Personally---Owned Computers, Laptops, Tablets, Routers, Cable Modems, Smartphones, and Similar Devices: Tips on Getting Service, Support, and Repairs Off---Campus

Our best recommendation is for you to seek outside help for your personal computer and other devices. Technicians who work in the home support and retail business have broader knowledge and experience with the wide range of consumer---level products. Towson University specializes on a small subset of university---owned products used on campus.

Reasons why we recommend outside support:
1. OTS is trained and certified to work on Towson---owned Dell and Apple business computers. Your personal computer warranty could be voided if we work on it.
2. We cannot take on responsibility or liability for non---university---owned devices, plus it is unethical to use State---funded resources to provide service for people's personally---owned devices.
3. OTS does not authorize our staff to provide consulting or freelance work for personally---owned devices, e.g. home networks, personal computer purchasing, other hardware and software.
4. We do not recommend specific businesses or third---party vendors that provide computer service. However, listed below are some ways you may be able to identify a reputable service provider.
5. Your personal computer and data, is your personal responsibility—keep one or more backups.
6. If you lose, erase, or otherwise are not able to find data stored on your personally---owned devices, our staff are not permitted to try to recover that data. You will need to seek out professional data recovery services or find someone experienced with your particular need.

Some recommendations and possible resources for assistance:
1. Contact the store or business where you bought the device.
2. Contact the manufacturer by phone or visit their website for specific assistance, troubleshooting, and FAQs.
3. Contact your home Internet Service Provider, e.g. Verizon, Xfinity, for help with setting up routers and wireless devices for your home computer system, and to troubleshoot problems. They have a wide---range of experience with consumer---level products— along with extensive databases that they can search to find similar problems and their solutions.
4. If you are having trouble connecting a portable device at an airport, restaurant, retail store, coffee shop, hotel, or other public venue, ask for help *there*—do not call the OTS Help Center. Your connection has to be established at your remote location.
5. Search the Internet for resources and self---help directions or videos. Put your computer manufacturer and model in your search phrase for assistance specific to your computer. For example: Sound is not working on my HP Pavilion m7 laptop. If you are looking for a business in your area try searching for: computer repair:Towson, Maryland.
   a. Be careful of the sites you visit while searching for assistance. Stick with major well---known sites. Following are some examples:
      i) Microsoft Windows Support: https://support.microsoft.com
      ii) Apple OS X Support: https://www.apple.com/support/osx/
      iii) HP Support: http://support.hp.com/us-en?openCLC=true
6. Ask a friend or family member for help. Pay, barter, or provide cookies if needed.
7. Check the reviews and information on business practices. For referrals try:
   a. Angie's List: http://www.angieslist.com/quick-tour.htm
   b. Better Business Bureau: http://www.bbb.org/greater-maryland/accredited-business-directory/computers-service-and-repair/baltimore-md
   c. CNET: www.cnet.com/reviews
   d. Tech Radar: www.techradar.com/us/reviews
   e. Tom's Hardware: http://www.tomshardware.com/forum/
   f. Yellow Pages: http://www.yellowpages.com/search?search_terms=computer+repair&geo_location_terms=Baltimore%2C+MD
   g. Yelp: http://www.yelp.com/search?find_desc=computer+repair&find_loc=Baltimore%2C+MD&ns=1
   h. Yahoo! Local: https://local.yahoo.com/MD/Baltimore/Computers+Electronics/Computer+Repair
   i. Consumer Reports: http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/computers.htm
8. OTS Training has a large library of self---help documents and video tutorials to help you connect your personally owned computer to Towson systems and resources here**.**