

# State Plan For Independent Living (SPIL)

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended, Chapter 1,  
Title VII

Part B - INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Part C - Centers for Independent Living

State: Massachusetts

FISCAL YEARS: 2025-2027

Effective Date: 10/01/2024

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The mission of the Massachusetts Independent Living Network and this State Plan for Independent Living is to support individuals with disabilities to live in the community of their choice. In keeping with that mission, this SPIL focuses on four key goals that the Independent Living community identified as being essential to this mission:

- Increase access to available, affordable, accessible housing across Massachusetts
- Increase the capacity of Centers for Independent Living (CILs) to engage in transportation advocacy in Massachusetts
- Increase CIL services to underserved populations
- Increase support for CILs in Massachusetts

These goals will be met through a series of objectives. The objectives for increasing affordable housing focus on efforts to increase both the availability of housing vouchers and of accessible housing. The objectives for increasing the capacity of CILs to engage in transportation advocacy will focus on efforts to increase the number of persons with disabilities as voting members on Regional Transit Authority boards and on the formation of a new cross-CIL committee working on accessible transportation.

This SPIL also addresses the need to increase services to underserved populations of people with disabilities through staff training, and the development of outreach plans specific to the underserved populations in each CIL's service area. Finally, to increase support for CILs, CILs will participate in coordinated grassroots advocacy efforts to increase CIL funding.

All the objectives, indicators, activities, and evaluation for the above goals are addressed in Section 1.

Section 2 includes a chart of services provided by Centers for Independent Living in Massachusetts. Centers for Independent Living in Massachusetts collaborate extensively with the DSE and other organizations that support and provide services to individuals with disabilities and with each other.

This section includes a description of statewide collaborations and outreach plans. All of Massachusetts's 351 cities and towns are served through 10 Centers for Independent Living. This network is described in detail in Section 3. This section also includes minimum funding levels for Centers for Independent Living and an explanation of the distribution of funds. The Designated State Entity in Massachusetts is the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Massachusetts is a 723 State. Section 4 describes the oversight of Subchapter B, Subchapter C, and State funding. Section 5 describes the Statewide Independent Living Council. The Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council is an independent, Governor-appointed council. Section 6 provides legal certifications for the identified entities involved with authorities and responsibilities of the SPIL. Section 7 identifies the DSE assurances and expresses the administrative role and responsibilities of the DSE. Section 8 provides the SILC Assurances and Indicators of minimum compliance, detailing the functions, authorities, and requirements for operating as a SILC. Section 9 includes signatures of the SILC Chairperson, CIL Directors, and the Commissioner of the DSE agreeing to the content of this plan.

# Section 1: Mission, Goals, Objectives, and Activities

## 1.1 - MISSION

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Mission of the Independent Living Network and the SPIL

The mission of the Massachusetts Independent Living Network and this SPIL is to support the ability of individuals with disabilities to live in the community of their choice.

## 1.2 - GOALS

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Goals of the SPIL

Goal #1: Increase access to available, affordable, accessible housing across Massachusetts

Goal #2: Increase the capacity of CILs to engage in transportation advocacy in Massachusetts

Goal #3: Increase CIL services to underserved populations

Goal #4: Increase support for Independent Living Centers in Massachusetts

## 1.3 - OBJECTIVES

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Objectives for the three-year period of the plan - including geographic scope, desired outcomes, target dates, and indicators. Including compatibility with the purpose of Title VII, Chapter 1.

Goal #1: Increase access to available, affordable, accessible housing across Massachusetts

Objective #1.1: Increase in the number of available accessible, affordable apartments

### **Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #1.1.1: Number of accessible, affordable units (those where rent is based on income) as tracked by the Housing Navigator increases. Number of vouchers for persons with disabilities increases.

### **Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #1.1.1: Activities:Centers for Independent Living will, in coalition with disability partners, participate in coordinated grassroots advocacy efforts that support increases in housing vouchers, updating Architectural Access Board Regulations, and increases in accessible, affordable housing units.CILs will provide input in the MA Qualified Allocation Plan, which guides the Low

Income Housing Tax Credit Program.

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Objective #1.2: Increase in CIL consumers' access to available affordable apartments

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #1.2.1: 5% increase over 3 years in the number of IL consumers meeting their housing goals, per CIL database (WILD/MiCIL)

Indicator #1.2.2: 5% increase over 3 years in the number of IL consumers meeting their nursing home transition goals, per 704 report.

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #1.2.1: CILs will collaborate with State and local partners to build systems to better connect CIL consumers with housing.

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Objective #1.3: Architectural Access Board regulations are updated.

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #1.3.1: Architectural Access Board regulation updates are adopted by the State of Massachusetts

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Goal #2: Increase the capacity of CILs to engage in transportation advocacy in Massachusetts

Objective #2.1: Increase in the number of persons with disabilities as voting members on Regional Transit Authority boards

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #2.1.1: Increase in the number of CIL consumers serving as voting members on RTA Boards and number of CIL consumers ready to serve on RTA Boards when seats become available

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #2.1.1: Activities: Centers for Independent Living will participate in advisory groups for Regional Transit Authorities (RTAs). Each CIL will identify, recruit, and support at least one rider in their area with personal experience to take the next available seat on RTA Advisory Boards and other transportation advisory groups.

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Objective #2.2: CILs have established a committee to advance accessible, affordable transportation goals including: Increasing accessible rideshare, cab services or other on-demand transportation. Increasing the number of Regional Transportation Authorities that have accessible communication and notification systems Increasing RTA Funding

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #2.2.1: Committee for CILs engaged in accessible transportation is regularly meeting

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #2.2.1: Centers for Independent Living will collaborate across the state in advocacy and information sharing, working in coalition with disability partners, to advance accessible transportation goals listed in Objective 2.2

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Goal #3: Increase CIL services to underserved populations

Objective #3.1: Underserved people with disabilities have access to Independent Living services

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #3.1.1: 100% of CILs have an outreach plan focused on unserved and underserved consumers in their service area

Indicator #3.1.2: Increase in training to CIL staff and Board focused on serving underserved populations, particularly BIPOC populations and other multiply marginalized populations (including multiply disabled people and LGBTQ+ disabled people).

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #3.1.1: Activities: CILs draft outreach plans focusing on underserved and unserved populations in their service areas. SILC and CILs conduct regular training for staff and Boards on serving unserved and underserved populations, particularly BIPOC populations and other multiply marginalized populations (including multiply disabled people and LGBTQ+ disabled people).

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

Goal #4: Increase support for Independent Living Centers in Massachusetts

Objective #4.1: CILs have increased funding to serve consumers

**Measurable Indicators:**

Indicator #4.1.1: Increase in state funding for independent living centers by \$5 million

Indicator #4.1.2: Increase in funding for CIL nursing home transition work

**Other Objective info and/or Activities (optional):**

Objective Info #4.1.1: Activity: Centers for Independent Living will participate in coordinated grassroots advocacy efforts to increase CIL funding.

**Geographic Scope:** Statewide

## 1.4 - EVALUATION

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To facilitate the SILC's duty to monitor, review, and evaluate the implementation of the state plan the Independent Living Network of Massachusetts agrees on the following methods to review progress toward the goals and objectives in sections 1.2 and 1.3 above:

- The existing cross-CIL Housing Working Group will provide quarterly updates to the SPIL Committee.
- The newly-formed cross-CIL Transportation Advocacy committee will provide quarterly updates to the SPIL Committee.
- At least twice annually, CIL Executive Directors will review the status of the goal to increase services to underserved people with disabilities and report to the SPIL Committee.

- CIL Executive Directors will monitor the Independent Living line item and report changes to the SPIL Committee.

The SPIL Committee will track the progress of each objective by reviewing the above reports as well as data gathered from the CIL Program Performance Report (PPR), information from community surveys, and the Consumer Satisfaction Surveys. The SPIL Committee will report annually to the SILC body on the performance of the goals.

The objectives and activities in this SPIL rely on grassroots and systems advocacy. Because of this, movement toward the objectives may take the full three years before change is seen. The SPIL working groups will also be charged with evaluating and making recommendations regarding the need for adjustment in activities or to the objectives in the SPIL.

The Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council and the Centers for Independent Living collaborate on efforts to collect consumer satisfaction data. CILs distribute a consumer satisfaction survey annually and provide the data to the SILC. The SILC aggregates the data and provides a statewide consumer satisfaction report to the Centers for Independent Living and SILC members. This information serves as one data point in the evaluation of statewide Independent Living services.

## 1.4 - EVALUATION

Goal #1: Increase access to available, affordable, accessible housing across Massachusetts

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Organization primarily responsible for data collection</b>
Throughout 3 year period	Increase in the number of available accessible, affordable apartments	Number of accessible units tracked by Housing Navigator	Housing Navigator data	CIL, SILC
Throughout 3 year period	Increase in CIL consumers' access to available affordable apartments	The number of IL consumers meeting their housing and nursing home transition goals	CIL consumer database (WILD or MICIL) and 704 report	CIL, SILC
Throughout 3 year period	Architectural Access Board regulations are updated.	Change in status of Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (AAB) Regulations	State notifications	CIL

Goal #2: Increase the capacity of CILs to engage in transportation advocacy in Massachusetts

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Organization primarily responsible for data collection</b>
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<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Organization primarily responsible for data collection</b>
Throughout 3 year period	Increase in the number of persons with disabilities as voting members on Regional Transit Authority boards	Number of individuals with disabilities that are voting members of RTA boards and number of individuals identified by CILs to serve on RTA boards when spots become available	Baseline survey  Survey and community monitoring	CIL, SILC
Throughout 3 year period	CILs have established a committee to advance accessible, affordable transportation goals including: Increasing accessible rideshare, cab services or other on-demand transportation. Increasing the number of Regional Transportation Authorities that have accessible communication and notification systems Increasing RTA Funding	Number of CILs participating in transportation committee	Transportation committee reports to the SPIL Committee	CIL, SILC

**Goal #3: Increase CIL services to underserved populations**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Organization primarily responsible for data collection</b>
Throughout 3 year period	Underserved people with disabilities have access to Independent Living services	1. Outreach plan for each CIL 2. Trainings completed by each CIL 3. SILC training	Baseline survey  Survey and community monitoring	CIL, SILC

**Goal #4: Increase support for Independent Living Centers in Massachusetts**

<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Data to be collected</b>	<b>Data collection method</b>	<b>Organization primarily responsible for data collection</b>
Throughout 3 year period	CILs have increased funding to serve consumers	Change in status of CIL funding line item (4120-0200)	State notifications	CIL

## 1.5 - PART I: FINANCIAL PLAN

Sources, uses of, and efforts to coordinate funding to be used to accomplish the SPIL Goals and Objectives. Process for grants/contracts, selection of grantees, and distribution of funds to facilitate effective operations and provision of services.

Fiscal Year(s): 2025 - 2027

October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2027

Sources	Projected Funding Amounts and Uses					
	SILC Resource Plan	IL Services	General CIL Operations	Other SPIL Activities	Retained by DSE for Admin. Costs	TOTAL
Title VII Funds						
Chapter 1, Part B	\$112696	\$187950	\$60000	\$6000	\$18845	\$385491
Chapter 1, Part C	\$0	\$0	\$1731410	\$0		\$1731410
						\$2116901
Other Federal Funds						
Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	\$45000	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$45000
Social Security Reimbursement	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0
						\$45000
Non-Federal Funds						
Part B State Match	\$45000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$45000
Other State Match for Funds in SPIL	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$8000000	\$0	\$0	\$8000000
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
						\$8045000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$202696</b>	<b>\$187950</b>	<b>\$9791410</b>	<b>\$6000</b>	<b>\$18845</b>	<b>\$10206901</b>

## 1.5.2 - PART II: FINANCIAL PLANNING NARRATIVE

Sources, uses of, and efforts to coordinate funding to be used to accomplish the SPIL Goals and Objectives. Process for grants/contracts, selection of grantees, and distribution of funds to facilitate effective operations and provision of services.

In Massachusetts the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission serves as the Designated State Entity and is responsible for the oversight of state and federal funds that support Independent Living Services. A detailed description of the grant process and policies of oversight is located in sections 4.2, 4.3, and 4.7.

The following chart indicates how Independent Living funding is allocated within Massachusetts. Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B funding is primarily used to support the SILC Resource Plan and Consumer Services. Consumer Services funding is utilized to purchase home modifications, vehicle modifications, assistive technology, and other services that support individuals with disabilities in remaining in the community or moving out of an institution into the community. Utilizing Chapter 1, Part B funding for this purpose continues to be seen as an important tool in realizing the overall mission of the Independent Living Network and the SPIL.

State Plan for Independent Living goals and objectives are met with state, federal and other funding sources.

Amount Funding Source Agency (ies) Description \$155,950.50 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B CILs and DEAF, Inc. Direct services for consumers at IL Centers and DEAF, Inc. to support consumer Independent Living Goals \$60,000 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B Centers for Independent Living Support services and coordination required for the support of Independent Living Services. \$6,000 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B DEAF, Inc. Support services and coordination required for the support of Independent Living Services. \$32,000 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B Massachusetts Commission for the Blind MCB would utilize Part B funds for its direct services program to provide independent living services to those legally blind persons with the most significant secondary disabilities. The priority for MCB Part B is service provision that will enable people to remain in their homes, enhancing capacity for independent living and community integration. \$112,696.20 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B MASILCSILC Resource Plan including general operations and the support of developing, implementation, and monitoring the State Plan for Independent Living \$18,845.30 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Administrative Costs  
 \$1,731,410 Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C Centers for Independent Living Direct funding of IL services through Centers for Independent Living. \$45,000 Part B State Match Funds MASILCSILC Resource Plan \$45,000 Innovation and Expansion Funds MASILCSILC Resource Plan \$8,000,000 State Funds Centers for Independent Living Direct funding of IL services through Centers for Independent Living.

Review Status: Approved

## Section 2: Scope, Extent and Arrangements of Services

### 2.1 - SERVICES

Services to be provided to persons with significant disabilities that promote full access to community life including geographic scope, determination of eligibility, and statewide reach.

Core Independent Living Services: Information and referral

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Core Independent Living Services: IL skills training

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Core Independent Living Services: Peer counseling

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No



Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Core Independent Living Services: Individual and systems advocacy

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Transition Services: Transition from nursing homes & other institutions

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Transition Services: Diversion from institutions

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Transition Services: Transition of youth (who were eligible for an IEP) to post-secondary life

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Services related to securing housing or shelter, including services related to community group living, and supportive of the purposes of this Act and of the titles of this Act, and adaptive housing services (including appropriate accommodations to and modifications of any space used to serve, or occupied by, individuals with disabilities)

Note: CILs are not allowed to own or operate housing.

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL Other (MCB)

Rehabilitation technology

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE Other (MCB, DEAF, Inc.)

Mobility training

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Surveys, directories and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation opportunities, and accessible transportation and other support services

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Consumer information programs on rehabilitation and independent living services available under this Act, especially for minorities and other individuals with disabilities who have traditionally been unserved or underserved by programs under this Act

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Supported living

Note: CILs are not allowed to own or operate housing.

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	DSE

Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation and training in the use of public transportation vehicles and systems

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	DSE

Individual and group social and recreational services

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Training to develop skills specifically designed for youths who are individuals with significant disabilities to promote self-awareness and esteem, develop advocacy and self-empowerment skills, and explore career options

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Services for children

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Services under other Federal, State, or local programs designed to provide resources, training, counseling, or other assistance, of substantial benefit in enhancing the independence, productivity,

and quality of life of individuals with disabilities

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with disabilities for similar services in the future

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL

Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	No
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

Such other necessary services as may be necessary and not inconsistent with the Act

Is this service being provided?	Yes
Provided using Title VII, Chapter 1 Part B funds?	Yes
Provided using other funds?	Yes
Provided By	CIL DSE

## 2.1 - OPTIONAL MAP ATTACHMENT

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## 2.2 - OUTREACH TO UNSERVED AND UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

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In Massachusetts underserved individuals are individuals with disabilities who could benefit from Independent Living Center Services, but do not access them, or are not able to fully access them, due to barriers of language and culture, ethnicity or race, gender identity, geographic location, and or disability status. Massachusetts does not currently have any cities or towns that are unserved, but recognizes the above barriers impact an individual's ability to access services.

Massachusetts CILs identified both geographic areas that were underserved as well as groups of individuals who face social barriers to obtaining Independent Living services through a survey administered to CILs by the State Plan Committee. Additional input on these populations was also received during listening session for input on the State Plan and in the public comments received on the State Plan draft.

Massachusetts CILs across the state identified geographic areas that are underserved. These include rural areas in Berkshire County, Franklin County, Worcester County, Hampshire County and Hampden County. They also include areas outside of major metropolitan areas in Middlesex,

Barnstable, Essex, and Plymouth counties. Centers for Independent Living also identified areas that are isolated by lack of transportation in Essex, Norfolk, and Middlesex counties as areas that are underserved.

Across Massachusetts, CILs commonly identified underserved individuals as including (but not limited to) the following groups:

- Individuals with psychosocial disabilities, also known as psychiatric or mental health disabilities
- Individuals with substance abuse disorders
- Immigrant and non-English speaking communities, though given the regional diversity of Massachusetts, there are variations in which immigrant and non-English speaking communities are underserved in each service area. Commonly identified underserved non-English speaking communities include individuals who speak Portuguese, Arabic, and Russian.
- Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).
- BIPOC populations and other multiply marginalized populations (including multiply disabled people and LGBTQ+ disabled people).

The experience of the Centers for Independent Living in Massachusetts is that the most effective outreach is done at the community level. Increasing services to underserved populations of people with disabilities is a SPIL goal. To achieve this goal, the CILs will draft outreach plans focusing on underserved and unserved populations in their service areas and conduct regular training for staff and Boards on serving unserved and underserved populations.

During this SPIL period, the Independent Living network (CILs and the SILC) will build on collaboration with the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) and local Disability Commissions to increase connections at the community level with underserved populations. The Independent Living Network will use in-person and virtual meetings to connect Independent Living Center staff and local Disability Commissions. The IL network will seek to collaborate in statewide conferences (in-person or virtual) as well as smaller meetings (in-person or virtual) by geography and Center for Independent Living. This increased collaboration would have the objective of increasing community connections in geographic areas that are underserved and or have populations that are underserved with the goal of increasing awareness and comfort and request for services with Centers for Independent Living.

## 2.3 - COORDINATION

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Plans for coordination of services and cooperation between programs and organizations that support community life for persons with disabilities.

The CIL directors, MASILC Coordinator, and DSE meet at least six times per calendar year to discuss issues related to Independent Living Services and ensure coordination of services across the state. Massachusetts CIL directors and members of the Statewide Independent Living Council participate in coordination of services in both formal and informal ways. These are described in more detail in the following paragraphs. MASILC meets quarterly. Meetings are open to the public and include voting representatives from at least five centers as well as Ex- Officio non-voting seats from the DSE, the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, and the Massachusetts Office on Disability. MASILC members sit on advisory councils for the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and Massachusetts Commission for the Blind. Vocational Education MRC contracts with each of the CILs to provide pre-vocational services for current MRC VR Consumers. Developmental Disabilities Services Some of the CILs are involved with developmental disabilities services through their participation in their local ADRC. MRC is involved with the statewide coordination of ADRCs. DDS offers CILs opportunities to attend trainings, including on identifying individuals that would benefit from DDS services. Public Health Some of the CILs are involved with public health services through their participation in their local ADRC and MRC is involved with the statewide coordination of ADRCs. The SILC also participates as a member of the Massachusetts Health and Disability Partnership. The Massachusetts Health and Disability Partnership is a coalition of disability

advocacy organizations, state agencies, and other stakeholders working to improve the health of people with disabilities statewide, which was created by the Department of Public Health's Health and Disability Program. Mental HealthOne CIL has a Recovery Learning Community, funded by the Department of Mental Health. Other centers work very closely with Recovery Learning Communities in their service areas. HousingMany CILs work with local housing authorities, the Home Modification loan programs and other local programs that support individuals with disabilities in finding, keeping, or modifying housing in order to help individuals with disabilities live in the community. CILs also work closely with their local tenancy preservation programs. In September 2022, the CILs hired an ILC Housing Projects Coordinator using funding from the Public Health Workforce Grant. The ILC Housing Projects Coordinator has built on the existing housing work of CILs and initiated a monthly Housing Working Group meeting to increase collaboration and share resources and best practices across Centers. The ILC Housing Coordinator has built new relationships with housing stakeholders across Massachusetts to ensure more effective communication about the needs of IL consumers and create the opportunity for future collaborations. As of the drafting of this report, the IL Network is pursuing funding to sustain this initiative. TransportationThe majority of CILs participate in regional transportation groups or sit on advisory boards of regional transportation authorities. Veterans ServicesSome of the CILs are involved with veterans consumer-directed services through their participation in their local ADRC and MRC is involved with the statewide coordination of ADRCs. A number of Centers have partnered with the VA to become a Veteran-Directed Care Provider, and other Centers are pursuing this designation. Home and Community Based SupportsAll CILs consistently work with the DSEs and other state agencies to ensure that the consumer-directed PCA program, the first in the country, is reflective of independent living philosophy and is sufficiently available to CIL consumers. This includes ongoing work to increase the PCA workforce. The independent living philosophy believes that people with disabilities are the best experts on their own lives and have the right to self-direct their own services and supports and choose who provides them. Many CILs currently operate Medicaid-funded consumer-directed Personal Care Assistance programs. These PCA programs include evaluations and skills training to identify any supports or additional services needed for the consumer to manage and direct their own care needs. Several CILs work closely with the State through advisory groups for both the PCA program and Medicaid to assure that Home and Community Based supports are available as alternatives to institutional placements, including nursing facilities. CILs work together collaboratively and with state agencies to advocate for maintaining and protecting consumer control within all levels of the program and to expand levels of consumer control across other HCBS programs throughout the state. Emergency Response and PreparednessMassachusetts CILs participate in both emergency preparedness and emergency response at both a local and a statewide level. They collaborate with MEMA, the Massachusetts Office on Disability, and local emergency management directors. Formerly Incarcerated People with DisabilitiesCILs across Massachusetts collaborate with state and local organizations to support individuals with disabilities leaving incarceration and formerly incarcerated individuals with disabilities. Adlib works with the local Public Defender's office and district attorney's office. STAVROS works with Prisoner's Legal Services.

Review Status: Approved

## Section 3: Network of Centers

### 3.1 - EXISTING CENTERS

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Current Centers for Independent Living including: legal name, geographic area and counties served, and source(s) of funding. Oversight process, by source of funds, and oversight entity.

## 3.1 - EXISTING CENTERS

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Ad-Lib, Inc.

Counties Served: Berkshire

All Sources of Funding:

Title VII Chapter 1, Part B

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Title VII Chapter 1, Part C

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

State Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Other Non-Federal Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Oversight Entity: DSE

SPIIL Signatory: Yes

County Services

Berkshire (Full Services)

Boston Center for Independent Living

Counties Served: Middlesex, Norfolk, Suffolk

All Sources of Funding:

Title VII Chapter 1, Part B

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Title VII Chapter 1, Part C

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Other Federal Funds - include examples (CDC, PHWF, etc.)

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

State Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Other Non-Federal Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Oversight Entity: DSE

SPIIL Signatory: Yes

County Services

Middlesex (Full Services)

Norfolk (Full Services)

Suffolk (Full Services)

Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled

Counties Served: Barnstable, Dukes, Nantucket

All Sources of Funding:

Title VII Chapter 1, Part B

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Title VII Chapter 1, Part C

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

State Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Other Non-Federal Funds

Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE

Oversight Entity: DSE

SPIIL Signatory: Yes

County Services

Barnstable (Full Services)

Dukes (Full Services)  
Nantucket (Full Services)  
Center for Living & Working, Inc.  
Counties Served: Middlesex, Worcester  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Middlesex (Full Services)  
Worcester (Full Services)  
Disability Resource Center  
Counties Served: Essex  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Essex (Full Services)  
Independence Associates, Inc.  
Counties Served: Bristol, Plymouth  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Federal Funds - include examples (CDC, PHWF, etc.)  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Bristol (Full Services)  
Plymouth (Full Services)



MetroWest Center for Independent Living  
Counties Served: Middlesex, Norfolk  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Federal Funds - include examples (CDC, PHWF, etc.)  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Middlesex (Full Services)  
Norfolk (Full Services)  
Northeast Independent Living Program  
Counties Served: Essex, Middlesex  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Federal Funds - include examples (CDC, PHWF, etc.)  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Essex (Full Services)  
Middlesex (Full Services)  
Southeast Center for Independent Living  
Counties Served: Bristol, Plymouth  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Bristol (Full Services)

Plymouth (Full Services)  
Stavros Center for Independent Living, Inc.  
Counties Served: Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire  
All Sources of Funding:  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part B  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Title VII Chapter 1, Part C  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
State Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Other Non-Federal Funds  
Oversight Process: CIL submits PPR to DSE  
Oversight Entity: DSE  
SPIL Signatory: Yes  
County Services  
Franklin (Full Services)  
Hampden (Full Services)  
Hampshire (Full Services)

### 3.1 - EXISTING CENTERS

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#### CIL Network

Explain the criteria for defining the CIL network, bearing in mind that those CILs included in the network should be those eligible to sign the SPIL.

Massachusetts network of Centers for Independent Living is outlined in the chart above. Massachusetts currently has 10 Centers for Independent Living that serve all the communities of Massachusetts. All centers are funded with Subchapter C, Subchapter B, State, and other funding and provide the five core services to individuals with disabilities throughout their service areas. All Centers for Independent Living identified in the chart above are eligible SPIL Signatories.

### 3.2 - EXPANSION AND ADJUSTMENT OF NETWORK

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Plan and priorities for use of funds, by funding source, including Part B funds, Part C funds, State funds, and other funds, whether current, increased, or one-time funding, and methodology for distribution of funds. Use of funds to build capacity of existing Centers, establish new Centers, and/or increase the statewide reach of the Network. (Follow the instructions in Title VII, Part C of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.)

Definition of served, unserved, and underserved.

#### Definition of served, unserved and underserved

The definition of served are individuals who receive or have received services from Centers for Independent Living.

Massachusetts CILs currently serve all 351 communities in Massachusetts. There are no communities that are unserved at this time.

Underserved are individuals with disabilities who could benefit from Independent Living Center Services, but do not access or are not able to fully access them due to barriers of language and culture, ethnicity or race, gender identity, geographic location and or disability status.

Massachusetts CILs serve all 351 communities of Massachusetts. Over the last three years, Massachusetts CILs served an average of 33,500 individuals with disabilities each year over the last three years. Despite serving all communities there is still unmet IL service need.

Massachusetts CILs identified both geographic areas that were underserved as well as groups of individuals who face social barriers to obtaining Independent Living services through a survey administered to CILs by the State Plan Committee. Additional input on these populations was also received during listening session for input on the State Plan and in the public comments received on the State Plan draft.

Massachusetts CILs across the state identified geographic areas that are underserved. These include rural areas in Berkshire County, Franklin County, Worcester County, Hampshire County and Hampden County. They also include areas outside of major metropolitan areas in Middlesex, Barnstable, Essex, and Plymouth counties. Centers for Independent Living also identified areas that are isolated by lack of transportation in Essex, Norfolk, and Middlesex counties as areas that are underserved.

Across Massachusetts, CILs commonly identified underserved individuals as including (but not limited to) the following groups:

- Individuals with psychosocial disabilities, also known as psychiatric or mental health disabilities
- Individuals with substance abuse disorders
- Immigrant and non-English speaking communities, though given the regional diversity of Massachusetts, there are variations in which immigrant and non-English speaking communities are underserved in each service area. Commonly identified underserved non-English speaking communities include individuals who speak Portuguese, Arabic, and Russian.
- Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).
- BIPOC populations and other multiply marginalized populations (including multiply disabled people and LGBTQ+ disabled people).

Minimum funding level for a Center and formula/plan for distribution of funds to ensure that each Center receives at least the minimum.

The SILC and Massachusetts Centers for Independent Living determined that the minimum level of funding for a center is \$800,000. Currently all CILs in Massachusetts are funded above this level. The CILs will continue to focus on increased funding. The formula for increased funding or decreasing funding described below supports the goal of maintaining this current equilibrium.

Priorities for establishment of new CIL(s).

N/A

Action/process for distribution of funds relinquished or removed from a Center and/or if a Center closes.

- If a Center relinquishes funds in a given fiscal year, the funds are redistributed to the remaining centers according to the funding formula used to distribute new funds discussed earlier in this section.
- In the event that a Center funded by Title VII, Part B or Part C should close or no longer qualify to receive State or Federal funding, and the funds remain available to use in the state priority would be given to maintain or re-establish service through allocation of funds to an existing center or creating a Center for Independent Living to serve those areas. The following steps would be taken to ensure statewide services are maintained.
- The DSE will develop a competitive RFP process in collaboration with the Statewide Independent Living Council. This process will award the funds to a non-profit organization that meets the qualifications of an Independent Living Center to provide services to the geographic location served by the Center that closed.
- If a center closing occurs without time to complete an RFP process and award funds prior to the

end of the fiscal year, the DSE will allocate funds in the following way:

- Funds that can be rolled over to the next fiscal year will be provided to the new grantee to assist with start-up costs.
- Funds that cannot be rolled over will be allocated to geographically adjacent Centers to provide interim services to individuals with disabilities in the service area of the closed CIL.

Plan to build capacity of existing CILs and/or expand statewide reach by establishing branch offices and/or satellites of existing CILs.

Each of the 351 communities in Massachusetts is served by one of the existing Centers for Independent Living. As of the completion of this SPIL, two of the CILs have branch offices providing the five core services; Boston Center for Independent Living (downtown Boston and Dorchester), and Stavros (Springfield, Amherst, and Greenfield). One center, South East Center for Independent Living, offers services by appointment at a satellite office in New Bedford. The ability to provide services virtually has impacted the utility of branch offices. Access to assistive technology by both consumers and center staff has eased the need for branch locations.

The network of Centers for Independent Living in Massachusetts will continue to build capacity across the state by enhancing the ability of all centers to provide services to individuals with disabilities. This will be accomplished through, when funding allows, an increase in staffing, training for staff, and the use of technology to provide services. At this time there is no plan to increase the number of satellite or branch offices.

Plan/formula for distribution of new funds (Part B, Part C, one-time funds, etc.)

New money from subchapter C and State IL will be distributed among the existing CILs using the following process:

Additional monies will be split 12 ways with The Boston Center for Independent Living receiving 3 shares to address their large service area, and each of the 9 remaining CILs will receive 1 share. The process for distributing Subchapter B funds is discussed in detail in section 4.2. Increases in Subchapter B will be distributed in the following way: The DSE will retain 18% of the total of Part B funds to cover administrative costs. The SILC will retain 30% of the total of subchapter B funds. The remaining increase will be distributed equally among Centers for Independent Living and DEAF, Inc. for client services.

Plan/formula for adjusting distribution of funds when cut/reduced.

Any cuts in Title 7 Part C, or state funds allocated for Independent Living, will be applied to all CILs in the network existing at the time, using the same formula used for new funding distribution.

Plan for changes to Center service areas and/or funding levels to accommodate expansion and/or adjustment of the Network. State the needed change(s) as concretely and succinctly as possible.

No funding changes are needed at this time. There is no plan within this SPIL to change current CIL service areas or funding levels to accommodate expansion or adjustment.

Temporary Changes (if applicable) Other (if applicable)

Review Status: Approved

# Section 4: Designated State Entity

## 4.0 - DESIGNATED STATE ENTITY

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Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission will serve as the entity in Massachusetts designated to receive, administer, and account for funds made available to the state under Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B of the Act on behalf of the State.

## 4.1 - DSE RESPONSIBILITIES

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- receive, account for, and disburse funds received by the State under this chapter based on the plan;
- provide administrative support services for a program under Part B, and a program under Part C in a case in which the program is administered by the State under section 723;
- keep such records and afford such access to such records as the Administrator finds to be necessary with respect to the programs;
- submit such additional information or provide such assurances as the Administrator may require with respect to the programs; and
- retain not more than 5 percent of the funds received by the State for any fiscal year under Part B for the performance of the services outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4).

## 4.2 - ADMINISTRATION AND STAFFING: DSE ASSURANCES

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Administrative and staffing support provided by the DSE.

Administrative and staffing support provided by the DSE.

- As noted in the financial plan the DSE will utilize no more than 5% of Subchapter B funds for costs related to the administration of IL services. Quarterly financial reports to the SILC list these expenses and the overall award amount.
- The SILC does not plan to utilize DSE employees as staff for the SILC during this SPIL period.

## 4.3 - STATE-IMPOSED REQUIREMENTS

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State-imposed requirements contained in the provisions of this SPIL including:

- State law, regulation, rule, or policy relating to the DSE's administration, funding, or operation of IL programs and/or establishment, funding, and operations of the SILC
- Rule or policy implementing any Federal law, regulation, or guideline that is beyond what would be required to comply with 45 CFR 1329
- That limits, expands, or alters requirements for the SPIL

MRC imposes no requirements in the provisions of this SPIL which might limit, expand or alter the requirements for the SPIL.

## 4.4 - GRANT PROCESS & DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

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Grant processes, policies, and procedures to be followed by the DSE in the awarding of grants of Part B funds.

Instructions: Describe the processes, policies, and procedures to be followed by the DSE in the awarding of grants of Part B funds including: (all of the following are required)

Process for soliciting proposals

- The Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission distributes Part B funds through a variety of mechanisms; not all are through a grant process. The Statewide Independent Living Council receives Part B funds as part of the Resource Plan. Funds for operations of the Statewide Independent Living Council are made available through a cost reimbursement contract with the

SILC's fiscal host, the MetroWest Center for Independent Living. The fiscal host is chosen through an open competitive procurement in accordance with Massachusetts state procurement requirements. An RFR for this role was issued at the end of FFY19. The current contract is a five-year contract, renewable for one additional term. Part B funds are distributed as described in more detail in Section 5.2. Part B dollars allocated to the SILC and unused during the fiscal year are rolled over to the next fiscal year.

- The priority for MCB Part B is service provision that will enable people to remain in their homes, enhancing capacity for independent living and community integration. Part B funds allocated to Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (MCB) are transferred through an Interagency Service Agreement. MCB purchases ramps from a state-approved vendor.
- Part B funds for Independent Living services and Service Coordination by the CILs and DEAF, Inc. are distributed based on Master Service Agreements. These are issued on a non-competitive basis, as only these entities listed in the SPIL can provide Part B services with MRC's share of Part B funds. These contracts have no funds attached and are good for 10 years. The actual allocation of funds is done through authorization emails, with each CIL and DEAF, Inc. being allocated the same amount. Funds are encumbered on a Master Service Agreement, allowing multiple entities to be paid from a single encumbrance.
  - Funds are allocated for service coordination.
  - The remaining funds allow for use in three categories:
- Consumer Services
- Innovative projects that enhance Independent Living
- CILs or DEAF, Inc. can choose to use Part B funds in a combination of option 1 and 2.
- Innovative projects require a short application. (Attachment 1) and are reviewed and approved by the SILC with support from MRC.
- Centers can make the decision to transfer any funds allocated to their CIL for service coordination to consumer services.
- Part B Consumer Services Policy:
  - Consumers are allowed to receive funding from more than one category in each FFY and consumers can request funding in subsequent years as long as new consumers requesting services are given priority to be served.
  - Part B funding may be used for the following services, with the cost limitations specified below:
    - \$8,200 limit for vehicle modifications.
    - \$2,500 limit for Assistive Technology.
    - \$3,000 limit for home modification. People eligible for the Home Modification Loan Program would be ineligible for Part B unless they can show that the total cost of their modification exceeds the loan limit of the HMLP
    - \$3,000 will be the limit for ancillary services.
    - Ancillary services must be related to either:
      - a. expenses that will facilitate transition or diversion from an institution (nursing facility or shelter), and where such institutionalization is disability-related, and not solely due to financial circumstances; or,
      - b. goods and services that improve the health or safety of an eligible individual when it can be justified that these goods and services will improve the individual's ability to function, continue functioning or move towards functioning independently in family or community or to continue in employment. Staff are encouraged to explore other methods of payment for goods and services first and should document denials.
- Subchapter B funds for consumer services will be allocated to the individual CILs and DEAF, Inc. as soon as funds are available. Each CIL and DEAF, Inc. will be allocated an amount which they can use for the federal Fiscal Year in which the funds were appropriated. As of December 31st following the end of the FFY, any funds which were not encumbered by a CIL and DEAF, Inc. for a

specific client's services will be allocated to a central fund. For the subsequent year those central funds will be managed by MRC, and any CIL which has exhausted its own allocation of Part B funds may apply to use central funds for consumer services.

Development of format for proposals

For the purpose of awarding the SILC Fiscal Host, an RFP is developed by MRC and members of the SILC.

The application for Centers to use Part B funds for Innovative projects was developed by the SILC and CILs as part of the SPIL process.

Process for reviewing proposals and who reviewers will be

The process for reviewing RFPs for the SILC fiscal host is developed in collaboration with the SILC and MRC. In the last process, reviewers included staff from the DSE and the SILC.

Process for evaluating performance and compliance of grantees

Please see Section 4.5.

## 4.5 - OVERSIGHT PROCESS FOR PART B FUNDS

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The oversight process to be followed by the DSE.

Massachusetts is a 723 State. The DSE receives and distributes Subchapter C and B funding and is responsible for the oversight of Subchapter C, Subchapter B and state funding to Centers for Independent Living and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

- Oversight of Part B funds received by the SILC: MRC exercises oversight of these funds through a number of mechanisms. MRC's liaison participates in the SILC's Finance Committee, Executive Committee, and State Plan Committee, as well as in regular quarterly meetings. MRC monitors SILC billing against the SILC's approved budget and the fiscal host contract.
- Oversight of the Centers for Independent Living is carried out by the DSE through:
  - Review of quarterly service reports, including progress toward contractual outcomes.
  - Monitoring of expenditures against contract amounts.
  - Utilization and billing for Part B services
  - Review of annual Program Performance Reports
  - Site reviews for compliance with federal standards and assurances, as well as with state contractual requirements. These will continue to be conducted by the MRC, in cooperation with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), using the timelines established for federal compliance reviews.
- Oversight of DEAF, Inc. relates solely to their utilization of Part B funds for consumer services. This is carried out through review of documents submitted for individual authorizations of funds, and invoicing.
- MRC reviews quarterly reports submitted by MCB which document the services provided and related expenses charged against the Interagency Service Agreement.

## 4.6 - 722 VS. 723 STATE

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723 State

## 4.7 - 723 STATES

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Order of priorities for allocating funds amounts to Centers, agreed upon by the SILC and Centers, and any differences from 45 CFR 1329.21 & 1329.22.

- Existing Centers for Independent Living are funded at the level they were funded the previous year.
- As noted in section 3.2 funding for the Centers, will be allocated using the following formula;

New funds (subchapter C, state funds and one-time funds) will be split 12 ways with The Boston Center for Independent Living receiving 3 shares to address their large service area, and each of the 9 remaining CILs will receive 1 share. This second priority allows for both cost of living increases as well as increases to address underserved geographic areas that exist.

- Subchapter B funds are allocated as described in section 1.5 and increases are allocated as described in Section 3.2

How state policies, practices, and procedures governing the awarding of grants to Centers and oversight of the Centers are consistent with 45 CFR 1329.5, 1329.6, & 1329.22.

Awarding Grants:

The Designated State Entity (DSE), the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC), will continue to receive and administer federal funds under Section 723 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, according to current practice, including:

The director of the DSE hereby applies to award grants or assistance contracts to eligible agencies in the State that comply with indicators of minimum compliance in 45 CFR 1329.5. The grants are to be made from the funds allotted to the State for the planning, conduct, administration, and evaluation of CILs under part C, Chapter 1.

State IL contracts for existing Centers for Independent Living (CILs) will continue to be linked to existing federal grants pursuant to the provisions of regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Purchased Services.

The director of the DSE awards grants or assistance contracts under section 723 of the Act to any eligible agency that was awarded a grant under part C, Chapter 1 on September 30, 1993, unless the director makes a finding that the agency involved fails to comply with the standards and assurances set forth in section 725 of the Act or the director of the DSE and the Chairperson of the SILC, or other individual designated by the SILC to act on behalf of and at the direction of the SILC, jointly agree to another order of priorities.

In the event that a center closes the DSE will develop a competitive RFP process in collaboration with the SILC consistent with 45 CFR 1329.22.

The State assures that any assistance contracts issued to eligible agencies will not add any requirements, terms, or conditions to the assistance contract other than those that would be permitted if the assistance contract were a sub-grant consistent with grants issued by ACL under section 722 of the Act.

In administering the part C, Chapter 1 program, the State will not enter into any procurement contracts with CILs to carry out section 723 of the Act.

The oversight process to be followed by the DSE.

Monitoring

CILs in Massachusetts submit PPR reports to the DSE consistent with 45 CFR 1329.6.

The DSE assures that periodic and on-site compliance reviews will be conducted to determine CIL compliance with section 725 and CFR 45 1329.5.

- MRC the DSE will use the Overview of Compliance and Outcome Monitoring Protocol (COMP) as guidance in conducting on-site or desk reviews of Centers for Independent Living in Massachusetts.
- State and federal site reviews for compliance with standards and assurances will continue to be conducted by the MRC, in cooperation with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), using the timelines established for federal compliance reviews.

Review Status: Approved

## Section 5: Statewide Independent Living



# Council (SILC)

## 5.1 - ESTABLISHMENT OF SILC

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How the SILC is established and SILC autonomy is assured.

On December 12, 2019 Governor Baker signed Executive Order 590 revoking the previous Executive Order 373 signed by Governor Weld Sept 26, 1994 establishing the Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council. The new order changed the number of voting members and Ex-Officio members.

MASILC is not a 501c3 non-profit and does not exist within a state agency. MASILC maintains autonomy through a fiscal intermediary. The current fiscal intermediary is the MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc. (MWCIL) in Framingham, Massachusetts. MWCIL hosts the SILC offices and provides administrative and fiscal support. The process of determining the fiscal intermediary is through a competitive grant process administered by the DSE in partnership with appointed members of MASILC. The contract for providing administrative support to the SILC is updated every 10 years, most recently in December 2019.

The SILC develops and implements its own budget separate and independent from MWCIL and the state agencies. MWCIL simply acts as the SILC's fiscal intermediary. The SILC is governed by its own set of bylaws, policies, and procedures.

## 5.2 - SILC RESOURCE PLAN

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Resources (including necessary and sufficient funding, staff/administrative support, and in-kind), by funding source and amount, for SILC to fulfill all duties and authorities.

Funding sources may include "Innovation and Expansion (I&E) funds authorized by 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(18); Independent Living Part B funds; State matching funds; [state allotments of Vocational Rehabilitation funding;] other public funds (such as Social Security reimbursement funds); and private sources."

The SILC receives \$115,647.60 in Part B funding, \$45,000 in Part B State Match funding and \$45,000 in Innovation & Expansion Funds. The total of \$205,647.60 annually is sufficient to support the SILC Coordinator, training and travel for SILC members, reasonable accommodations, and communication access for SILC Meetings and public hearings for SPIL input. Funding for the SILC is in compliance with 45 CFR to carry out its statutory duties including;

- (1) The SILC shall develop the SPIL in accordance with guidelines developed by the Administrator;
- (2) The SILC shall monitor, review and evaluate the implementation of the SPIL on a regular basis as determined by the SILC and set forth in the SPIL;
- (3) The SILC shall meet regularly, and ensure that such meetings are open to the public and sufficient advance notice of such meetings is provided;
- (4) The SILC shall submit to the Administrator such periodic reports as the Administrator may reasonably request, and keep such records, and afford such access to such records, as the Administrator finds necessary to verify the information in such reports; and
- (5) The SILC shall, as appropriate, coordinate activities with other entities in the State that provide services similar to or complementary to independent living services, such as entities that facilitate the provision of or provide long-term community-based services and supports.

Process used to develop the Resource Plan.

The SILC resource plan was reviewed as part of the process of SPIL development. The SPIL writing team reviewed the current allocation and made recommendations to the DSE and Independent Living Center Directors to maintain the current level of funding for the SILC resource plan.

The SILC resource plan was increased in this State Plan, with the addition of \$45,000 in Innovation & Expansion funds. The SILC resource plan is adequate for the SILC to carry out its duties and the authorities listed below.

- (1) Work with Centers for Independent Living to coordinate services with public and private entities to improve services provided to individuals with disabilities;
- (2) Conduct resource development activities to support the activities described in the approved SPIL and/or to support the provision of independent living services by Centers for Independent Living; and
- (3) Perform such other functions, consistent with the purpose of this part and comparable to other functions described in section 705(c) of the Act, as the Council determines to be appropriate and authorized in the approved SPIL. Conducting systemic advocacy will be completed under this authority.

Process for disbursement of funds to facilitate effective operations of SILC.

MetroWest Center for Independent Living (MWCIL) serves as the fiscal agent for the SILC. This contract was awarded through a competitive RFR process by the DSE. The MASILC budget is developed and approved by the SILC membership. Funds are dispersed by the DSE to MWCIL on a cost reimbursement basis. MWCIL invoices the DSE monthly with detailed expenditures for the previous month. The DSE disburses funds to the fiscal agent in an average of 30 business days. Justification if more than 30% of the Part B appropriation is to be used for the SILC Resource Plan.

### 5.3 - MAINTENANCE OF SILC

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How State will maintain the SILC over the course of the SPIL.

Instructions: Describe the process used by the State to appoint members to the SILC who meet the composition requirements in section 705(b). Indicate who appoints members to the SILC, how the State ensures that the SILC composition and qualification requirements are met, how the chair is selected, how term limits are maintained, and how SILC vacancies are filled. Describe how the specific SILC-staffing requirements listed in the SPIL Instrument will be addressed. Concisely describe or cite relevant written policies, procedures, by-laws, technical assistance, and monitoring activities, or other practices.

Describe how the State will ensure that: (all of the following are required)

The SILC is established and operating

In Massachusetts, the Governor appoints members to the SILC. This process is administered by the Office of Boards and Commissions.

Appointments are made in a timely manner to keep the SILC in compliance with the Act

MASILC works closely with staff of this office to ensure that appointments are up to date and meet the composition requirements in section 705(b). Massachusetts accepts memberships for all boards through an online application and by recommendation from the SILC, through the Nominations Committee. MASILC works closely with the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions to ensure that all applicants for appointments to the SILC are vetted to ensure they would meet composition requirements and be able to carry out their duties as SILC members. The MASILC Nominations Committee works to ensure that appointments to the SILC include individuals who provide statewide representation and include individuals with disabilities from diverse backgrounds. This includes individuals who represent a diversity of disability as well as diversity of race and ethnicity.

The process of making recommendations to the Governor for appointment to the SILC is outlined in the Article IV, Section 8.2 of the MASILC Bylaws and further described in detail in MASILC policies. MASILC maintains a Nominations and Development Committee that oversees membership and

tracks appointments. This committee meets monthly to review applications, current appointments and term limits, and plan for outreach and training. The Nominations Committee follows the current MASILC Policy regarding the nomination process. This includes reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, and presenting selected individuals to the Executive Committee and membership for approval. Approved individuals are then sent to the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions as nominees. The Nominations Committee develops monthly updates to send to the Governor's Office on Boards and Commissions. In addition to the monthly updates, MASILC meets with staff in person or via video conferencing when there are changes in staffing, regulations or as needed. This process ensures appointments are made in a timely manner. SILC appointments are made on a rolling basis, vacancies are filled using the process described above. The SILC Chairperson is chosen at the annual meeting of the SILC, held in September, as outlined in MASILC By-laws. The Chairperson is chosen by a majority vote for a term of one year.

The SILC is organized in a way to ensure it is not part of any state agency

#### Staffing requirements

The SILC hires an independent consultant to act as its Coordinator. The Coordinator is a contracted position with the SILC's fiscal intermediary the MetroWest Center for Independent Living. The Coordinator's contract is reviewed annually by the SILC Chairperson & its fiscal intermediary to be sure that the coordinator is fulfilling the tasks outlined on the independent consultant's contract. The SILC Coordinator is directed by the SILC Chairperson. All assignments and tasks come to the coordinator directly from the chairperson who works with the Executive Committee and the other active committees of the SILC. Although the SILC is housed at the MetroWest Center for Independent Living, Inc. it is governed by its own set of bylaws and policies and procedures separate from the Center's. The SILC fiscal agent provides office space for the SILC to perform its day-to-day operations.

The SILC has the autonomy necessary to fulfill its duties and authorities, including “[working] with CILs to coordinate services with public and private entities, . . . conducting resource development, and performing such other functions . . . as the [SILC] determines to be appropriate

#### SILC organization and autonomy

As described in section 5.1, MASILC is an organization independent of a State Agency. MASILC finances are overseen by a fiscal agent and the day-to-day operations are carried out by an independent consultant who acts as the Coordinator for MASILC. MASILC membership approves the budget of the SILC and monitors expenditures. The Coordinator's work for the SILC is monitored and evaluated by the MASILC Executive Committee.

Necessary and sufficient resources are provided for the SILC Resource Plan to ensure the SILC has the capacity to fulfill its statutory duties and authorities

As described in section 5.2, the SILC resource plan provides necessary and sufficient resources to ensure the SILC has the capacity to fulfill its statutory duties and authorities. This includes sufficient funding for the Coordinator, transportation for SILC members, communication access and other reasonable accommodations to support daily operations, quarterly meetings and hearings or other forms of public meetings as necessary.

Review Status: Approved

## Section 6: Legal Basis & Certifications

## 6.1 - DESIGNATED STATE ENTITY

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The state entity/agency designated to receive and distribute funding, as directed by the SPIL, under Title VII, Part B of the Act is Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission.  
Authorized representative of the DSE Toni Wolf. Title: Commissioner.

## 6.2 - STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)

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The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) that meets the requirements of section 705 of the Act and is authorized to perform the functions outlined in section 705(c) of the Act in the State is Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council.

## 6.3 - CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CILS)

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The Centers for Independent Living (CILs) eligible to sign the SPIL, a minimum of 51% whom must sign prior to submission, are:

Ad-Lib, Inc.

Boston Center for Independent Living

Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled

Center for Living & Working, Inc.

Disability Resource Center

Independence Associates, Inc.

MetroWest Center for Independent Living

Northeast Independent Living Program

Southeast Center for Independent Living

Stavros Center for Independent Living, Inc.

### 6.4.A

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The SILC is authorized to submit the SPIL to the Independent Living Administration, Administration for Community Living.

Yes

### 6.4.B

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The SILC and CILs may legally carryout each provision of the SPIL.

Yes

### 6.4.C

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State/DSE operation and administration of the program is authorized by the SPIL.

Yes

Review Status: Approved

# Section 7: DSE Assurances

## DSE ASSURANCES

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Toni Wolf acting on behalf of the DSE Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission located at:

Street: 600 Washington Street

City: Boston

State: MA

Zip Code: 2111

## 7.1

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The DSE acknowledges its role on behalf of the State, as the fiscal intermediary to receive, account for, and disburse funds received by the State to support Independent Living Services in the State based on the plan;

## 7.2

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The DSE will assure that the agency keeps appropriate records, in accordance with federal and state law, and provides access to records by the federal funding agency upon request;

## 7.3

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The DSE will not retain more than 5 percent of the funds received by the State for any fiscal year under Part B for administrative expenses;

## 7.4

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The DSE assures that the SILC is established as an autonomous entity within the State as required in 45 CFR 1329.14;

## 7.5

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The DSE will not interfere with the business or operations of the SILC that include but are not limited to:

1. Expenditure of federal funds
2. Meeting schedules and agendas
3. SILC board business
4. Voting actions of the SILC board
5. Personnel actions
6. Allowable travel
7. Trainings

## 7.6

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The DSE will abide by SILC determination of whether the SILC wants to utilize DSE staff:

1. If the SILC informs the DSE that the SILC wants to utilize DSE staff, the DSE assures that management of such staff with regard to activities and functions performed for the SILC is the sole responsibility of the SILC in accordance with Sec. 705(e)(3) of the Act (Sec. 705(e)(3), 29 U.S.C.796d(e)(3)).

## 7.7

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The DSE will fully cooperate with the SILC in the nomination and appointment process for the SILC in the State;

## 7.8

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The DSE shall make timely and prompt payments to Part B funded SILCs and CILs:

1. When the reimbursement method is used, the DSE must make a payment within 30 calendar days after receipt of the billing, unless the agency or pass-through entity reasonably believes the request to be improper;
2. When necessary, the DSE will advance payments to Part B funded SILCs and CILs to cover its estimated disbursement needs for an initial period generally geared to the mutually agreed upon disbursing cycle; and
3. The DSE will accept requests for advance payments and reimbursements at least monthly when

electronic fund transfers are not used, and as often as necessary when electronic fund transfers are used, in accordance with the provisions of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. 1693-1693r).

## DSE SIGNATURE SECTION

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Toni Wolf

Name of DSE Director/Authorized Representative

Commissioner

Title of DSE Director/Authorized Representative

Toni A. Wolf

Electronic Signature

06/14/2024

Date

I understand that this constitutes a legal signature

Review Status: Approved

# Section 8: Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Assurances and Indicators of Minimum Compliance

## 8.1 - SILC ASSURANCES

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Steven Higgins acting on behalf of the SILC Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council located at:

Street: 1 Clarks Hill, Suite 200

City: Framingham

State: MA

Zip Code: 1702

45 CFR 1329.14 assures that:

1. The SILC regularly (not less than annually) provides the appointing authority recommendations for eligible appointments;
2. The SILC is composed of the requisite members set forth in the Act;
3. The SILC terms of appointment adhere to the Act;
4. The SILC is not established as an entity within a State agency in accordance with 45 CFR Sec. 1329.14(b);
5. The SILC will make the determination of whether it wants to utilize DSE staff to carry out the functions of the SILC;
  - The SILC must inform the DSE if it chooses to utilize DSE staff;
  - The SILC assumes management and responsibility of such staff with regard to activities and functions performed for the SILC in accordance with the Act.
6. The SILC shall ensure all program activities are accessible to people with disabilities;
7. The State Plan shall provide assurances that the designated State entity, any other agency, office, or entity of the State will not interfere with operations of the SILC, except as provided by law and regulation and;
8. The SILC actively consults with unserved and underserved populations in urban and rural areas that include, indigenous populations as appropriate for State Plan development as described in Sec. 713(b)(7) the Act regarding Authorized Uses of Funds.

## 8.2 - INDICATORS OF MINIMUM COMPLIANCE

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Indicators of minimum compliance for Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC) as required by the Rehabilitation Act (Section 706(b), 29 U.S.C. Sec 796d-1(b)), as amended and supported by 45 CFR 1329.14-1329.16; and Assurances for Designated State Entities (DSE) as permitted by Section 704(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. Sec. 796c(c)(4)), as amended.

### (a) STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL INDICATORS -

1. SILC written policies and procedures must include:
  - a. A method for recruiting members, reviewing applications, and regularly providing recommendations for eligible appointments to the appointing authority;
  - b. A method for identifying and resolving actual or potential disputes and conflicts of interest that are in compliance with State and federal law;
  - c. A process to hold public meetings and meet regularly as prescribed in 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(3);
  - d. A process and timelines for advance notice to the public of SILC meetings in compliance with State and federal law and 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(3);
  - e. A process and timelines for advance notice to the public of SILC meetings in compliance with State and federal law and 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(3);
    - i. "Executive Session" meetings should be rare and only take place to discuss confidential SILC issues such as but not limited to staffing.
    - ii. Agendas for "Executive Session" meetings must be made available to the public, although personal identifiable information regarding SILC staff shall not be included;
  - f. A process and timelines for the public to request reasonable accommodations to participate during a public Council meeting;
  - g. A method for developing, seeking and incorporating public input into, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating implementation of the State Plan as required in 45 CFR 1329.17; and
  - h. A process to verify centers for independent living are eligible to sign the State Plan in compliance with 45 CFR 1329.17(d)(2)(iii).
2. The SILC maintains regular communication with the appointing authority to ensure efficiency and timeliness of the appointment process.
3. The SILC maintains individual training plans for members that adhere to the SILC Training and Technical Assistance Center's SILC training curriculum.
4. The SILC receives public input into the development of the State Plan for Independent Living in accordance with 45 CFR 1329.17(f) ensuring:
  - a. Adequate documentation of the State Plan development process, including but not limited to, a written process setting forth how input will be gathered from the state's centers for independent living and individuals with disabilities throughout the state, and the process for how the information collected is considered.
  - b. All meetings regarding State Plan development and review are open to the public and provides advance notice of such meetings in accordance with existing State and federal laws and 45 CFR 1329.17(f)(2)(i)-(ii);
  - c. Meetings seeking public input regarding the State Plan provides advance notice of such meetings in accordance with existing State and federal laws, and 45 CFR 1329.17(f)(2)(i);
  - d. Public meeting locations, where public input is being taken, are accessible to all people with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
    - i. proximity to public transportation,
    - ii. physical accessibility, and
    - iii. effective communication and accommodations that include auxiliary aids and services, necessary to make the meeting accessible to all people with disabilities.
  - e. Materials available electronically must be 508 compliant and, upon request, available in alternative and accessible format including other commonly spoken languages.
5. The SILC monitors, reviews and evaluates the State Plan in accordance with 45 CFR



1329.15(a)(2) ensuring:

a. Timely identification of revisions needed due to any material change in State law, state organization, policy or agency operations that affect the administration of the State Plan approved by the Administration for Community Living.

6. The SILC State Plan resource plan includes:

a. Sufficient funds received from:

i. Title VII, Part B funds;

ii. If the resource plan includes Title VII, Part B funds, the State Plan provides justification of the percentage of Part B funds to be used if the percentage exceeds 30 percent of Title VII, Part B funds received by the State;

iii. Funds for innovation and expansion activities under Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. Sec. 721(a)(18), as applicable;

iv. Other public and private sources.

b. The funds needed to support:

i. Staff/personnel;

ii. Operating expenses;

iii. Council compensation and expenses;

iv. Meeting expenses including meeting space, alternate formats, interpreters, and other accommodations;

v. Resources to attend and/or secure training and conferences for staff and council members and;

vi. Other costs as appropriate.

## SILC SIGNATURE SECTION

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The signature below indicates the SILC's agreement to comply with the aforementioned assurances and indicators:

Steven Higgins

Name of SILC Chair

Steven S. Higgins

Electronic Signature

05/01/2024

Date

I understand that this constitutes a legal signature

Review Status: Approved

## Section 9: Signatures

### SIGNATURES

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The signatures below are of the SILC chairperson and at least 51 percent of the directors of the centers for independent living listed in section 6.3. These signatures indicate that the Massachusetts Statewide Independent Living Council and the centers for independent living in the state agree with and intend to fully implement this SPIL's content. These signatures also indicate that this SPIL is complete and ready for submission to the Independent Living Administration, Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The effective date of this SPIL is 10/01/2024

SILC SIGNATURE SECTION



Steven Higgins  
Name of SILC Chair  
Steven S. Higgins  
Electronic Signature  
05/01/2024  
Date  
I understand that this constitutes a legal signature

CIL SIGNATURE SECTION

Ad-Lib, Inc.  
Name of Center for Independent Living  
Sally English  
Name of CIL Director  
Sally English  
Electronic Signature  
06/20/2024  
Date

Boston Center for Independent Living  
Name of Center for Independent Living  
Bill Henning  
Name of CIL Director  
William H. Henning  
Electronic Signature  
06/18/2024  
Date

Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled  
Name of Center for Independent Living  
Coreen Brinckerhoff  
Name of CIL Director  
Coreen S Brinckerhoff  
Electronic Signature  
06/14/2024  
Date

Center for Living & Working, Inc.  
Name of Center for Independent Living  
Meg Coffin  
Name of CIL Director  
Margaret B Coffin  
Electronic Signature  
06/14/2024  
Date

Disability Resource Center  
Name of Center for Independent Living  
Lisa Orgettas  
Name of CIL Director  
Lisa orgettas  
Electronic Signature  
06/14/2024  
Date

Independence Associates, Inc. Name of Center for Independent Living Steven Higgins Name of CIL Director Steven S. Higgins Electronic Signature 06/20/2024 Date
MetroWest Center for Independent Living Name of Center for Independent Living Sadie Simone Name of CIL Director Sadie Simone Electronic Signature 06/14/2024 Date
Northeast Independent Living Program Name of Center for Independent Living Matt Pellegrino Name of CIL Director Matthew Pellegrino Electronic Signature 06/24/2024 Date
Southeast Center for Independent Living Name of Center for Independent Living Lisa Pitta Name of CIL Director Lisa Pitta Electronic Signature 06/16/2024 Date
Stavros Center for Independent Living, Inc. Name of Center for Independent Living Angelina Ramirez Name of CIL Director Angelina Ramirez Electronic Signature 06/14/2024 Date

Review Status: Approved