills. The conference content is geared towards therapists, teachers, paraprofessionals, direct support professionals, parents/caregivers, and anyone else eager to learn more about complex communication.

3. The online page for this specific activity can be found at: <https://montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/talks-and-tours/>

Module M: Technical Assistance

1. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module M: Technical Assistance (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

2. Provide a short description of at least one and no more than two planned technical assistance activities. If the Statewide AT Program is meeting the transition requirements of the AT Act through technical assistance, please describe that planned activity.

Planned Transition Technical Assistance or Other Technical Assistance Activity (required)

Provided technical assistance to multiple organizations, including the State Rehabilitation Council, on how to effectively run hybrid meetings. Included information on types of AT to use and how to accommodate virtual participants in an inclusive way.

Planned Other Technical Assistance Activity (optional)

Module N: Public Awareness

1. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module N: Public Awareness (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

2. Provide a short description of at least one and no more than two planned major public awareness activities. If the Statewide AT Program conducts a major ongoing public awareness activity such as an annual AT awareness day with a Governor's Proclamation, please include that activity.

Major Annual Planned or Other Public Awareness Activity (required)

In addition to a quarterly newsletter and many targeted mailings across the state, MonTECH started a YouTube Channel in 2020 that has experienced significant growth in the last two years. With 184 subscribers, some videos have amassed as many as 12,000 views. A recent video shared on social media included the comment "Does anyone else get a "Q" (James Bond) or "Lucius Fox" (Batman) vibe from MonTECH? You know - a tinkering genius that outfits our heroes with a neverending assortment of the coolest and most efficient tools for the job? Or...is it just us?"

Planned Other Public Awareness Activity (optional)

Module O: Information and Assistance

1. Identify the types of collaborations you have in place to conduct this activity.

Banks/Financial Institution (select any/all)

Independent Living Center (select any/all)

Easter Seals (select any/all)

Disability/Assistive Technology Organizations (select any/all)

Federal Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

State Entities/Agencies (select any/all)

Module O: Information and Assistance (Continued...)

Local/Community Entities (select any/all)

Private Entities (select any/all)

Other (select any/all)

2. Describe the activity

Our Program Coordinator and Data Resource Specialist share the duty of answering the phone and welcoming visitors at the Missoula office (Billings has an appointment-only policy). Both of the people in these roles have extensive social service backgrounds and are always ready to share appropriate MonTECH info, as well as referrals at the local, state, and national level. Emails go to a central account and get routed to the best person to handle the request. Our website also includes a "contact us" feature that is handled in a similar way. Most inquiries are responded to within 48 hours at the latest.

Assurances and Measurable Goals

Section 4(d) of the AT Act prescribes the duties of the Lead Agency receiving a grant under section 4 of the AT Act and requires the State to provide a number of assurances in its application for funds. 34 CFR part 76 also requires that any State Plan include certain assurances. The Statewide AT Program certifying representative will attest to these assurances and other requirements below and by submitting the State Plan, will affirm that to the best of his or her knowledge and belief all information provided in the State Plan is true and correct and the State Plan fully discloses all known weaknesses concerning the accuracy, reliability, and completeness of the information.

Assurances

As the Certifying Representative of the Lead Agency for the State of , I hereby assure the following:

1. The Lead Agency prepared and submitted this State Plan on behalf of the State of Montana.
2. The Lead Agency submitting this plan is the State agency that is eligible to submit this plan and if an Implementing Entity is identified it is designated to implement the required AT Act activities.
3. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under this program.
4. The State legally may carry out each provision of this plan.
5. All provisions of this plan are consistent with State law.
6. A State officer, specified by title in this certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan.
7. The State officer who submits this plan, specified by title in this certification, has authority to submit this plan.
8. The agency that submits this plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved this plan.
9. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program.
10. The Lead Agency will maintain and evaluate the program under this State Plan.
11. The State will annually collect data related to the required activities implemented by the State under this section in order to prepare the progress reports required under subsection 4(f) of the Act.
12. The Lead Agency will submit the annual progress report on behalf of the State.
13. The State will prepare reports to the Secretary in such form and containing such information as the Secretary may require to carry out the Secretary's functions under this Act and keep such records and allow access to such records as the Secretary may require to ensure the correctness and verification of information provided to the Secretary.
14. The Lead Agency will control and administer the funds received through the grant.
15. The Lead Agency will make programmatic and resource allocation decisions necessary to implement the State Plan.
16. Funds received through the grant will be expended in accordance with Section 4 of the Act, and 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.
17. The Lead Agency will ensure conformance with all applicable Federal and State accounting requirements.
18. The State will adopt such fiscal control and accounting procedures as may be necessary to ensure proper disbursement of and accounting for the funds received through the grant.
19. Funds made available through a grant to a State under this Act will not be used for direct payment for an assistive technology device for an individual with a disability.
20. A public agency or an individual with a disability holds title to any property purchased with funds received under the grant and administers that property.
21. The physical facility of the Lead Agency and Implementing Entity, if any, meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Section 4(d)(6)(E)
22. Activities carried out in the State that are authorized under this Act, and supported by Federal funds received under this Act, will comply with the standards established by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (20 U.S.C. 794d). Section 4(d)(6)(G)
23. The Lead Agency will coordinate the activities of the State Plan among public and private entities, including coordinating efforts related to entering into interagency agreements.
24. The Lead Agency will coordinate efforts related to the active, timely, and meaningful participation by individuals with disabilities and their family members, guardians, advocates, or authorized representatives, and other appropriate individuals, with respect to activities carried out through the grant.