# **OILP Newsletter- June 2024**

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the OILP Monthly Newsletter! We are pleased to share recent updates from ACL, TA Resources, and other IL resources below.

To improve user friendliness, we have included a Table of Contents with links to each section.

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# ***Staffing Updates***

* ***Welcoming Heyab Berhan to OILP:*** Please join me in welcoming Heyab Berhan ([Heyab.berhan@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:Heyab.berhan@acl.hhs.gov)) to the Office of Independent Living Programs here at ACL. He will be overseeing Regions IX and X at a future date. Heyab, who is of Eritrean descent, was born in Washington, DC and was raised by his mother and two older sisters. Shortly after birth, he was diagnosed with bilateral cerebral palsy. Heyab earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology at Marymount University in 2013. When he was in college, Heyab completed an internship and went on to become a full time Independent Living Specialist, working at the District of Columbia Center for Independent Living for five years. Heyab earned a Master’s degree in rehabilitation counseling in May of 2018. Shortly after, Heyab became a Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor with the District of Columbia Department on Disability Services (DDS), providing significant supports to transition age youth with disabilities; these supports included job placement assistance, vocational counseling, and college funding support related to their person-centered career goals. Heyab worked at DDS for 5 years before coming to ACL.



# ***Reporting and Guidance***

* ***June and September OILP Quarterly Connection Calls:*** Thank you to everyone who attended our recent OILP Quarterly Connection Call on June 5th. The recording and transcript are available at [OILP ACL Quarterly Connection | Independent Living Research Utilization (ilru.org)](https://www.ilru.org/training/quarterly-connection).



During the Quarterly Connection call, there was a question regarding full vs. limited services in Section 3 of the State Plans for Independent Living (SPILs) please see the response below.

Although over the last year we have been working with ILRU to provide the IL network with continued TTA around the SPIL, we have recently become aware of concern around the reason why a question 3.1 was revised in the State Plan last year. The question was revised to include if a CIL is providing ‘limited’ versus ‘full’ services in a county. This addition is included in the SPIL instructions (which introduces the question and how to answer it) and the instrument. This question was requested to be added during the last revision of the SPIL by members of the IL network so that they can better understand how served the counties in their states are. This helps with coordination and resource development. For example, a CIL may only provide HCBS funded services to a certain county. In that case, they may check ‘limited.’ A CIL may offer to serve a remote area of the state with the provision of I&R services, but they don’t have the staff to offer full services. In this case, the CIL would check ‘limited’ for that county. It’s important for state networks to be able to know the difference in services so they have a better understanding of who are the underserved for planning efforts; as currently, if a CIL provides I&R to a one person in county, the data suggests then that the county is served. ACL does not use the data to assess compliance, as the SPIL determines service areas. ACL would only use the data in aggregate to determine how many counties by state or nationally are fully served and to make the case for increased funding to support the CILs.

Feel free to reach out to your Program Officer if you have further questions. We are here to support you and thank you for all that you do on behalf of persons with disabilities.

***Please Save the Date for the September 4 OILP Quarterly Connection Call at 3:00 P.M. Eastern Time.*** To register, the September OILP Quarterly Connection Zoom link is [September OILP Quarterly Connection Call](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Fwebinar%2Fregister%2FWN_AVS3bAlNRoWyoMiwxr9omQ%23%2Fregistration&data=05%7C02%7Cjennifer.martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7C318c77320c0f4437efd808dc8575772d%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638531986774442193%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FX1hbqB1uDCMYDqtkPwRxNGWGI1HuI1wxwhcew8PSPY%3D&reserved=0).

The OILP Quarterly Connection Call provides an opportunity to get updates from the Office of Independent Living Services (OILP), meet new staff, hear presentations from our ACL colleagues; learn more about new programs or funding opportunities and get reminders around dates of importance. There is also always a question-and-answer period as well. The meeting is open to all IL stakeholders. Board members, directors, staff – are all encouraged to attend. We had presentations from RSA and another presentation on Massachusetts SILC’s partnerships and innovative uses around public health work funding.

* ***FY2024 Annual ILSG Grant Awards Issued:*** Your organization has received a notification directly from GrantSolutions of a new Notice of Award (NoA) for the following program(s):

FY 2024 Rehabilitation Act Subchapter B Independent Living Services Grants (ILSG)

The NoA is the legal document advising you that a mandatory grant award has been made and that grant funds may be requested from the HHS Payment Management System (PMS) after the budget period start date.

Please print out appropriate copies of the NoA for internal records and distribution needs and keep this e-mail for future reference/documentation.

Should you have any questions regarding your grant award, the contact information for your ACL programmatic and fiscal specialists is located on the NoA via a weblink.

Grant recipients can log in to GrantSolutions to get access to the NoAs, or obtain access to GrantSolutions by submitting a “Recipient User Account Request Form” listed on this link: [GrantSolutions](https://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/getting-started-request-a-user-account/).

Grant recipients can also log in to PMS to check the funding posted.

* ***CIL and ILS PPRs:*** Staff at the Office of Independent Living Programs have been reviewing CIL and ILS PPRs and have returned several for minor revisions or for additional information/clarifications. We use the PPR tool and process as a tool to communicate with CILs around the work they’re doing. For instance, a CIL or DSE may have entered the incorrect grant award amount from their Notice of Award, in which case we would send it back to ask for the update to be made. When a PPR is returned, it should in no way be seen as a rejected PPR. It is currently the tool we use to communicate around the report. If you have not received a notification about your CIL or ILS PPR, please login into the PPR portal for a status update at [Q90 Portal](https://portal.q90.com/external/login.php).

*If revisions have been requested, please resubmit as soon as possible and contact your* [*Program Officer*](https://acl.gov/programs/community-living-programs/office-independent-living-programs-contact-list) *with any questions.*

* ***CIL Combined Annual Report Released for Program Years 2020 and 2021:*** The [CIL Annual Report](https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living) is available on ACL’s website under the subheading of Annual Reports. In the Annual Reports, we highlight examples of the great work that Centers and states do through topics such as transition services, peer counseling, advocacy, emergency preparedness/disaster response and much more! We encourage you to view and share the report. Thank you for your support!
* ***IL Network Contact Updates:*** As a reminder, if there are any contact information changes for CIL Executive Directors, SILC Executive Directors, SILC Chairs or DSE’s, please let your Program Officer know. To verify the current name and contact information for your Program Officer, please view the [OILP staff list](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Facl.gov%2Fprograms%2Fcommunity-living-programs%2Foffice-independent-living-programs-contact-list&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333464084%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=LQcxic97v80MGqaN1bel6SS1MDOr6pmyqDC4jlXlqEM%3D&reserved=0) on ACL’s website. For guidance on changes in Executive Directors, please visit [Changes in CIL Executive Directors](https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living) under Frequently Asked Questions.
* ***OILP Monthly Newsletters:*** Beginning in April 2024, the newsletters and other communications will be distributed from [OILP@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:OILP@acl.hhs.gov). Please add this e-mail address to your Safe Senders list.

The OILP newsletters from May 2023—present are available on our website under the heading of [Office of Independent Living Programs Monthly Newsletters](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Facl.gov%2Fprograms%2Faging-and-disability-networks%2Fcenters-independent-living&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333620211%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2F5sO89wOj7j6j%2BYkZyMr86ok8JhvjxQbV%2BxDT68NXlI%3D&reserved=0).

* ***FY2025-FY2027 SPIL and SPIL Portal Is Now Open:*** This is a friendly reminder that the FY2025-FY2027 SPIL is due on ***June 30, 2024***. The current SPIL instructions and instrument are available on ACL’s website under the subheading of [SPIL Instructions, Instruments & Amendments](https://acl.gov/programs/aging-and-disability-networks/centers-independent-living).

The SPIL is now LIVE for your SILC on the Q90 Portal and is available at [Q90 Portal](https://portal.q90.com/external/login.php).

A few key tips:

If you did not attend the SPIL portal tour, it is recommended to watch the recording first before entering your SPIL. The recording is available at [SPIL Portal Tour](https://youtu.be/rfjPoJvJmdw).

When you begin entering your SPIL, please navigate to Section 3 and Section 9 and look at the list of Centers in your state or territory.

If any information is incorrect or if you have questions regarding the SPIL portal, please reach out to [Q90 Support](mailto:support@q90.com).

Should you have any questions regarding SPIL content, please reach out to your [Program Officer](https://acl.gov/programs/community-living-programs/office-independent-living-programs-contact-list).

* ***Making Disability Rights History: HHS Announces Powerful Anti-Discrimination Protections:*** For more information on the final Section 504 rule of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, please read [Making Disability Rights History](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/acl-blog/making-disability-rights-history-hhs-announces-powerful-anti) by Alison Barkoff, Performing the duties of ACL Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging.
* ***DOJ Final Rule ADA Title II Digital Accessibility:*** The Federal Register published the Department’s [final rule](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDAsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3YvYXNzZXRzL3BkZnMvd2ViLXJ1bGUucGRmIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDQyNS45Mzg1MjgxMSJ9.nmkZ4DXvXkJrI8d4rvNUl4AlhXNhR2LdLglQMvzglkQ%2Fs%2F3063358158%2Fbr%2F241336615423-l&data=05%7C02%7Crobert.groenendaal%40acl.hhs.gov%7C58cf090745f84eb56b9408dc652f9c4c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638496502373139500%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=YqoR6HCwqohH8Q1KZtoUMfOFmwC4chq1drzngLgxAWA%3D&reserved=0) under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which applies to State and local governments, to improve web and mobile application (app) access for people with disabilities. The rule clarifies how State and local governments can meet their existing ADA obligations as many of their activities move to the digital space. This rule, [signed by the Attorney General](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDEsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3Lmp1c3RpY2UuZ292L29wYS9wci9qdXN0aWNlLWRlcGFydG1lbnQtcHVibGlzaC1maW5hbC1ydWxlLXN0cmVuZ3RoZW4td2ViLWFuZC1tb2JpbGUtYXBwLWFjY2Vzcy1wZW9wbGUiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwNDI1LjkzODUyODExIn0.MGWn9TYxpC40qXmrFMFlBH2P9QRarDwcwsZRFUUTISo%2Fs%2F3063358158%2Fbr%2F241336615423-l&data=05%7C02%7Crobert.groenendaal%40acl.hhs.gov%7C58cf090745f84eb56b9408dc652f9c4c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638496502373150112%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Ye5UN%2BV%2ByPa%2FpI9H8PPch8PsN70jZQCna1oc3GR8VtI%3D&reserved=0) earlier this month, adopts a technical standard for web and mobile accessibility to ensure that people with disabilities can better access important public services like health care, voting, and education.

With this publication, the dates by which State and local governments must comply with the rule’s requirements are now finalized. State and local governments with a population of 50,000 or more will have to be in compliance with the rule’s requirements beginning on April 24, 2026. State and local governments with a population of less than 50,000, as well as special district governments, will have to be in compliance beginning on April 26, 2027. This means that State and local governments’ web content and mobile apps will have to generally meet the technical standard in the rule by these dates and on an ongoing basis after these dates.

In the meantime, State and local governments still have existing Title II obligations. This means that even before the compliance dates, State and local governments must provide people with disabilities equal access to their services, programs, and activities offered via the web and mobile apps.

For a high-level summary of the final rule, read the [fact sheet](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3Yvbm90aWNlcy8yMDI0LzAzLzA4L3dlYi1ydWxlLyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDA0MjUuOTM4NTI4MTEifQ.X45xr_I4lm8mgAKMjohb2X4cepSTlBu7ZrmNRIPBB0A%2Fs%2F3063358158%2Fbr%2F241336615423-l&data=05%7C02%7Crobert.groenendaal%40acl.hhs.gov%7C58cf090745f84eb56b9408dc652f9c4c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638496502373158024%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7559S23hiG9CqxQe7KAoeIhY3IiU7S4gPxC0f2aR0PE%3D&reserved=0). Individuals can also find the official version of the full rule in the [Federal Register](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmZlZGVyYWxyZWdpc3Rlci5nb3YvZG9jdW1lbnRzLzIwMjQvMDQvMjQvMjAyNC0wNzc1OC9ub25kaXNjcmltaW5hdGlvbi1vbi10aGUtYmFzaXMtb2YtZGlzYWJpbGl0eS1hY2Nlc3NpYmlsaXR5LW9mLXdlYi1pbmZvcm1hdGlvbi1hbmQtc2VydmljZXMtb2Ytc3RhdGUiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwNDI1LjkzODUyODExIn0.WAgZf_-Ltr1vtZyCfUJx3QWR7ay36HG7cXALBTWdbhc%2Fs%2F3063358158%2Fbr%2F241336615423-l&data=05%7C02%7Crobert.groenendaal%40acl.hhs.gov%7C58cf090745f84eb56b9408dc652f9c4c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638496502373164301%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=BcaXTQfzFv8xsh7vpPrk96WNGqnE2M7IS%2BKGjoPKlyI%3D&reserved=0). The Department also plans to issue a Small Entity Compliance Guide to assist small State and local governments in complying with the rule.

To find out more about the ADA, visit [ada.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmFkYS5nb3YvIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDQyNS45Mzg1MjgxMSJ9.dsIvZOHPs6rnnaFKNDZvQaSPOm_Zt8PH-44NPKLV82g%2Fs%2F3063358158%2Fbr%2F241336615423-l&data=05%7C02%7Crobert.groenendaal%40acl.hhs.gov%7C58cf090745f84eb56b9408dc652f9c4c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638496502373170626%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=f9cqRrT3tVF26CRoj3fdj6KIc7V1HfqAIOidBT%2FwOGI%3D&reserved=0) or call the Justice Department’s toll-free ADA information line at 1-800-514-0301 (voice) or 1-833-610-1264 (TTY).

* ***Audit Confirmation Requests:***  Many Centers for Independent Living have reached out to request verifications for their independent fiscal audits. Please be advised that audit confirmation requests should be sent to [pmsoigaudit@psc.hhs.gov](mailto:pmsoigaudit@psc.hhs.gov).
* ***Indirect Cost Rates:*** For questions regarding indirect cost rates, contact information can be found at the [Indirect Cost Rates webpage](•%09https:/www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/asa/psc/indirect-cost-negotiations/index.html).
* ***Allowable Expenses:*** OILP has recently received questions from our grantees regarding allowable costs. For additional guidance, please consult [45 CFR 75.403](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ecfr.gov%2Fcurrent%2Ftitle-45%2Fsubtitle-A%2Fsubchapter-A%2Fpart-75%2Fsubpart-E%2Fsubject-group-ECFRffa2eaa9f93be60%2Fsection-75.403&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333620211%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=U8M87su7nF6LbhwNkDxLeZam4kaS5p8%2FdxMtmwtrGB4%3D&reserved=0) and contact the fiscal officer listed in your notice of award.

* ***Public Health Workforce Funding:*** As we are now in 2024, please keep in mind that all Public Health Workforce (PHWF) grant period ends ***September 30, 2024***. If you are having difficulty spending these funds or require guidance, please reach out to your [Program Officer](https://acl.gov/programs/community-living-programs/office-independent-living-programs-contact-list).

# ***Conferences, Trainings and Technical Assistance***

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* ***How to Create the Best Board and Staff Relationships in Your CIL:*** This ILRU webinar will be held on ***June 26, 2024, from 3:00 P.M. -4:30 P.M.*** Please visit the [Registration Link](mailto:Registration%20Link)or email[Mary-Kate@ncil.org](mailto:Mary-Kate@ncil.org?subject=IL-NET)for more information.

***In this training, attendees will learn how to:***

* Clarify what the Executive Director does, what the board Chair does, and the role of the full board.
* Apply Independent Living Philosophy in the composition and work of the CIL board.

Provide CIL board members with the information they need to meet their responsibilities for overseeing the work of the Center, but not overstepping.

* ***Section 722 States Becoming Section 723 States FAQ Document Released:*** This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is available at [Independent Living Programs FAQs](https://acl.gov/programs/centers-independent-living/cil-frequently-asked-questions-faqs).
* ***SPIL Training and Technical Assistance Series:*** Please join IL-NET's newly launched monthly virtual meeting that offers comprehensive training and technical assistance for the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). These sessions are aimed at providing you with in-depth training on SPIL requirements, while also offering a platform to discuss how to leverage your plan to build cross-coordination and elevate the IL network in your state. By participating, you will have the opportunity to learn from experts and peers alike and gain valuable insights on how to make the most of your SPIL. Don't miss out on this opportunity and join us on the first Thursday of every month. To register or for more information, please visit [SPIL Training and Technical Assistance Series](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.ilru.org%2Ftraining%2Fspil-training-and-technical-assistance-series&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333776462%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=3Chds5I1ir%2BrdrN3aeEG7PTzHbswMMOk%2FTcCmbsPOTk%3D&reserved=0).

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| |  | | --- | | * ***SILC 101: A Deep Dive for New SILC Members and Staff:*** This ILRU rapid course is designed to increase understanding of common issues for all different types of Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILCs). The audience for this training is council-elected chairpersons, their fellow Governor-appointed council members, and staff hired by the SILC, such as executive directors, coordinators, and chairpersons.   [Visit ILRU's website to view this training](Microsoft%20Teams%20classic%20(work%20or%20school).lnk) | |

* ***ILRU IL-NET National Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) Center: Management 101: A Guide for New CIL Executive Directors:*** Are you a New Center for Independent Living (CIL) Executive Director, or planning to become an Executive Director in the future?

This course will focus your attention on important aspects of the job that you need to know about early on and that might get lost in the daily conflicting demands for attention.

Concrete action steps are provided in easy-to-use checklists, bullet points, dos and don’ts, and general knowledge to support newly hired Executive Directors of Centers for Independent Living.

[Visit ILRU's website to view this training](https://www.ilru.org/training/management-101-guide-for-new-cil-executive-directors-1-course)

* + ***2024 Rural Conversation Series: 3rd Wednesday of the Month at 1:00 p.m. Eastern***

The Rural Conversation Community series is provided by ILRU's IL-NET National Training and Technical Assistance Center for Independent Living and facilitated by APRIL, the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living. There are no presenters or designated speakers in these conversations; they are an informal time and space to gather with your peers and share about current events and ask your peers questions. Captioning and ASL are provided. Bring your questions for your peers and updates on your CIL’s creative solutions and activities to share.

[2024 Rural Conversation Series](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.april-rural.org%2Findex.php%2Frural-conversations&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333776462%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Nd1z5OQwV1x5fk76R%2Fdq68k1XcqzSgqQ14LvkeO%2F%2BO0%3D&reserved=0)

* ***Youth Coordinator Connect Meetings: 1st Tuesday of the Month at 2:00 p.m. Eastern***

Join us to begin building a community of peer support and sharing for Youth Program Coordinators. Come share your experiences and tips and tricks and problem solve barriers to growing and implementing youth programs in your Center for Independent Living. Meet and learn from your colleagues throughout the country who are working towards the common goal of improving services for youth with disabilities.

Each month we will discuss a topic as it relates to youth programs and services.  These topics are chosen as a group.  We will also brainstorm solutions for barriers that may come up in your programs. To register, please visit [Youth Coordinators Connection Call](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZItd-GtrDkpHdNejRIeh4Yyk8iAfpETKbak#/registration).

* ***Advocacy Committee Meetings: 1st Wednesday of the Month at 4:00 p.m. Eastern***

APRIL is a national membership organization dedicated to advancing the rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities in rural America.

APRIL is committed to an aggressive and culturally appropriate advocacy strategy tied to its Vision statement: “APRIL is the unified voice of independent living in rural America.” In furtherance of that Vision, APRIL has engaged hundreds of members and dedicated many hours aimed at developing a mission-focused system-change agenda to further the civil rights of all people with disabilities regardless of age, disability, income, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

Equally important to us, is ensuring that young people with disabilities are integrated into all facets of program development and delivery. We are truly committed to the mantra “Nothing About Us, Without Us.”  The advocacy committee works to address APRIL’s advocacy priorities.

[Advocacy Committee](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.april-rural.org%2Findex.php%2Fadvocacy&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333776462%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=AsoIBJtmc2bpHHIziYpuTke22LHH86IX3pQkmHXcE9w%3D&reserved=0)

* ***Emergency Prep Committee: 2nd Monday of the Month at 3:00 p.m. Eastern***

APRIL began this committee to support CILs and SILCs in their efforts on emergency preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

We are in a constant climate crisis. Disasters and emergencies are increasing in intensity and frequency. Persons with disabilities are 26% of the US population. Disabled people are disproportionately impacted by disasters and emergencies. We are 2-to-4 times more likely to die or be injured during a disaster.

We are all first responders when disasters strike in our localities. Let’s get together to share good practices and strategies, information and resources, and peer support before, during, and after disasters and emergencies.

[Emergency Preparedness Committee](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.april-rural.org%2Findex.php%2Fadvocacy%2Fdisaster-and-emergency-preparedness&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840333776462%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=hgnow2GGHiDpv7wSlo9PYRDDZb0cCOnbbCggV9GJgjk%3D&reserved=0)

# ***Opportunities for Engagement***

* ***Accessible Transportation Resource Center Virtual Office Hours Session:*** The Accessible Transportation Resource Center (ATRC) will host their first Virtual Office Hours Session on ***June 26, 2024,*** from 1:00PM-2:00PM Eastern Time. The session will focus on ATRC’s activities and how you can get involved. [Register for the Office Hours](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fus02web.zoom.us%2Fmeeting%2Fregister%2FtZIuceyuqjwuHdQVJ-cIXewn2zY7rO5LyVZj%23%2Fregistration&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7C6b92afc9657c4ef8946208dc7fd36c3c%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638525793226788551%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ar5fibxskCLcQIe5l5ylGxsCiO5eUqzp8n7C6OW63vg%3D&reserved=0). ASL interpretation will be provided. Please contact us at [atrc@acl.hhs.gov](mailto:atrc@acl.hhs.gov) with any other accessibility requests by Wednesday, June 19th.
* ***Survey of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Users:*** CommunicationFIRST and the OHSU UCEDD Community Partners Council want to hear from you as a first step in their national plan for AAC peer support models. The project is grounded in the lived experiences of children and adults who need or use AAC and their networks. If you are an AAC user, please consider completing this short 5-minute, 5-question survey to help us learn what AAC users have experienced with peer supports so far ➡️ [AAC User Survey](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfU57vbzxsM56i8yQ7F5O7V7OhFoiUtTlhjqa-Xppntbt1E2Q/viewform).
* ***Disaster & Emergency Query:*** ACL is seeking feedback from any CILs/SILCs that have engaged in any contracts with their state/county emergency management agencies and provision of services before, during or after disaster. We’re looking for CILs/SILCs that have developed innovative models which could be replicated by other CILs or SILCs. For more information or to share your story, please e-mail [Ed Ahern](mailto:edward.ahern@acl.hhs.gov).
* ***The Role of CILs and SILCs in Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response:*** ACL wants to better understand the role CILs, and SILCs are taking before, during or after disasters. Tell us about the disaster and/or emergency work you’re doing and how we might be able to support that work. We would also like to spotlight these programs where possible. For more information or to share your story, please e-mail [Ed Ahern](mailto:edward.ahern@acl.hhs.gov).

# ***Funding Opportunities***

* ***Funding Opportunities for Disability Employment Research Projects:*** For more information, please visit [Disability Employment Research Projects](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/funding-opportunities-disability-employment-research-projects). Proposals are due ***June 17, 2024***.
* ***Applications Open for Projects To Improve Strategies to Transition Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities to Competitive, Integrated Employment (CIE):*** For more information or to apply, please visit [Transition Youth and Adults to CIE](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/applications-open-projects-improve-strategies-transition-youth-andor). Applications are due ***July 8, 2024.***
* ***Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants:*** EPA’s new [Environmental and Climate Justice](https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-environmental-and-climate-justice-program) Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity for approximately $2 billion dollars in [Inflation Reduction Act](https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act) funds in environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges.

EPA is accepting applications on a rolling basis for $2 billion in Inflation Reduction Act funding available to support community-driven projects that build capacity for communities to tackle environmental and climate justice challenges, strengthen their climate resilience, and advance clean energy.

[Read the announcement for the NOFO](https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-2-billion-fund-environmental-and-climate-justice)

To apply for this opportunity, [view the RFA on Grants.gov](https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/351071).  Applications packages must be submitted on or before ***November 21, 2024,*** ***at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.***

For more information, please visit [Community Change Grants](https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program#Eligible) or contact [CCGP@epa.gov](mailto:CCGP@epa.gov).

# ***Sharing Your Stories***

* ***Recognizing the Olmstead Anniversary:*** In recognition of Olmstead Anniversary in June, the Office of Independent Living Programs is seeking highlights of any Olmstead Anniversary Celebrations from CILs and SILCs. If you are planning any events to mark this occasion, please reach out to your [Program Officer](https://acl.gov/programs/community-living-programs/office-independent-living-programs-contact-list).
* ***VA, Independent Living teaming up for veteran-directed care in 9 WNY counties:*** For more information, please visit [Veterans Administration and Western New York Independent Living, Inc.](https://orleanshub.com/va-independent-living-teaming-up-for-veteran-directed-care-in-8-wny-counties/)
* ***OILP is Seeking Success Stories:*** The Office of Independent Living Programs wants to highlight examples of the amazing work of our CIL and ILS colleagues! Therefore, we are asking you, our colleagues, to help us share your stories by copying your Program Officer on any press releases that are distributed. Please view the [staff contact list for the Office of Independent Living Programs](https://acl.gov/programs/community-living-programs/office-independent-living-programs-contact-list). We appreciate your support!

# ***Resources***

* ***Paula @ ILRU Blog: Why Can't We All Get Along?:*** For more information, please visit [ILRU's Blog](https://ilnet-ta.org/wp/2024/06/04/why-cant-we-all-get-along/).
* ***HUD Resource: Housing-Related Services for People Experiencing Homelessness:*** For more information, please visit [Housing-Related Services](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/hud-resource-housing-related-services-people-experiencing).
* ***A World of Opportunities: Bridging I/DD and Mental Health Systems through The Link Center:*** For more information, please visit [The Link Center](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/world-opportunities-bridging-idd-and-mental-health-systems-through).
* ***Federal Transit Administration Half-Fare Program Available for Senior Citizens:*** The Federal Transit Administration offers a half fare program that applies to adults aged 65 or older or those who have a Medicare card who live in an urban area (population of 50,000+) with public transit. For more information, please visit [NADTC's blog on half-fare requirements](https://www.nadtc.org/news/blog/understanding-half-farereduced-fare-requirements/).
* ***National Center for Diversity, Equity, and Intersectionality:*** The National Center for Disability, Equity, and Intersectionality is a coalition of professionals, individuals with disabilities, and family members of individuals with disabilities; this coalition aims to identify and reduce life-limiting inequities in healthcare, community living, and justice for people with disabilities. More information and resources are available for CILs, SILCs and DSEs at [Think Equitable](https://thinkequitable.com/) and[What We Do](https://thinkequitable.com/what-we-do/). Questions may be e-mailed to [Peter Nye](mailto:peter.nye@acl.hhs.gov).
* ***U.S. Department of Transportation FAQ:*** The U.S. Department of Transportation provides answers to [**Frequently Asked Questions on Incorporating Accessibility in Transportation Projects**](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDIsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnRyYW5zcG9ydGF0aW9uLmdvdi9ncmFudHMvZG90LW5hdmlnYXRvci9mcmVxdWVudGx5LWFza2VkLXF1ZXN0aW9ucy1pbmNvcnBvcmF0aW5nLWFjY2Vzc2liaWxpdHktdHJhbnNwb3J0YXRpb24tcHJvamVjdHMiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjQwMTA4Ljg4MTc1MTMxIn0._V9DCA0rKwY-jWi1QbXC1BZ-tPZrJYVtXCGD693jokU%2Fs%2F2575557892%2Fbr%2F234464221726-l&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cfb89953ca60b489b896508dc1926b82d%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638412901295206985%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7RkS9OD3C79dnRaiVIVYuwLf56T6tvj7buSPmLfB1Fs%3D&reserved=0) to help grant applicants understand accessibility-related requirements and best practices throughout the transportation project planning process. The FAQ provides insight on how DOT initiatives such as [ADA Transition Maps](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDMsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vbWFwcy5kb3QuZ292L3BvcnRhbC9hcHBzL3N0b3J5bWFwcy9zdG9yaWVzL2MwY2JkNGY5ZjcwMjRmMjdhMDJhNzI2Y2NkMWRhMTEyIiwiYnVsbGV0aW5faWQiOiIyMDI0MDEwOC44ODE3NTEzMSJ9.XmwPYtRSrU2mXHmcA3Kw-2ZVlMrcjHbJAO4L3OpvvGM%2Fs%2F2575557892%2Fbr%2F234464221726-l&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cfb89953ca60b489b896508dc1926b82d%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638412901295214716%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=NUVBAcpVjiAi4I34RVDIqH%2FbKoPYKf5JSVKi%2FL2V75g%3D&reserved=0), the Department’s [Disability Policy Priorities](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDQsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnRyYW5zcG9ydGF0aW9uLmdvdi9taXNzaW9uL2FjY2Vzc2liaWxpdHkvcHJpb3JpdGllcyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAxMDguODgxNzUxMzEifQ.7q9ibJma1yWVqMMt6paXQ2_rofHq1OM51AGTVwl-F2Q%2Fs%2F2575557892%2Fbr%2F234464221726-l&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cfb89953ca60b489b896508dc1926b82d%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638412901295221407%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=toQ%2B1AmA35OlK2Og7G6emRBZahyNAZ%2FzNKcSblZkSl4%3D&reserved=0), and the [Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Flnks.gd%2Fl%2FeyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDUsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LnRyYW5zcG9ydGF0aW9uLmdvdi9wcmlvcml0aWVzL2VxdWl0eS9wcm9taXNpbmctcHJhY3RpY2VzLW1lYW5pbmdmdWwtcHVibGljLWludm9sdmVtZW50LXRyYW5zcG9ydGF0aW9uLWRlY2lzaW9uLW1ha2luZyIsImJ1bGxldGluX2lkIjoiMjAyNDAxMDguODgxNzUxMzEifQ.aRSkhGpBOzNAYqrO5anUUdk2MevOmNv6e3-h8TsTEJE%2Fs%2F2575557892%2Fbr%2F234464221726-l&data=05%7C02%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cfb89953ca60b489b896508dc1926b82d%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638412901295227886%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TRr6CNePM1PrIhcWibN8%2BLmeu%2Bh19Gk4vHJNUUfNpHA%3D&reserved=0) guide can be used to advance accessibility in the many projects funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and beyond. By making information on accessibility more available, DOT aims to ensure that new investments in transportation are designed for all.
* ***HHS Provides Additional Tools to Strengthen Access to Quality Home and Community-Based Services:*** For more information, please visit [HHS Provides Tools for Accessing HCBS Services](https://acl.gov/news-and-events/announcements/hhs-provides-additional-tools-strengthen-access-quality-hcbs).
* ***Voting Accessibility Resources from ACL:*** To view ACL’s updated voting resource page, please visit [ACL's voting resource page](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Facl.gov%2Fnews-and-events%2Fannouncements%2Fvoting-resources-older-americans-and-people-disabilities&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840334245246%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=88lBjr0LMHnPtbgoDfvulZv4s9C98wknsmXzAM2FpC4%3D&reserved=0).
* ***Disability Vaccine Access Opportunities Center Resource Hub Launched:*** Resources and toolkits are available to serve people with disabilities before, during and after public health emergencies at the [DVAO hub](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fdvao.able-sc.org%2F&data=05%7C01%7CJennifer.Martin%40acl.hhs.gov%7Cbb9de1e85bc64e7d721408dbdee35cd6%7Cd58addea50534a808499ba4d944910df%7C0%7C0%7C638348840334245246%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=1Miwm6EHce9%2Fat%2F8m6lqtQCSiiiOPJkfjvSBu1ydf4M%3D&reserved=0).
* ***ACL Expands DIAL to include self-service features:*** ACL’s Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL) launched in September a new tool to help people with disabilities find local services and resources to support community living. Through [DIAL's enhanced website](https://dial.acl.gov/home) and it searchable database, users can now find the information they need, at any time of day, every day of the year. We encourage you to provide any contact information updates for your CIL through the DIAL website.

* ***Disability, Diversity, and Intersectionality in CILs:*** For research, training, and technical assistance resources, please visit [ILRU’s website](https://www.ilru.org/projects/cil-diversity).

Please share this newsletter with your staff so they can use these great resources. As always, please feel free to contact our office if you have questions.