

COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT EATI

What is The Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative?

The Equipment and Assistive Technology Initiative (EATI) provides funding to assist BC residents with disabilities to obtain the equipment and assistive technology needed to achieve their employment goals. This includes funding for assessments, trialing, training and repair.

What do you mean by 'Employment Goal'?

By 'employment goal' we mean taking the initial steps to one day gain employment. For some people this involves starting with a volunteer position, for others it is making equipment preparations to help make the transition to the workforce. In short, the EATI program is for anyone who wants to work even if they don't feel they are ready to do so right away.

Where does the funding come from?

The EATI is a new initiative that was funded by the Labour Market Agreement between the Government of Canada and the Province of BC.

How is it different from other programs that provide assistive technology?

Every program is slightly different, but EATI has three factors under the participation model that separate it from other assistive technology programs: person-directed approach, equipment-unique-to-needs approach & volunteerism support. To explain further:

- Person-directed: The approach allows individuals to determine their own needs and direct their own personal strategy. Recipients work closely with EATI Super Navigators to identify employment goals and determine equipment needs based on these goals.
- Equipment-unique-to-needs: The EATI provides items that are not typically available through other government programs, and it provides items that may not typically be considered to be assistive technology. The network identifies that non medical equipment such as tablet computers, and laptops can meet a person's accessibility needs.
- Volunteerism support: The EATI supports persons with disabilities who have an employment goal, regardless of where they are on their journey to employment as long as the volunteer work is a step towards entering the workforce.

How do I know if I am eligible?

We encourage potential applicants to email us at eati@bcpsn.org or call us 1-877-333-7554 and we can assist you in determining your qualifications. We offer the complete list of criteria on our website at www.bcpsn.org.

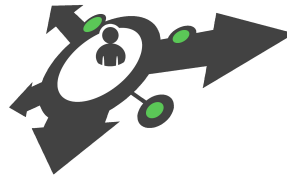
Is there an application deadline?

Because funding is based on availability, we highly recommend getting your application in as quickly as possible.

I know someone who might qualify. What should I do?

Let them know right away and direct them to our website at www.bcpsn.org or have them call us at 1-877-333-7554. We rely heavily on word-of-mouth and welcome new applicants.

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I don't understand the application process – is there someone who can help me?

Yes. We have a team dedicated to helping potential applicants determine eligibility and through the application process. Call us during work hours (8:30 am to 4:30 pm), Monday to Friday at 1-877-333-7554. Or if you prefer email, we can be reached at eati@bcpsn.org

I don't qualify right now. Will this money be available next year?

Even if you are concerned you may not qualify, we still recommend applying. All applications are used for our research and development into unmet needs across BC. This means even if EATI is not the right fit for you, we can work towards developing future programming that can help.

Do I need a doctor's validation to qualify?

No, the EATI provides supports based on a functional assessment, rather than a medical diagnosis.

I am still in high school, but hope to work next year when I graduate. Can I apply now?

While the EATI requires recipients to be 18 years or older and not enrolled in full-time school, we encourage those in the final few months of high school to start the application process as it can often take some time to work through.

What kind of equipment do you provide?

Unlike many assistive programs, we do not have a limited list of what we are able to provide. EATI has helped clients gain access to a wide range of devices for hearing, communication, seeing, learning, breathing and mobility. In addition to providing equipment and assistive devices EATI also may fund assessments, trialing, training and repairs. Essentially, this program provides funding for any kind of device that will help applicants reach an employment-related goal, including ones not typically supported by other programs.

I am not quite ready to go to work, but am hoping to volunteer first. Does the funding apply to volunteerism?

Yes, we consider volunteerism as a step towards employment. As long as your ultimate goal is to gain employment and you meet the other criteria, volunteer jobs qualify for this program.

Will I have to return my assistive device at the end of this job?

No. Unlike other programs, we are very happy to be able to offer permanent equipment solutions to our recipients. Once you receive the equipment, you own it and it will not be taken away from you at any point.

Is there a price limit on what I can receive for the equipment I need?

There is no set price limit on the equipment provided to each person as long as the device helps to overcome an impairment and is related to employment goals. In addition, applicants can re-apply for additional equipment as their needs change or expand, as long as they remain eligible for the program.

What is a Super Navigator?

A Super Navigator is a person who works closely with applicants through the application process. Navigators will help each individual through every aspect of the journey, including discussing their employment goals, their functional barriers and their possible equipment needs.

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