

**PROTECTION AND  
ADVOCACY FOR  
PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES, INC.**

*The Protection and Advocacy System for South Carolina*

**Protection and Advocacy for Assistive  
Technology  
(PAAT)**



*Ensuring the Right to Assistive Technology Devices and Services  
for South Carolinians with Disabilities*

## What is PAAT?

The Protection and Advocacy for Assistive Technology (PAAT) program helps people with disabilities who are denied money to pay for assistive technology (AT) devices and services. In 1994, Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities, Inc. (P&A) began helping people with disabilities under the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1987 (Tech Act). PAAT funding is limited to helping people with disabilities understand and speak up for their AT rights. This funding does not allow P&A to pay for AT devices or services for our clients.

PAAT's goal is to raise awareness of the benefits of AT. AT can help South Carolinians with disabilities access greater independence at home, in the community, on the job, and at school.

## What Services Does PAAT Offer?

### Education and Outreach

- Teach people with disabilities about their right to AT services and devices, and about PAAT's priorities.
- Teach people with disabilities about ways that AT can help.

### Information and Referral

- Provide information, fact sheets, and brochures that will help people with disabilities successfully advocate for themselves about AT devices or services.
- Provide referral to other places in the community that help people with disabilities find or pay for AT.

### Systems Advocacy

- Work with groups supporting AT rights for people with disabilities.
- Teach groups of people about AT rights to raise awareness in the disability community.

### Case Representation

- Help people with disabilities who need AT live in their own homes, improve their own homes or move from an institution or facility to homes of their choice.
- Help students with disabilities in public or private schools, colleges, technical schools or other higher educational institutions who have been denied AT evaluations, devices, or supportive services.

## What is Assistive Technology?

Assistive Technology (AT) devices or services are things that help people with disabilities live, work or learn. There are two general types of AT:

1. An "AT device" is any item or equipment that helps people with disabilities in their daily life. AT devices can be as simple as a ramp, a jar opener, or eyeglasses. They could also be computers, machines that help people talk or listen, hand controls or work tools to help drive a car or other tools specially fitted for a person's own needs.

Other AT tools include: power and specially fitted wheelchairs; communication machines, including talking computers; vehicle modifications, including wheelchair lifts and hand controls; computer equipment, including Braille printers, voice output, touch screens and switches that allow computer access through eye blinks or head movements; hearing aids; home modifications, including ramps, lifts and stair glides; work-site modifications, including adapted office equipment and environmental control devices; classroom modifications, including adaptive seating systems; and many others, including simple items like pencil grips, forks with specially fitted handles and lever door handles.

2. An "AT service" is any service that directly helps an individual with disabilities choose, get or use an AT device.

These services include evaluations to find out the need for an AT device; getting AT devices; selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, maintaining, repairing or replacing AT devices; coordinating necessary therapies with AT devices; training people with disabilities about how to use an AT device; and training for other people who need to know how to help someone using an AT device.

**There are no fees for our services.**

## Who Are We?

P&A was started in 1977 as the protection and advocacy system for the state of South Carolina. P&A is allowed by state and federal law to protect the rights of people with disabilities in South Carolina. P&A is a private, nonprofit South Carolina corporation governed by a volunteer board of directors. As required by federal law, P&A is independent of all agencies that provide treatment or other services to people with disabilities.

## Contact Us!

P&A's services are statewide and are not limited by age, race, sex, type of disability, income, residency, or religion. For information or support:

Call P&A toll-free in South Carolina:

1.866.275.7273 (Voice)

or

1.866.232.4525 (TTY)

or

visit our website:

[www.protectionandadvocacy-sc.org](http://www.protectionandadvocacy-sc.org)

or

email us:

[info@protectionandadvocacy-sc.org](mailto:info@protectionandadvocacy-sc.org)

or

write us:

3710 Landmark Drive, Suite 208  
Columbia, SC 29204

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Peter A. Cantrell is our designated coordinator for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.