

CSG Client Services Guide	Date Issued 12/09/19	Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment	Section 1900
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Section 1900	REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, MODIFICATIONS & EQUIPMENT	1
1900	REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY	1
1910	HEARING AIDS.....	5
1920	DRIVER'S EVALUATION, DRIVER'S TRAINING AND VEHICLE MODIFICATION.....	9
1930	HOME MODIFICATION AND/OR REMODELING	12
1940	COMPUTERS AND MOBILE COMPUTING DEVICES.....	144
1950	TOOLS, EQUIPMENT, INITIAL STOCKS	156

[CSG Table of Contents](#)

Federal Regulations

[34 CFR 361.5](#) - Definitions

[34 CFR 361.48](#) - Scope of vocational rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities

State Rule

[5 CSR 20-500](#)

Section 1900 REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY, MODIFICATIONS & EQUIPMENT

1900 REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY

1900.1 Guidance and Definitions

REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (RSA) DEFINITION OF REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY

- Rehabilitation technology means the systematic application of technologies, engineering methodologies or scientific principles to meet the needs of, and address the barriers confronted by, individuals with disabilities in areas that include education, rehabilitation, employment, transportation, independent living, recreation, home and vehicular modification, other assistive devices including but not limited to hearing aids, low vision aids and wheelchairs. Rehabilitation technology includes rehabilitation engineering, assistive technology devices and assistive technology services.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p>Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	-------------------------------------

The term includes the following services and devices:

- Rehabilitation engineering services are the systematic application of engineering sciences to design, develop, test, evaluate, apply and distribute technological solutions to problems confronted by vocational rehabilitation (VR) individuals in functional areas such as mobility, communications, hearing, vision, and cognition and in activities associated with employment, independent living, education and integration into the community.
- Assistive technology devices are any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.
- Assistive technology services are any services that directly assist an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device. Services may include
 - the evaluation of the needs of an individual including a functional evaluation of the individual in his or her customary environment;
 - purchasing, leasing or otherwise providing for the acquisition by an individual of an assistive technology device;
 - selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing or replacing assistive technology devices;
 - coordinating and using other therapies, interventions or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
 - training or providing technical assistance for an individual or, if appropriate, the family members, guardians, advocates or authorized representatives of the individual;
 - training or providing technical assistance for professionals, including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services, employers or others who provide services to employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of, VR individuals to the extent that training or technical assistance is necessary for individuals to achieve an employment outcome; and
 - expanding the availability of access to technology including electronic and information technology.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- Consider rehabilitation technology services each time a case is being reviewed including annual review of cases Closed – Other than Rehabilitated, Reason – Disability Too Severe.
- The director and assistant director of technology are available as a resource.
- Consider Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) as a possible resource for rehabilitation technology/assistive technology.
- Clients requiring rehabilitation technology/assistive technology services must be evaluated on their specific needs in reaching their employment outcome.
- Rehabilitation technology services are based on financial need policy except for services provided when conducting the assessment for eligibility and the nature and scope of services or during a trial work period.
- Rehabilitation technology services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits. However, if comparable services are known to be currently available, including Medicare/Medicaid or private insurance, they must be applied to reduce the cost of the service. If the vendor accepts Medicaid, then Medicaid payment must be accepted as payment in full.
- The Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) must identify the specific rehabilitation technology services to be provided.
- The IPE must also include an assessment of the expected need for post-employment services including rehabilitation technology services where appropriate.

1900.2 Maintenance and Repair

- The client is responsible for appropriate care and routine maintenance for items in his/her possession.
- VR may assist with repairs not covered by comparable services. Any assistance will be based on financial need.
- VR will not purchase extended warranties on any items.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p>Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	-------------------------------------

1900.3 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Review/discuss with the client and provide informed choice regarding those rehabilitation technology services necessary to assess and develop the capacities of the individual to perform in a work environment or to reach a successful employment outcome.
- If rehabilitation technology services are not being provided as a diagnostic service, discuss financial guidelines and collect required financial documentation. Complete the Financial Needs Assessment.
- Solicit written bids. If purchasing a prescribed assistive technology device and a bid is necessary, follow the bid process provided in [CSG Section 700](#). Take into consideration the client's preference of vendor, quality, service and warranty.
- Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.
- If rehabilitation technology services are not being provided as a diagnostic service, meet with the client to review and sign the IPE.
- Review/discuss ownership with the client. Refer to ownership guidance in [CSG Section 750](#).
- Send a copy of the IPE including client responsibilities to the client and a copy of the authorizations to the client and vendor.
- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document in the case file.

1900.4 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p>Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	-------------------------------------

1910 HEARING AIDS

1910.1 Guidance

- Follow deaf/hard of hearing guidance provided in [CSG Section 400](#).
 - Regardless of whether the deafness/hearing loss is a primary or secondary disability, hearing aid(s) may be purchased, as long as the counselor documents:
 - how the deafness/hearing loss creates functional limitations and
 - a substantial impediment to employment as a result of the deafness/hearing loss
 - Consider the following factors in helping to determine what type of technology is required to assist an individual in their employment needs. Document how the functional limitations/barriers will be accommodated by providing hearing aids.
 - Vocational Goal: Does the job/training require a lot of communication in a variety of listening environments? Will there be a lot of background noise? Will there be a lot of telephone use, group meetings, working directly with customers/co-workers? List overall functional limitations and barriers to employment.
 - Hearing Loss: Consider onset of hearing loss, residual hearing, speech discrimination, degree of hearing loss, progressive loss, oral vs. manual communication (method of communication) as a primary mode of communication, etc.
 - Hearing aids are dependent upon the unique employment related needs of the individual.
 - VR will provide either a Full Shell model or Behind the Ear Model as a general practice. Smaller half-shell, in-the-canal or completely in-the-canal style aids will generally be a personal preference and clients would need to cover the difference in cost.
 - Document in the case file when a smaller style aid is required for the client to perform his or her job or due to a medical reason.
- Entry Level Amplification –**
- Includes both conventional analog and basic digital/programmable technology.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- Conventional analog aids may still be utilized for many older wearers of hearing aids, because they are more comfortable with and accustomed to wearing these aids.

Advanced Level Amplification –

- May include programmable analog aids but most will include digital aids with multiple channels (up to 3 channel memory).
- This category may include special hearing aids such as Cross- or Bi-Cross Hearing Aids.

Premium Level Amplification –

- Includes digital aids that have multiple features and technologies.
- Will generally include aids with 4 channel memory or more, directional microphones, noise reduction, automatic digital algorithms, which adapt to the user’s environment.
- Open-fit aids.
- Receiver in the Canal (RIC) aids.
- Receiver in the Ear (RIE) aids, etc.

- Price guidelines are outlined in the Frequently Used Procedure Codes spreadsheet.

1910.2 Maintenance and Repair

- The client is responsible for appropriate care and routine maintenance for items in his/her possession.
- VR may assist with repairs not covered by comparable services. Any assistance will be based on financial need.
- VR will not purchase extended warranties on any items.

1910.3 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Discuss financial guidelines, collect required financial information and complete the Financial Needs Assessment. Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- Rehabilitation technology services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits. However, if comparable services are known to be currently available, including Medicare/Medicaid, or private insurance, they must be applied to the cost of the service. If the vendor accepts Medicaid, then Medicaid payment must be accepted as payment in full.
- Inform the client that hearing aids generally last four to six years with proper care and maintenance.
- Provide guidance to assist the client in planning for future repairs and/or replacement aids.
- On the IPE, mark the Assistive Technology box. Select Rehabilitation Technology Services and provide a description.
- Prior to the authorization of services, review the Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) and client responsibilities with the client and secure client's signature.
- Counselors for deaf/hard of hearing (DHH) serve as a resource to the general caseload counselor about recommendations for hearing aids. They assist in evaluating the need for assistive technology and utilization of the Telecommunications Access Program and assist in referrals to local Centers for Independent Living.
- Review the medical/audiometric records of a client with a severe to profound hearing loss (71db or greater) with a counselor for DHH or with the director or the assistant director of DHH. Document the consultation in the file. Depending on the severity, some cases may be transferred to a counselor for DHH to best meet the client's needs.
- Transfer cases involving physical restoration services, such as cochlear implant or bone anchored hearing aids, to the counselors for DHH.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p>Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	-------------------------------------

- For services involving diagnosis and treatment of impairment such as Cochlear Implant or Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA):
 - On the IPE, mark the Assistive Technology box. Select Rehabilitation Technology Services & Diagnosis and Treatment of Impairment Services and provide descriptions. Authorize using the procedure codes requested by the doctors/providers.
- Contact the assistant director of DHH services or director of rehabilitation technology for consultation when you have questions regarding hearing loss, eligibility and if a hearing aid bid exceeds VR guidelines.
- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document.

1910.4 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Hearing aids may only be provided from a licensed dealer, certified audiologist or physician skilled in the diseases of the ear. All licenses and certifications must be valid, unencumbered, unrestricted and undisciplined.
- Always obtain the specific make and model of hearing aids being recommended by the vendor. Include a bid for the standard manufacturer's warranty. If the client would like to purchase additional warranty coverage, he or she is responsible for the additional cost.
- For clients able to utilize the phone and any applicable FM assistive technology, solicit a written bid for hearing aids that include a t-coil.
- Additional features, such as directional microphones, remote control function and special circuits (additional circuits, power circuit, super compression), may increase the cost and would need to be evaluated on an individualized basis.
- When reviewing bids, it is important to understand the make/model and type of aid being recommended. When discussing options with clients and

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p>Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	-------------------------------------

vendors, discuss looking at what is required for them to function in their employment environment.

- Hearing aids costing more than VR guidelines require more than one comparable written bid. Contact the assistant director of DHH services or director of rehabilitation technology when the bids exceed VR guidelines.
- When there is client participation, advise the vendor(s) it is their responsibility to obtain the client's contribution. Document communication with the vendor.
- If a client is receiving Medicaid, vendor must accept Medicaid reimbursement as payment in full. VR cannot supplement Medicaid.
- If vendor will not accept Medicaid payment, the counselor should document the vendor's refusal to accept payment from Medicaid; authorize the full amount of the lowest bid. Audiologists & hearing instrument specialists must submit a copy of the signed purchase agreement, which includes the terms of sale, along with the invoice.

1920 DRIVER'S EVALUATION, DRIVER'S TRAINING AND VEHICLE MODIFICATION

1920.1 Guidance

- The counselor will review/advise the client of the requirements and responsibilities regarding vehicle modifications as stated in the [state rule](#) and document.
- Evaluate local transportation systems to determine if there is suitable transportation that would meet the needs of the client to participate in the rehabilitation program and to achieve the employment outcome. Document results of this exploration.
- The agency shall not authorize modifications to a vehicle when the participant can effectively utilize other modes of transportation.
- Document the need for required modifications.
 - Example: VR will not consider providing for the cost of a conventional van conversion if a client is able to drive with the use of hand controls and is able to access the vehicle satisfactorily.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- A physician’s prescription and valid driver’s license, or permit, is required prior to VR authorizing the evaluation.
- Authorize driver’s evaluation and training with a driver rehabilitation specialist who is currently certified through the Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists or certified by a recognized professional accreditation organization that has developed commonly accepted standards for accreditation of driver rehabilitation specialists.
- Authorize the vehicle modification with a vendor who did not provide the driver’s evaluation.
- Clients provided vehicle modifications by VR must obtain, at their own cost, insurance on those modifications.
 - The insurance policy must include an endorsement to cover the modifications.
 - VR will not repair or replace vehicle modifications damaged in an accident, lost through theft or otherwise rendered inoperable since these costs will be paid through the client’s deductible and the insurance company.
- Include the following in the IPE:
 - The client’s agreement to purchase insurance on the modifications.
 - The client’s agreement to care for and maintain the equipment.

1920.2 Bid Process

- Follow bid process guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- When required, solicit written bids from at least two (2) National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association (NMEDA) certified vendors. Authorize services to the vendor with the lowest responsive bid.
- Used equipment may be purchased if it results in a cost savings to VR and meets the needs of the client. The following is required before authorizing the purchase of used equipment:
 - The equipment must be evaluated by a qualified appraiser. The appraisal must be submitted in writing with the appraiser’s signature.
 - The vehicle must be capable of passing state inspection.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- The vehicle's age and mileage must pass NMEDA vendor inspection/specifications.

1920.3 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Collect required financial documentation and complete the Financial Needs Assessment.
- Solicit written bids, if appropriate, and place documentation in the case management system.
- Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.
- Prior to the authorization of services, review IPE and Vehicle Modification Services responsibilities with client and secure client's signature.
- Send a copy of the IPE and client responsibilities to the client and a copy of the authorizations to the client and vendor.
- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document in the case file.

1920.4 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Use the Vehicle Modification procedure code in the case management system. Provide a complete description on the authorization of the items/modifications to be purchased.
- Review of the equipment/modification must be done prior to approving the invoice for payment. Conduct this review in person whenever possible.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

1930 HOME MODIFICATION AND/OR REMODELING

1930.1 Guidance

- The counselor will review/advise the client of the requirements and responsibilities regarding home modifications as stated in the [state rule](#) and document.
- Conduct a thorough evaluation to justify the necessity of home modifications related to employment. Include an on-site visit by the counselor and/or district supervisor or other qualified VR professional.
- If the dwelling is rented, written approval from the landlord is required before any home modification can be considered.
- Inform the client of the Residential Dwelling Accessibility Tax Credit. Contact Missouri Department of Revenue for more information.

1930.2 Bid Process

- Follow bid process guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Used equipment may be purchased if it results in a cost savings to VR and meets the needs of the client. The following is required before authorizing used equipment:
 - The equipment must be evaluated by a qualified appraiser. The appraisal must be submitted in writing with the appraiser's signature.

1930.3 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Collect required financial documentation. Solicit written bids, if appropriate.
- Complete the Financial Needs Assessment.
- Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.
- All home modifications and modification repairs must have prior written approval before an IPE can be written and authorizations created.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- Counselors must submit prior written approval requests through InfoTech and attach quote for work to be performed. Requests will be reviewed by the director of rehabilitation technology and the assistant director of procurement. Counselors will be notified when approval is secured.
- Follow prior written approval, ownership and inventory guidance provided in [CSG Section 750](#).
- The client's agreement to care for and maintain the home modification(s) and/or remodeling must be addressed in the IPE and in any IPE amendments.
- VR may assist with repairs not covered by comparable services. Any assistance will be based on financial need.
- Prior to the authorization of services, review IPE and Home Modification Services responsibilities with client and secure client's signature.
- Send a copy of the IPE and client responsibilities to the client and a copy of the authorizations to the client and vendor.
- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document follow-up.

1930.4 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Authorize the cost and installation of ramps and lifts on a separate line code, if applicable.
- Use the Home Modification procedure code in the case management system. Provide a complete description on the authorization of the items/modifications to be purchased.
- Review of the equipment/modification must be done prior to approving the invoice for payment. Conduct this review in person whenever possible.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

1940 COMPUTERS AND MOBILE COMPUTING DEVICES

1940.1 Guidance

- VR may consider providing a computer and other assistive technology services when suitable resources are unavailable to meet the client's IPE related needs.
- VR will not enter into a contract for cellular/data/internet service on behalf of clients.
- Document:
 - the reasons a computer/device is necessary to achieve a successful employment outcome;
 - the need for any special adaptive equipment/accommodations (e.g., special keyboard, software, etc.); and
 - how setting up the computer/device, instructing the client in its use, software, etc., and providing on-going support/technical assistance will be accomplished.

1940.2 Computer Request for a Client Who Is Employed

- It is not the intent of VR to purchase computers or other technology for clients who are employed. Employers who meet the legal requirements under the ADA are required to make reasonable accommodations for employees with a disability.
- VR may consider providing a computer and other assistive technology services for individuals who are employed when
 - there is documentation of an undue hardship on the employer to provide the needed accommodations, and
 - assistive technology services are required due to client's disability to enable the client to perform essential functions of employment.

1940.3 Maintenance and Repair

- Clients are responsible for appropriate care and routine maintenance for computer equipment in their possession.
- VR may assist with repairs not covered by comparable services. Any assistance will be based on financial need.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- VR will not purchase extended warranties on any items.

1940.4 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Collect required financial documentation and solicit written bids, if appropriate. Follow the bid process provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Complete the Financial Needs Assessment.
- Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.
- Computer and related purchases are all subject to the same guidance and rules listed in [CSG Section 750](#).
- Determine if the equipment will be authorized as rehabilitation technology/assistive technology or tools/equipment.
- Prior to the authorization of services, review IPE and appropriate client responsibilities with client and secure client's signature.
- Send a copy of the IPE and client responsibilities to the client and a copy of the authorizations to the client and vendor.
- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document.

1940.5 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- Use the appropriate procedure code in the case management system.
- Provide a detailed description of the computer/device to be purchased (make, model number, specifications, etc.) on the authorization.
- Prior to paying invoice, VR staff must contact the client directly to verify receipt of computer/equipment and document in the case file.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

1950 TOOLS, EQUIPMENT, INITIAL STOCKS

1950.1 Guidance

- Training tools/equipment may be purchased for a client during a training program.
- Placement tools/equipment may be purchased for a client in order to obtain/maintain employment or in starting and conducting self-employment. The client must have either training or past work experience prior to purchasing the tools/equipment.
- Initial stocks are expendable items that may be purchased for a client in conjunction with placement tools/equipment. They include items/supplies, which may be used (1) in operation of the placement equipment or (2) for production of items for sale.
- Expendable items are items that will be used up, sold as initial stocks/supplies, worn out or reduced to salvage within a period of one (1) year.
- Non-expendable items are items not falling within the meaning of an expendable item.

1950.2 Initial Considerations

- VR may provide occupational tools, equipment and initial stocks for a client to achieve the employment outcome providing the following conditions have been met and documented in the file:
 - Ability – The client has the proper skill and ability to succeed in the trade or occupation for which the services are provided.
 - Resources – The client is able to provide for the appropriate care and routine maintenance of tools/equipment/stocks.
 - Financial eligibility – The client meets VR financial need requirements.
 - Self-employment – [CSG Section 1000](#)
- Conduct a thorough evaluation to justify the necessity of placement tools/equipment and initial stocks. Include an on-site visit by the counselor and/or district supervisor, if necessary, and document.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

1950.3 Bid Process

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).

1950.4 Purchasing Used Equipment

- Used equipment may be purchased if it results in a cost savings to VR and meets the needs of the client. The following is required before authorizing used equipment:
 - The equipment must be evaluated by a qualified appraiser. The appraisal must be submitted in writing with the appraiser’s signature.

1950.5 Maintenance and Repair

- The client is responsible for appropriate care and maintenance for tools/equipment in his/her possession.
- VR may assist with repairs not covered by comparable services. Any assistance will be based on financial need.
- VR will not purchase extended warranties on any items.

1950.6 Procedure

- Follow vocational planning guidance provided in [CSG Section 500](#).
- Collect required financial documentation and solicit written bids, if appropriate.
- Complete the Financial Needs Assessment.
- Document on a Cost Scenario, or in the case file, utilization of client contribution or comparable services, if appropriate.
- Tools, equipment and initial stocks are all subject to the same guidance and rules listed in [CSG Section 750](#).
- Prior to the authorization of services, review the IPE including the Tools and Equipment responsibilities with client and secure client’s signature.
- Send a copy of the IPE and client responsibilities to the client and a copy of the authorizations to the client and vendor.

<p style="text-align: center;">CSG Client Services Guide</p>	<p>Date Issued 12/09/19</p>	<p>Subject Rehabilitation Technology, Modifications & Equipment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Section 1900</p>
---	--	---	---

- Contact the client immediately after the receipt of services to ensure client satisfaction with the services provided and document.
- Follow up with the client to monitor satisfactory progress in accordance with the timelines stipulated in the IPE and document.

1950.7 Authorization and Billing

- Follow authorization and billing guidance provided in [CSG Section 700](#).
- To purchase tools/equipment/initial stocks, use the appropriate procedure code in the case management system. Itemize and describe for each line code as follows:
 - All items costing \$5,000 or less may be accumulated and entered on one line code. If several items, enter the statement, "Equipment (or tools or initial stocks as appropriate) as per attached list," and the total amount of purchase.
 - Any one item costing more than \$5,000 must be authorized on a separate line code and include a detailed description of the item.
- Prior to paying invoice, VR staff must contact the client directly to verify receipt of tools/equipment and document in the case file.