WASHINGTON ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT PROGRAM (WATAP)

ADVISORY COUNCIL GUIDELINES

Council Mission:

It is WATAP’s mission to promote assistive technology to enhance independence for Washington residents with disabilities of all ages.

The Advisory Council’s role is to provide input and guidance for the activities and priorities of WATAP, and to inform and educate organizations and consumers who benefit from WATAP’s programs and resources.

Council Membership:

* The Council has a minimum of eleven members which must include:
  + Six members who are consumers with disabilities or parents of people with disabilities. These members should represent diverse geographic, economic, social, racial and disability populations.
  + A representative from each of the following:
    - Office of superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI),
    - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR),
    - Department of Services for the Blind (DSB),
    - Workforce Investment System, and
    - Centers for Independent Living (CILs).
* Required agency members are not counted among the consumer representatives described above.
* Additional members may be appointed as long as a majority of the total membership are consumers with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities who are not agency representatives.
* Individuals who wish to serve on the Council shall contact WATAP and, through written, spoken, or other alternative means, describe their interest, experience, ability to meet commitment and attendance requirements, and the category (consumer, parent, or agency representative) they wish to represent on the Council. Final appointment is with the consent of the WATAP director and Executive Committee.
* Membership terms are two calendar years beginning in January. A member can serve two consecutive terms. Further terms can be approved with the consent of the WATAP director and Executive Committee.
* Members should have:
  + An interest in/experience with assistive technology (AT);
  + A connection to the community or organization they represent;
  + A desire to commit to and serve on the council.

Responsibilities of Members

* Commit to the term of service: attend the 1 in-person and 4 web conference meetings scheduled each year. Absences will be excused with prior notice or on a case by case basis.
* Become familiar with WATAP services and partnerships.
* Assist in developing the goals and activities of the Advisory Council.
* Act as a communication link to people and organizations in the community.
* Make recommendations to staff regarding program activities including:
  + Assistive technology device acquisition for the demonstration and loan library
  + Outreach strategies including use of social media
  + Program/partnership expansion
  + Effectiveness and comprehensiveness of program’s statewide
* With assistance from WATAP, communicate with state government officials regarding the benefits of AT devices and services for people with disabilities.
* Encouraged to serve on active committees.
* If a member is unable to keep these commitments, WATAP staff (with consultation from the Executive committee) may remove the member from the council and appoint another applicant to fill the vacancy.

Committees:

* The Executive Committee
  + The Executive Committee works with WATAP staff to plan meeting agendas, to coordinate council membership recruitment, and will be available for consultation to staff between meetings as needed.
  + Nomination and selection of committee positions will happen at the December meeting at the end of each year. The 3 committee positions are Chair, Vice Chair and Member-At-Large. Generally, it will be expected that the previous year’s Vice Chair will move into the Chair position and a new Vice Chair and Member-At –Large will be nominated and elected to serve. Each term is for one year and positions can be held by the same person in consecutive years by election.
* Other committees will be appointed as standing committees or as ad hoc committees as needed to conduct activities of the Council.

Meetings:

* The council meets every other month on the second Wednesday.
  + One 4-hour annual in-person meeting in April.
  + Four 1 hour web conference meetings in February, June, October, and December.
* The meeting minutes will be provided within one week following the date of the meeting.
* The meeting agenda, any minutes of the previous meeting, and other required documents will be sent to council members at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.