

## WHAT CAN A COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST DO?

- Assess the communication strengths and weaknesses of the person with a disability.
- Assist in developing a plan for accommodations that will allow the participant to effectively communicate and understand the proceeding or meeting
- Assist in requesting the necessary accommodation
- Implement identified accommodations by providing communication support in the administrative or judicial proceedings
- Model effective communication techniques for other individuals in the proceeding

*“Having a VCSP Communication Specialist was very helpful! There were things that I didn’t know about how things work at the court and she explained those to me. Also, having time to talk before and after my hearing gave me confidence that I had understood everything that I needed to in order to make good decisions.”*

*~Litigant*



## CONTACT VCSP

For help with effective communication in court and administrative hearings or meetings.

## VERMONT COMMUNICATION SUPPORT PROJECT

Lynne C. Cardozo, Director  
141 Main St., Suite #7  
Montpelier, VT 05602

1-888-686-VCSP (8277)  
csp@DisabilityRightsVt.org  
www.disabilityrightsvt.org

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*VCSP is a project of Disability Rights Vermont.  
For more information about Disability Rights Vermont visit us on the web at  
[www.disabilityrightsvt.org](http://www.disabilityrightsvt.org)*

*This project is made possible by a grant from the Vermont Agency of Human Services and with support from the Vermont Judiciary*

**1-888-686-VCSP**

# VERMONT COMMUNICATION SUPPORT PROJECT

# VCSP

**PROVIDING SPECIALIZED  
COMMUNICATION  
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR  
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
TO ASSURE EQUAL ACCESS  
TO OUR SYSTEM OF JUSTICE  
AND STATE SERVICES**

## WHAT WE DO

The Vermont Communication Support Project assists individuals with disabilities that impact their ability to communicate.

The VCSP helps in court and administrative proceedings and in communications with attorneys or agency personnel.

## WHAT IS A COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST?

A Communication Specialist is an individual specially trained to understand the communication needs of individuals with disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries, learning disabilities, developmental disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, mental illness, aphasia and other stroke related conditions.

They understand the barriers to effective communication and can help to overcome those barriers with effective accommodations.

The Communication Specialists can assist individuals to effectively participate in court or administrative proceedings.

## WHO DOES THE VERMONT COMMUNICATION SUPPORT PROJECT SERVE?

The Project serves individuals with disability-related communication barriers that prevent them from fully participating in civil, family, probate and small claims courts, as well as administrative proceedings.

## EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Divorce
- Parental Rights and Responsibilities
- Child Support
- Relief from Abuse and Stalking
- CHINS (child in need of supervision)
- Termination of Parental Rights
- DCF Case Management
- Eviction
- Small Claims
- Probate / Guardianship
- State Administrative Proceedings

- VCSP SERVICES ARE CONFIDENTIAL
- VCSP SERVICES ARE FREE FOR LITIGANTS

*“The VCSP’s services have been outstanding in quality and a great boon to the clients themselves, as well as to the fair administration of the legal system in their cases. With skill and understanding, the VCSP communication specialists help clients better understand the situations before them, which greatly support their navigation and communication with elements of the social and judicial systems.”*

*~ Jonathan Heppell, Esq.*

*The VCSP makes available and supports a trained cadre of Communication Support Specialists qualified and accepted by Vermont’s judiciary and administrative agencies.*

*“There are many disabilities that can affect a person’s ability to communicate and comprehend the judicial or administrative process. As certified communication specialists, we are trained to provide the support and necessary accommodations to ensure that people are being offered an equal opportunity. This respects the civil rights of people with disabilities and provides for a more efficient system.”*

*~ Hilde Hyde, VCSP Communication Specialist*

IF YOU THINK YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW MAY NEED VCSP SERVICES CALL (888) 686-8277