



ATAP ADVISORY COUNCIL GUIDELINES

NAME

The name of the body shall be the Rhode Island Council on Assistive Technology, hereinafter referenced as RICAT.

PURPOSE

The mission of the RI Council on Assistive Technology is to provide guidance and advice to the Assistive Technology Access Partnership (ATAP).

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) To provide consumer-responsive, consumer-driven advice to ATAP for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the activities carried out through the AT Act.
- 2) To assist ATAP in development and monitoring of annual goals for the program.
- 3) To participate in the development of the annual program plan updates.
- 4) To provide guidance to ATAP in establishment of priorities.
- 5) To adhere to the Rhode Island Open Meeting Law, Rhode Island General Laws §42-46-1 et. seq., with particular emphasis on architectural and environmental accessibility.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

- 1) The Council shall be comprised of no fewer than 15 members.
- 2) The Council shall have a representative from the Office of Rehabilitation Services, State Center for Independent Living, State Workforce Investment Board, Rhode Island Department of Education, as well as other State Agencies as determined by the lead agency. These representatives shall not count as consumer representation.
- 3) "Fifty-one per cent (51%) of the members, **excluding required representatives listed above**, shall be individuals with disabilities who use assistive technology, or the family members/guardians of the individuals.
- 4) The Advisory Council shall be geographically representative of the State and reflect the diversity of the State with respect to race, ethnicity, socio-economic groups, types of disabilities across the age span, and users of types of services that an individual with a disability may receive.
- 5) Each member of RICAT, other than the required representatives listed above, shall be called to serve for three (3) years and be eligible for re-election. Expiration of this term may occur upon the request of the resigning members for any reason or for reasons found appropriate by RICAT.
- 6) Member vacancies shall be filled within three (3) months.

- 7) New members shall participate in an Orientation to the ATAP program & the Advisory Council prior to attendance as member.
- 8) Any member of RICAT who has three consecutive non-excused absences shall be considered to have submitted a DeFacto resignation. Absences are considered excused if the Co-Chairs, ATAP Program Director, or Technical Support Staff of ATAP is notified of the absence.
- 9) The Administrator of the Lead Agency and the ATAP Program Director shall be Ex-Officio Members of RICAT, without voting privileges. RICAT may appoint other ex-officio members.

COUNCIL STRUCTURE

- 1) The Council shall have two Co-Chairs from its membership, with at least one being a consumer member of RICAT.
 - a) Co-Chairs shall assume duties immediately following the election and shall serve for a two (2) year term.
 - b) Elections shall occur for each position on alternating years to assure continuity.
 - c) If there is a Co-Chair vacancy, the vacancy shall be filled by a vote of RICAT members, held in a timely manner, for the remaining term of the Co-Chair.
- 2) The Membership Committee shall identify, recruit and nominate appropriate individuals to be voted upon by the full Council membership.
- 3) Ad Hoc Committees shall be created as needed and at the discretion of RICAT (ex.: Communications to increase public awareness.)

RICAT GUIDELINES

1) Meeting Procedures

- a) The RICAT Co-Chairs and ATAP Program Director shall collaborate on development of agenda two weeks prior to meeting date.
- b) ATAP Contracted Partners shall provide updates to Council members at each meeting, either in person or by written report.
- c) **QUORUM:** One third of RICAT shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of its business, provided that 51% of those members present are individuals with disabilities that use assistive technology, or the family members or guardians of the individuals. In the event that votes are equally divided, the topic shall be tabled until the next meeting.
- d) Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern RICAT and its committees in all cases in which they are applicable and in which they are not in conflict with these Guidelines or Rhode Island statute, Federal law or related rules and regulations.
- e) **EMERGENCY MEETINGS:** The Co-Chairs or Program Director may request an emergency meeting to consider matters of unforeseen urgency. Every effort shall be made to notify all RICAT members of such an emergency meeting.

2) Meetings Structure

- a) All meetings of RICAT shall be conducted according to the Rhode Island Open Meeting Law, and shall be held in locations on public transportation routes. RICAT

shall make every attempt to hold meetings in locations that shall encourage full attendance by its members.

- b) RICAT shall meet a minimum of four (4) times a year. Meeting dates, time, and place shall be set by RICAT. A meeting on other occasions may be called as the Co-Chairs deems necessary or upon the request of any four members of RICAT. Documented notice in appropriate format of the agenda, date, time and place of such meetings shall be received at least one (1) week in advance by all RICAT members.
- c) Technical Support Staff for the ATAP Lead Agency shall assume responsibility for distributing agenda and recording/distributing the minutes of all meetings, subsequent to review and approval by either Co-Chair or Program Director.
- d) Assistive technology to facilitate communication, print and other media materials shall be provided in alternate formats upon request prior to meetings.
- e) RICAT members shall not receive a per diem but shall be reimbursed parking cost, upon submission of parking garage ticket for payment through the state agency, for their actual and necessary expenses for parking incurred attending meetings.

Proposed changes to the Council Guidelines may be presented at any time to the Co-Chairs. The Co-Chairs shall review and evaluate the proposed modification to the guidelines. Proposed changes shall be distributed by the Co-Chairs, in writing, or other most appropriate formats, to all members of RICAT at least thirty (30) days in advance of the next regular meeting. Any changes to the Guidelines must be approved by a majority vote.