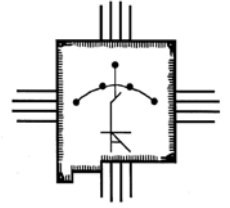

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A Newsletter about Assistive Technology for People with Disabilities

New Mexico State Plan for Assistive Technology

The new Assistive Technology Act (October 1, 2005) provides New Mexico with the minimum state allotment of \$366,000.00 for Federal Year (FY) 2005. However FY 2006 appropriations are still being debated in Congress. The President's budget does not recommend any funding for the state programs.

The new Act requires that state Tech Act programs provide a State Plan by August 26, 2005 describing how their federal dollars will be used to implement at least three of the four, required activities: Alternative Financing; Device Reutilization; Device Loan; and Device Demonstrations. The bill also requires states to spend no more than 40 percent of their federal funds on required state leadership activities, such as Training & Technical Assistance, Public Awareness (including Information and Referral), and Coordination and Collaboration with other government and private entities. Under Training and Technical Assistance, the new Act requires that 5 percent of the total dollars spent on the state leadership activities be directed specifically to assist students transitioning from school to community living or adults "maintaining or transitioning to community living." The Rehabilitation Services Administration, rather than the National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) will oversee the assistive technology state programs administered by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) of the Department of Education.

The Act authorizes: Training and Technical Assistance activities for state programs; Protection and Advocacy systems; and a National Internet Information System. The Act also focuses on Research and Development grants for developing new assistive devices and for developing standards for reliability, accessibility, and interoperability of information and telecommunications technology. New Mexico's State Plan will be posted on the Web site after approval by OSERS (nmtap.com and dvrgetsjobs.com).

