

ASVI- Edmonton Assistive Technology Loan Guidelines

About ASVI

The Alberta Society for the Visually Impaired was established in 1971 by a group of parents of children with visual impairments or blindness interested in pooling their resources and expertise to help other parents. At the time, many students were being educated outside of their neighbourhood school, often in a residential placement. Resources were scarce and these students lacked the support to excel in school and beyond.

ASVI grew to include the vision strategists and educational assistants involved in the education of students with visual impairments. Together the parents, vision strategists, educational assistants and others work to ensure needed resources are available, providing necessary guidance, expertise and access to specialized materials.

Two chapters were formed, one based in Edmonton, serving the city and surrounding areas up to Red Deer, and another chapter based in Calgary, serving the southern part of the province.

ASVI is a non-profit organization; all of its members, its executive and any committee members are volunteers, and none receive a salary, stipend or honorarium for work given.

Assistive Technology Loans

ASVI provides assistive technology loans for children and youth up to the age of 25 with **severe visual impairments** using revenues received through charitable gaming (casinos). The assistive technology must be specific to the unique needs of visually impaired/blind individuals and provide the individual with better access to the curriculum and or recreational/leisure pursuits.

Equipment that is specific to vision loss (e.g., Braille notetaker) will always take precedence for approval when funds are limited. However, we do recognize the importance of mainstream technology, which includes built-in accessibility features for many of our students. Effective September 2023, we will consider applications for laptops and tablets (including vision-specific accessories, software, and apps). The assistive technology is on loan to the individual/family, with the understanding that items no longer in use are to be returned in good working order, to be redistributed to others as requests arise.

All requests are reviewed for approval by the ASVI Assistive Technology Committee, made up of members of the ASVI board.

The following criteria used to review and approve assistive technology requests have been carefully established and are current as of the date of writing.

Should you require assistance with the completion of these forms, or with the selection of appropriate assistive technology, please contact info@asviedmonton.org.

Criteria for Approval of ASVI Assistive Technology Loans:

Eligibility

1. Applicant (this refers to the child/youth) must be a member of ASVI in good standing. The parent/guardian can be the primary paid member of ASVI. Member in good standing is defined as an up-to-date paid yearly membership up to and including the current year the application is being made. Payment must be made for all years in which membership has lapsed (from the last paid membership) prior to any application being accepted for review.
2. Applicant lives in the region served by the Edmonton Chapter of ASVI.
3. The applicant has provided an identified and documented visual impairment.
4. Applicant is a child/youth up to the age of 25.
5. The applicant has not received equipment loans from ASVI within the last two years.
6. Applicant has not exceeded the lifetime maximum of \$20,000.00 in technology provided by ASVI (including technology requested in the current application).

Application Guidelines

1. Applications for assistive technology must be made on the current forms available on the ASVI website. The application form (all pages) must be complete, including adequate documentation from a professional who is knowledgeable about the specific equipment.
2. Applications must include evidence that you have explored alternative sources of funding prior to applying to ASVI (e.g. Military Police Blind Children's Fund, STEP program through CNIB, Rotary/Lion's/Elks Clubs) and were not successful. Post-secondary students must provide evidence of attempts to get funding first through Canada Student Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities.
3. A minimum 2-week trial with the requested technology should be completed when possible and the benefits documented in the application. If this is not possible, evidence must be provided that establishes the suitability of the requested technology for the individual. If there is a formal assistive technology assessment that would support the need for the requested equipment, you can include this with the application.
4. Assistive technology applications must be signed by all individuals who contributed to the completion of the application (e.g. parent, student/applicant, teacher, principal, vision consultant) before they are forwarded to ASVI.
5. Applications for more than one piece of technology may be made on the same form assuming documentation regarding trials, etc. is included for each technology item requested.
6. Incomplete applications will be returned and only reviewed once all information is provided.
7. Applications can be submitted any time but will only be reviewed between September and June. Any applications received and approved after May 30 will be deployed the following September.

8. Once the technology is deployed to an individual, it becomes the parent's responsibility for any necessary security, maintenance and repairs.
9. An equipment loan agreement form will be sent to you when the assistive technology is provided. This agreement must be signed and returned to ASVI.
10. Assistive technology follows the students throughout their school career. When students transfer to another classroom or school, their technology should follow them.
11. When a student no longer requires the assistive technology, it must be returned to ASVI for reassignment.

Student-specific devices purchased by ASVI may be eligible for replacement if the following conditions are met:

- ✓ The device is more than 4 years old and no longer functioning as needed
- ✓ The existing device no longer meets the student's needs
- ✓ The device is unable to update the required software/app

Replacement equipment is treated as a new request and the application must be completed as such.

Considerations in Decision-Making

Loan applications are subject to approval by the Assistive Technology Committee based on:

- a. determined need for (and appropriateness of) the assistive technology selected
- b. cost and availability of the assistive technology
- c. availability of ASVI funds

Successful applications (approved by the Assistive Technology Committee) are subject to approval by the Executive.

Assistive technology purchased by ASVI will...

- a. be identified with markings as being the property of ASVI
- b. have the serial number of the AT kept on record by ASVI
- c. be on loan to the applicant, understanding that it is to be returned in good condition
- d. be covered under the warranty program (if available) as provided by the manufacturer. After the manufacturer warranty expires, it would be the responsibility of the applicant (not ASVI) to maintain the technology in good working order and purchase any additional warranties or maintenance contracts if desired.
- e. have insurance coverage against fire and theft under the applicant's household policy
- f. be returned to ASVI in good working order should the applicant no longer use it
- g. require a loan contract (see Appendix II) drawn up between the applicant and ASVI, outlining the conditions as indicated above

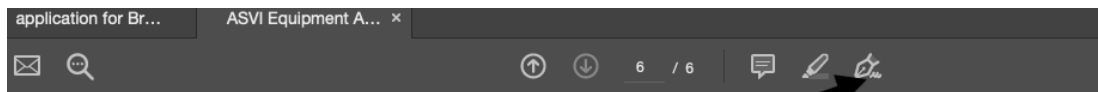
The information on the application form shall remain confidential and will not be shared with any other individuals or organizations.

ASVI does not fund the following:

1. Service agreements/extended warranties, including those initially offered by the retailer and/or manufacturer.
2. Any repair/servicing required during the use or prior to the return of the technology to ASVI.
3. Replacement due to theft, loss or damage.
4. Mainstream technology like desktop computers and smartphones. ASVI does provide vision-specific software for mainstream devices like text-to-speech software (JAWS).
5. Braille production software and embossers for school use.
6. Exercise equipment.
7. Health/medical devices (e.g. eyewear).

Submitting the Assistive Technology Loan Application

The application form is a fillable PDF file that you can complete online. If you are using Adobe Acrobat, you will be able to create a signature and sign online by clicking on the pen nub at the top of the page (see arrow on screenshot below).



The completed, signed application can be emailed to info@asviedmonton.org . Before you send your application to us, please check the following:

- ✓ The student/applicant meets all eligibility criteria
- ✓ Membership is current
- ✓ The requested technology falls within the mandate of what ASVI funds
- ✓ The application is completed in all areas
- ✓ All names and signatures are included