

**Ventura County Office of Education (VCOE)  
Hearing Conservation: Audiology Services  
Conference and Educational Services Center  
5100 Adolfo Road, Camarillo, CA 93012  
Phone: (805) 437-1380 FAX: (805) 389-4297  
Kathryn Huff, D.P.A., Coordinator**

## **Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT/FM Amplification) Guidelines**

The following guidelines are for use when direct teacher to student amplification (HAT/FM system) is considered for a student with hearing loss.

For the purposes of these guidelines:

- HAT refers to Hearing Assistive Technology
- FM refers to Frequency Modulation
- The role of the audiologist in the schools includes “determination of children’s needs for group and individual amplification, selecting and fitting an appropriate aid, and evaluating the effectiveness of those devices.” IDEA, Part B, CFR§300.24(b)(1).
- Educational Team refers to school district personnel and may include, but is not limited to, IEP; SST; 504; or Intervention Progress Teams (IPT).

### **Referral Process**

Member of School District Educational Team contacts VCOE Hearing Conservation Coordinator to determine if a student with documented hearing loss (audiologic assessment completed within the previous 12 months) is a potential candidate for hearing assistive technology (HAT/FM amplification). An audiologic assessment from VCOE Audiology may be requested if the assessment is not current or additional tests are necessary. Please note that a recommendation for HAT/FM from a private provider does not supersede this process.



If a student is a potential candidate for HAT/FM amplification, the VCOE Hearing Conservation Coordinator will provide a Permission Form & Authorization for Use/Disclosure of Medical/Educational Information for the parent to complete, and a Request for Consideration of Hearing Assistive Technology for the Educational Team to complete. The completed forms should be returned to VCOE, Hearing Conservation and should include a copy of the current audiologic assessment.



### **Trial Period**

VCOE Educational Audiologist gathers the information needed to determine eligibility, implementation considerations, and device selection for HAT/FM trial period to include:

- Completed Request for Consideration of Hearing Assistive Technology from District Educational Team
- Completed Parent Permission and Authorization forms
- Current audiologic assessment.
- Medical clearance, as needed.
- Hearing Aid or Cochlear Implant information.
- Auditory skills performance data.
- An evaluation of the listening, communication, and educational demands of the classroom noting any current modifications.



- Need for trial use of HAT/FM system established by VCOE Educational Audiologist in consultation with school district Educational Team Representative
- Identification of available, appropriate system, or plan for acquisition of a loaner system by VCOE Educational Audiologist.



VCOE Educational Audiologist fits the student with the trial HAT/FM system for a minimum two week period and documents pre and post auditory skills data to determine student benefit. Educational Team members provide input regarding student performance.



If the trial period successfully demonstrates that the student receives benefit from the HAT/FM system, continue usage and convene Educational Team.



## Equipment Purchase

### Student Qualifies

### Student does not Qualify

#### **Instructions for Completion of IEP Forms**

*Low Incidence (LI)* category must be reported first in order to generate LI funds for the purchase of HAT/FM for students.

Examples for completion of IEP forms follow:

#### **Primary Eligibility**

*Check the appropriate Low Incidence category:*

Deaf/Blindness (LI)

Deafness (LI)

Hard of Hearing (LI)

#### **Least Restrictive Environment Page:**

*Special Factors Affecting Learning and Placement*

Yes  No Assistive technology devices and services

Assistive technology should be checked “yes” and Hearing Assistive Technology used for student to access core curriculum.

Yes  No Low Incidence Equipment to be acquired

Note: The Low Incidence Equipment box can be checked “Yes” with a notation on the blank line indicating the type of Hearing Assistive Technology recommended by the VCOE Audiologist.

#### *Additional Supports for Student:*

Provide a statement describing how the student’s hearing aid or HAT/FM amplification will be monitored (how often/by whom). Hearing aid monitoring is required by IDEA (34 CFR§300.303).

#### *Services:*

Primary Service will most often be SAI or SLP. Either of these may be provided as a “consult”. For preschool students Individual / Small Group services is common. For SAI, note subjects in which HAT will be used. Each service must have a related goal.

#### Annual Goals:

*Examples of goals for HAT/FM amplification:*

- Student will use HAT/FM system during academic classes with \_\_\_ prompts; independently, etc.
- Student will be responsible for picking up HAT/FM each morning, delivering microphone to teacher each period, and returning FM to charger at the end of each school day with \_\_\_ prompts; with less than \_\_\_ errors, etc.

School District General Funds are used to purchase and service equipment for students with 504 plans, or in early intervening services with no plan.

In some cases, loaner FM amplification may be available and appropriate for longer-term use. If not, a recommendation for purchase can be made by the Educational Audiologist.

There may be situations where older students with an IEP, consistent use of hearing aid or implant, and FM amplification experience are performing well and need accommodations only. In these cases, continuation of current HAT/FM equipment and limited audiology services may be appropriate. Consult with VCOE Educational Audiologist before services are committed to a 504 plan.

Please note that VCOE Hearing Conservation: Audiology Services needs to be notified regarding the use of any HAT/ FM amplification in a school due to frequency interference. This includes FM sound field speaker systems that are used for general classrooms with students with normal hearing.

VCOE Hearing Conservation Coordinator submits Purchase Request with all specifications for HAT/ FM system through Low Incidence Funds to the SELPA Assistant Superintendent, with copy of relevant sections of the IEP attached.



VCOE Educational Audiologist provides recommendations and specifications, as needed, for HAT/FM system purchased with School District Funds.



Ventura County SELPA Assistant Superintendent arranges for purchase of specified HAT from manufacturer. The new HAT/FM system is shipped to the VCOE Educational Audiologist at Hearing Conservation for inspection and setting prior to fitting and school staff / student training.

School District arranges for HAT/FM system purchase and contacts VCOE Hearing Conservation Coordinator regarding scheduling set-up and training.



### **HAT/FM Fitting, Training, Monitoring, Service**

VCOE Educational Audiologist fits student with HAT and provides in-service training for designated school personnel and student.



- Designated school personnel and students need to perform daily equipment charging and listening checks.
- For equipment purchased with Low Incidence Funds or loaner equipment, report HAT/ FM problems to VCOE Hearing Conservation at 437-1380, as soon as possible, so that arrangements can be made for repair or replacement.
- Repairs for equipment purchased with school district funds should be arranged by the district.
- Hearing aid problems should be reported to parents who will need to consult with their private audiologist for repairs. The private audiologist should also be seen for regular hearing tests and device checks (hearing aids /cochlear implants).
- Any changes in the hearing aid or cochlear implant need to be reported to the VCOE Educational Audiologist so that appropriate adjustments can be made.



HAT / FM system use should be discussed as part of I.E.P. or annual 504 plan review process. Input from the VCOE Educational Audiologist is requested well in advance of meeting date.



If the Educational Team has concerns about student benefit or compliance with use of the HAT / FM system, the VCOE Educational Audiologist should be consulted. If benefit or compliance issues cannot be resolved, the IEP or 504 plan should be reviewed (within 30 days of request).



The VCOE Educational Audiologist picks up low incidence or loaner HAT/FM systems at the end of the student's school year and prepares the equipment for service. Annual summer service is provided on low incidence or loaner equipment as part of the warranty period or an annual maintenance agreement with vendors. These agreements are maintained by the Hearing Conservation Coordinator on appropriate equipment purchased with low incidence funding, and approved by the SELPA Assistant Superintendent.

HAT / FM systems purchased with district funds are serviced by the vendor through the warranty period or with a district purchased service agreement after the warranty period ends. The district will need to be responsible for storage during school breaks and delivery to the appropriate classroom for the new school year. The VCOE Educational Audiologist can be contacted at 437-1380 with a request to provide in-service training for the new Educational Team.



The VCOE Educational Audiologist delivers the low incidence or loaner HAT/FM at the beginning of the new school year and provides in-service training for the new Educational Team. Communication is maintained throughout the school year to ensure the proper function of equipment and to assess student benefit.



Equipment purchased with Low Incidence Funds remains the property of the SELPA. Report unused equipment to the VCOE Educational Audiologist, so that it can be used for other eligible students within the Ventura County SELPA.