

STATE PLAN FOR
INDEPENDENT
LIVING (SPIL)

Revised

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

VII

SUBCHAPTER B -INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Subchapter C - Centers for Independent Living

State: Georgia

FISCAL YEARS: 2021-2023

Effective Date: October 1, 2020

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number (OMB 0985-0044). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 240 hours per response, including time for gathering and maintaining the data needed and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to receive financial assistance (Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mission of the Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc. is equal participation of people with disabilities within their communities. Continuing with this mission, the 2021-2023 State Plan for Independent Living will focus on ensuring integrated, accessible and inclusive communities are developed; providing opportunities for people with disabilities across the state of Georgia. The SPIL contains four goals to complete while keeping true to the mission:

- Educate & prepare for emergencies
- Increase opportunities to transportation
- Increase opportunities to affordable and accessible housing
- Change perceptions and increase acceptance of Georgians with disabilities

Efforts to accomplish these will be directed at people with disabilities, the public, policymakers, and the Georgia Independent Living Network (GILN).

The SPIL contains objectives and action steps directed towards the achievement of these goals.

The SILCGA utilized SILC town halls and SPIL workgroups comprised of SILCGA & CIL Directors to work on action steps. The assembly independently agrees to an integrated and community approach to support Independent Living.

The scope of services provided, outreach related to unserved and underserved populations, coordination of services and cooperation among programs and organizations to support inclusive community living are described in Section 2.

A detailed explanation of expansion of the network, minimum funding levels for CILs, and distribution of funds is included in Section 3.

Section 4 represents the Designated State Entity's (DSE) response to their administrative responsibilities related to the SPIL.

The Statewide Independent Living Council's (SILC) establishment, autonomy, resource plan, appointment process, and staffing are detailed in Section 5.

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.

The Statewide Independent Living Council, GA (SILCGA), Centers for Independent Living, and the Designated State Entity (Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency-GVRA) will continue to work with each other to coordinate efforts to maximize resources to support community life for people with disabilities. Various entities are represented on the SILC, which provides opportunities for coordination and the SILC participates in many collaborations at the state level, taking every opportunity to ensure CILs are maximized and the IL philosophy is instilled.

The back sections of the plan focus on legal assurances and authorities as well as the signatures of the SILC Chairperson and the Director of the Designated State Entity agreeing to fulfill them.

The last section includes the signatures of the SILC Chairperson and the CIL Directors agreeing to the content of the plan and authorizing its submission to the Administration for Community Living.

It is not predicted all the goals and objectives can/will be accomplished in the three years covered by this plan. But public input over the years has verified that individuals who have access to a CIL truly appreciate them and that individuals who do not have access to a CIL unquestionably want and need a CIL in their area. Therefore, the SILCGA, CIL Directors and public input, made practical decision to strengthen the IL network. These efforts will be continued until every individual with a disability in Georgia has access to a CIL and all the services the CILs provide.

SECTION 1: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

1.1 Mission

Mission of the Independent Living Network and the SPIL:

“The Mission of the Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc. is equal participation of people with disabilities within their communities.”

1.2 Goals

The following are the goals of the SILCGA and GA CIL’s for the years 2021-2023:

GOAL 1: Georgians with disabilities are prepared in emergency situation

GOAL 2: Georgians with disabilities will have adequate access to transit

GOAL 3: Georgians with disabilities have access to resources and choices for a wide range of accessible, affordable, discrimination free and safe housing

GOAL 4: Georgians with disabilities are valued in all of community life as equal citizens, perceived as equal and have equal opportunities and resources to live independently

1.3 Objectives

- GOAL 1: GEORGIANS WITH DISABILITIES ARE PREPARED IN EMERGENCY SITUATION
 - Objective 1.1: People with Disabilities in Georgia have access to services in an emergency.
 - Target Date: 10/1/20-9/30/23
 - Indicators:
 - Development of awareness campaign
 - Number of advocacy activities/trainings
 - Number of consumers reached through advocacy/educational awareness campaign
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress for 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - FY21: Develop awareness campaign for dissemination. Emergency preparedness video to be produced and shared through social media and trainings.
 - FY22: Nine advocacy activities that increase awareness on emergency preparedness resources to consumers; participate on local and state boards and emergency management entities.
 - FY23: 150 consumers receive education and resource information through awareness campaign.
 - Action Steps:

- 1.1.a The CIL's, coordinated by SILCGA, will communicate during an emergency in order to coordinate services and identify unmet needs.
 - 1.1.b At least one Center will participate in a national and/or statewide communications organization (ex. VOAD) during a GA State of Emergency and report to the GILN.
 - 1.1.c. The SILCGA will create a series of Emergency Information Posts as part of an awareness campaign that can be shared on Social Media on all IL Network Sites.
 - 1.1.d Each CIL will conduct one activity one time a year that includes information/resources regarding emergency preparedness.
 - 1.1.e CIL's will create and implement a mutual agreement to support each other during a declared emergency which may include information, resources, and finances.
- Lead Organizations: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
- o Objective 1.2: CIL's will utilize CARES Act funding to address COVID-19 related needs under the guidance of the ACL.
 - Target Date: 3/1/2020-9/30/2021
 - Indicators:
 - Purchase of pertinent supplies, equipment and assistive technology to advance health and safety to staff and consumers.
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress for FY20-FY21: 5/1/2020 – 9/30/2021
 - Action Steps:
 - 1.2.a CIL's may purchase supplies/equipment that advance the safety and health of staff/consumers before, during, and after the delivery of direct services and activities intended to address COVID-19 related needs at the CIL's. In addition, CILS may purchase supplies/equipment to address remote working, remote services and telecommunication opportunities to consumers.
 - Lead Organization: Centers for Independent Living
- o Objective 1.3: CILs to increase capacity to respond to COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Target Date: 5/1/2020-9/30/2021
 - Indicators:
 - Develop Memorandum of Agreement
 - Number of consumers assisted
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress for FY20-FY21: 5/1/2020 – 9/30/2021
 - Action Steps:
 - 1.3.a CIL's may purchase supplies/equipment that advance the safety and health of staff/consumers before, during, and after the delivery of direct services and activities intended to address COVID-19 related needs at the CIL's. In addition, CILS may purchase supplies/equipment to address remote working, remote services and telecommunication opportunities to consumers.
 - 1.3.b CILs will have addressed capacity, innovative service systems and infrastructure to better serve consumers and the community to establish and maintain operational guidelines and procedures for safety of staff and consumers.
 - 1.3.c CIL's will meet at least quarterly, to share strategies and solutions to assist all CILs to address individual CIL needs in modifying operations during pandemic. i.e. Remote working, telecommunication engagement with consumers, etc.
 - Lead Organization: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
- o Objective 1.4: CILs will use CARES Act Funds to provide services to support individuals with disabilities to reconnect with services and supports to remain safe, integrated in the community and transition into safe community-based living.

- Target Date: 5/1/2020-9/30/2021
 - Indicators:
 - Purchase of pertinent supplies, equipment and assistive technology to advance health and safety to staff and consumers.
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress for FY20-FY21: 5/1/2020 – 9/30/2021
 - Action Steps:
 - 1.4.a CILs may purchase goods and services that advance the safety and health of consumers before, during, and after the delivery of direct services and activities intended to address COVID-19 related needs.
 - 1.4.b Where able, CIL's will expand Five Core and other allowable services to address COVID-19 needs.
 - Lead Organization: Centers for Independent Living
- GOAL 2: GEORGIANS WITH DISABILITIES WILL HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO TRANSIT
 - Objective 2.1: Improve the mutual exchange of information/education between the IL network by participating in local, county, regional, and statewide transportation meetings in order to continue to address the lack of para-transit and public transportation services for persons with disabilities living in rural and remote areas.
 - Target Date: 10/1/2021-9/30-2023 (continuous)
 - Indicators:
 - Participate in 20 advocacy efforts around state on transportation issues
 - Number of consumers and stakeholders educated on transportation barriers
 - Increase outreach efforts by 3% annually
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress: 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - FY21: Participate in 20 advocacy activities and provide transportation education to 100 individuals
 - FY22: Membership on 5 transportation boards, committees and/or boards
 - FY23: Increase educational and advocacy efforts by 10%
 - Action Steps:
 - 2.1.a SILC and CIL's will utilize existing transportation planning efforts, activities, and/or initiatives to increase advocacy efforts around transportation issues for persons with disabilities at least 20 times a year.
 - 2.1.b SILC will work with at least two state entities to improve existing and/or create additional statewide transit options.
 - 2.1.c SILC will disseminate information monthly to the CIL's about transportation initiatives and participate with CIL's in providing technical assistance, research, educational and networking opportunities with stakeholders.
 - Lead Organizations: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
- GOAL 3: GEORGIANS WITH DISABILITIES HAVE ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND CHOICES FOR A WIDE RANGE OF ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, DISCRIMINATION FREE AND SAFE HOUSING.
 - Objective 3.1: Monitor housing and community development plans of Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and other state, local, and/or private housing entities to increase housing options for people with disabilities that are accessible, affordable and integrated into the community.
 - Target Date: 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - Indicators:
 - Participate in 20 advocacy activities on housing
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress for FY21-FY23

- FY21-FY23: Review and provide comment on 5 regional housing development plans
 - Develop and maintain Home Access Program contractor list(s)
 - Action Steps:
 - 3.1.a Maintain lists of contractors and actively recruit new contractors as appropriate in each region to be made available to consumers and other CIL's
 - 3.1.b Participate and advocate on at least 50% of local and state planning & policy development relating to fair housing.
 - Lead Organization: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
 - o Objective 3.2: Support the CILs in their local housing advocacy and fair housing implementation efforts.
 - Target Date: 10/1/2020-9/30/2023
 - Indicators:
 - 20 advocacy activities annually on housing.
 - Survey tool development
 - Increase number of consumers and policymakers educated on housing annually.
 - Target Progress: 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - FY21: 150 consumers educated on various housing issues; increasing annually by 3%
 - FY22: 150 individuals received education on housing related issues.
 - FY23: 30 accessibility assessments surveys completed
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Action Steps:
 - 3.2.a SILC and CIL's will have collaborated with at least 10 housing entities to promote community integration.
 - 3.2.b SILC and CIL's will have created a survey tool and will have conducted accessibility assessments for at least 10 homelessness services/systems to adequately accommodate individuals with disabilities who are experiencing homelessness.
 - 3.2.c Annual information was provided to state decision makers supporting the need for additional accessible affordable housing.
 - Lead Organization: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
 - o Objective 3.3: Georgians are informed on disability housing issues and solutions.
 - Target Date: 10/1/2021-9/30/2023
 - Indicators:
 - Number of trainings
 - Number of collected success transition stories
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress: 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - FY21: 9 trainings provided to the CILs; 10 transition stories collected.
 - FY22: 9 trainings provided to the CILs; 13 transition stories collected.
 - FY23: 9 trainings provided to the CILs; 16 transitions stories collected.
 - Action Steps:
 - 3.3.a SILC and CIL's will have collaborated on at least 9 staff trainings on current housing policies and laws affecting the state.
 - 3.3.b SILC and CIL's will have provided annual success stories that demonstrate successful transition.
- GOAL 4: GEORGIANS WITH DISABILITIES ARE VALUED IN ALL OF COMMUNITY LIFE AS EQUAL CITIZENS, PERCEIVED AS EQUAL AND HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY
 - o Objective 4.1: SILC and CIL's will promote, through the dissemination of media, the simplicity and importance of removing barriers for people with disabilities from being included in the community.
 - Target Date: 10/1/20-12/31/21

- Indicators:
 - Develop awareness campaign.
 - Number of individuals receiving educational information.
- Scope: Statewide
- Target Progress for FY21: Have video(s) concept ready for production.
- Action Steps:
 - 4.1 Produce visual and written materials that will communicate inclusivity.
- Lead organization: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living
- o Objective 4.2: SILC and CIL's will collaborate with state entities and/or other stakeholders to promote equitable employment opportunities.
 - Target Date: 10/1/20-9/30/23
 - Indicators
 - Number of individuals educated on employment barriers.
 - Number of individuals receiving educational materials.
 - Number of board, committee and/or council participation.
 - Number of attendees at annual IL Day event
 - Scope: Statewide
 - Target Progress: 9/30/21, 9/30/22 and 9/30/23
 - FY21: 50 individuals receive information on employment options annually, 40 individuals attend IL Day; provide input on equitable employment plans.
 - FY22: 50 individuals receive information on employment options annually, 40 individuals attend IL Day; provide input on equitable employment plans.
 - FY23: 50 individuals receive information on employment options annually, 40 individuals attend IL Day; provide input on equitable employment plans.
 - Action Steps:
 - 4.2.a The SILC will interact with at least 3 entities that represent persons with disabilities locally and nationally to identify pertinent issues of impact relating to employment.
 - 4.2.b The SILC, in cooperation with the CIL's, will organize IL Day, annually, to address policy issues pertinent to the disability community such as advocating for the state to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
 - Lead Organization: SILCGA, Centers for Independent Living

1.4 Evaluation

Methods and processes the SILC will use to evaluate the effectiveness of the SPIL including timelines and evaluation of satisfaction of individuals with disabilities

- Review the SPIL quarterly prior to each SILCGA/GILN board meeting(s) with executive director, CIL Rep, DSE Liaison and Board Chair. SPIL implementation will be discussed during board meetings to see if adjustments need to be made.
- SILC Director will submit monthly reports to DSE on SILC activities.
- Review annual CIL PPR reports. The CILs have agreed to provide PPR reports to the SILC at the end of each federal fiscal year.
- CILs will identify and collect stories from people with disabilities; by way of public forums and meetings when available/possible.
- CILs will conduct consumer satisfaction surveys annually; by way of survey tools i.e. Survey Monkey, paper format, or other tools deemed by each CIL.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the State Plan’s objectives’ accomplishments is the responsibility of the Monitoring Team; comprised of the SILC Director, CIL Representative, DSE Liaison and Board Chair. The SILC Monitoring Team will meet quarterly and prepare quarterly reports on progress made on implementing the SPIL. The SILC will prepare annual reports on progress made on SPIL objectives based on PPR data collected from the CILs. The evaluation plan for this SPIL is detailed in the table below.

1.5 Financial Plan

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

Due to COVID-19 all nine CIL’s have received funding under the CARES Act for part of FY2020-FY2021. With this funding, the CIL’s will distribute resources in compliance with all current federal law, regulations and guidance from ACL. CILs may work collaboratively on issues that support Georgians across established CIL service boundaries.

- CARES Act Funds Disbursements

Access 2 Independence (A2I)	\$145,023
Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network (BAIN)	\$166,419
Disability Connections (DC)	\$299,443
disABILITY LINK	\$575,051
Disability Resource Center (DRC)	\$165,927
Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE)	\$285,135
Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living (MCCIL)	\$155,496
Northwest Georgia Center for Independent Living (NWCIL)	\$162,846
Walton Options for Independent Living (WOIL)	\$314,973

- Fiscal Year(s) 2021

Sources	Projected Funding Amounts and Uses				
	SILC Resource Plan	IL Services	General CIL Operations	Other SPIL Activities	Retained by DSE for Administrative costs (applies to only Part B funding)
Title VII Funds					
Chapter 1, Part B		\$577,493			
Chapter 1, Part C			\$2,333,382		
Other Federal Funds		\$688,458			

Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation & Expansion)	\$210,129				
Social Security Reimbursement					
Other (CARES Act Funds)		\$2,270,313			
Non-Federal Funds (include the match amount in non-federal funds)		\$82,583			
State Funds	\$56,871	347,873			
Other					
Total	\$267,000	\$4,285,246	\$2,333,382		

▪ Fiscal Year(s) 2022

Title VII Funds					
Chapter 1, Part B		\$577,493			
Chapter 1, Part C			\$2,333,382		
Other Federal Funds					
Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation & Expansion)	\$210,129				
Social Security Reimbursement					
Other		\$688,458			
Non-Federal Funds		\$82,583			
State Funds	\$56,871	\$347,873			
Other					
Total	\$267,000	\$2,014,933	\$2,333,382		

▪ Fiscal Year(s) 2023

Title VII Funds					
Chapter 1, Part B (including state match)		\$577,493			

Chapter 1, Part C			\$2,333,382		
Other Federal Funds					
Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation & Expansion)	\$210,129				
Social Security Reimbursement					
Other					
Non-Federal Funds		\$688,458			
State Funds	\$56,871	\$347,873			
Other					
Total					

Description of financial plan narrative.

The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency serves as the Designated State Entity that receives the federal and state funds and provides oversight and accounting for the funds. The Independent Living (IL) Network consists of 9 Centers for Independent Living, two state funded satellite offices and the State Independent Living Council and is funded primarily from a combination of three funding sources: Title VII Funds, both Part B and Part C; Innovation & Expansion funds. Other funding sources, such as grants and donations, are available to the IL Network, but those funding sources and opportunities are not covered in this section.

The financial plan provides a combination of funds, including state matching funds, to the CILs and the SILC to enable them to achieve the goals and objectives of this SPIL. The funds are not limited to specific goals or objectives, but instead are used to maximize overall IL services for individuals with disabilities

Section 2: Scope, Extent, and Arrangements of Services

2.1 Services

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

Table 2.1A: Independent Living Services	Provided using Part B (check to indicate yes)	Provided using other funds (check to indicate yes; do not list the other funds)	Entity that provides (specify CIL, DSE, or the other entity)
Core Independent Living Services, as follows: - Information and referral - IL skills training - Peer counseling	X	X	All GA CIL's

- Individual and systems advocacy - Transition services including: ▪ Transition from nursing homes & other institutions ▪ Diversion from institutions ▪ Transition of youth (who were eligible for an IEP) to post-secondary life			
Counseling services, including psychological, psychotherapeutic, and related services	X	X	All GA CIL's
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.	X	X	All GA CIL's
Rehabilitation technology	X	X	All GA CIL's
Mobility training	X	X	All GA CIL's
Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services	X	X	All GA CIL's
Table 2.1A: Independent living services	Provided using Part B (check to indicate yes)	Provided using other funds (check to indicate yes; do not list the other funds)	Entity that provides (specify CIL, DSE, or the other entity)
Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services	X	X	All GA CIL's
Surveys, directories, and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation opportunities, and accessible transportation, and other support services	X	X	All GA CIL's, SILC
Consumer information programs on rehabilitation and IL services available under this Act, especially for minorities and other individuals with disabilities	X	X	All GA CIL's, DSE, SILC
who have traditionally been unserved or underserved by programs under this Act			

Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities	X	X	All GA CIL's, SILC
Supported living	X	X	ALL GA CIL's
Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation	X	X	All GA CIL's
Physical rehabilitation			
Therapeutic treatment	X	X	Walton, A2I, disABILITY LINK
Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices	X	X	All GA CIL's
Individual and group social and recreational services	X	X	ALL GA CIL'S
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	X	X	All GA CIL's
Services for children	X	X	All GA CIL's
Table 2.1A: Independent living services	Provided using Part B (check to indicate yes)	Provided using other funds (check to indicate yes; do not list the other funds)	Entity that provides (specify CIL, DSE, or the other entity)
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	X	X	All GA CIL's, SILC
Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with significant disabilities for similar services in the future	X	X	All GA CIL's
Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities	X	X	All GA CIL's, SILC
Such other services as may be necessary and not inconsistent with the Act	X	X	All GA CIL's, SILC

2.2 Outreach

Identify steps to be taken regarding statewide outreach to populations that are unserved or underserved by programs that are funded under Title VII, including minority groups and urban and rural populations

Definitions of "unserved" and "underserved" for outreach

Served: Service area and population of individuals with disabilities have full access to a CIL.

Underserved: Area is part of the service area of a CIL, but individuals with disabilities do not have complete access to the CIL due to the size of the service area.

Unservd: No part of the area is served by a CIL

Georgia has 159 counties; of which, 27 counties are *unserved*. The SILC and IL Network have long known all counties currently served by a CIL are underserved. Federal and State funding for Georgia's IL has remained fixed. The Centers for Independent Living have worked to expand their funding sources by seeking private sources of funding. Nevertheless, a majority of CILs rely on federal and state resources for their base funding. SILCGA has also worked to secure additional state funding for satellite office expansion. However, this funding is not guaranteed year after year. It is imperative for our IL Network to secure additional funding to ensure they can meet the needs and serve the counties and populations within their current service areas and priorities. However, as long as the IL Network continues to be underfunded, current service areas and populations will forever remain underserved.

All groups identified above as unserved/underserved live "distant" throughout the 159 Georgia counties. The CILs each have their own outreach plans. This section is to address statewide outreach efforts and is to be separate from, not inclusive of or replacing, the CILs outreach plans.

Data collected from the CIL PPR shows a large percentage of those currently being served are members of minority groups in both urban and rural areas.

Outreach activities and methods to be conducted and who will conduct each:

- CILs, being cross disability organizations, will continue interaction with appropriate community organizations specific to outreach to the visually impaired, hearing impaired and behavioral health & developmental disabled communities.
- CIL staff will collaborate with youth and family focused organizations, e.g. public schools and Parent to Parent, etc. to increase independent living opportunities to young individuals with disabilities.
- CIL staff will continue interaction with local community partners that are minority focused to educate on CIL services and encourage referrals.

Additionally, the SILC & CILs will collaborate with state agencies to maximize resources to increase independent living within their regions/communities. Outreach efforts will consist of, but not limited to, presentations, conference(s) participation, community events, virtual workshops & meetings. All outreach materials will consist of electronic & hard copy options and made available to all within and outside the IL Network through updated websites. Email lists will be maintained and information will be sent through email blast on a regular basis. An active social media presence will also be maintained in Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

2.3 Coordination

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

Coordination activities will continue to make certain support for integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities in community life. The SILC and the CILs will continue efforts to coordinate services, emergency response, and advocacy through memberships and collaborations with the following; but not limited to:

- * Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
- * Division of Aging Services
- * Department of Community Affairs
- * Georgia Advocacy Office
- * Georgia Council of Developmental Disabilities
- * National Council on Independent Living
- * Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living
- * Tools For Life
- * Adult & Disabled Resource Connection
- * GA Department of Transportation
- * Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- * GA Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Section 3: Network of Centers

3.1 Existing Centers

Current Centers for Independent Living including: legal name; geographic area and counties served; and source(s) of funding. Oversight process, by source of funds (e.g., subchapter B, subchapter C, state funds, etc.) and oversight entity.

Georgia currently has a network of nine CILs and two state funded satellite offices that cover 132 counties. All counties serviced by existing CILs provide core independent living services through state and federal funding. The remaining 27 counties do not have access to full CIL services.

Access 2 Independence, Inc. (d.b.a. Access 2 Independence / A2i (SPIL Signatory)

- Geographical Area: 9 counties; The counties make up of square miles; 2,882.17 as per the *Georgia Land area in square miles, 2010 by County*.
<https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/unitedrg>-states/quick-facts/georgia/land-area#table>
 - o 1 of the 9 Counties are classified as an Urban areas (Muscogee). The other 8 counties are Rural per the national data census. References:
https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/DataFiles/53180/25565_GA.pdf?v=0and
<https://patch.com/georgia/eastcobb/urban-vs-rural-counties-ranked-atlanta-metro>.
 - o The 9 county population at the last census 2010 was 275,013 (https://www.georgia-demographics.com/counties_by_population).
 - o Counties Served: Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion, Muscogee, Stewart, Talbot, Taylor, Webster, Quitman.
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: Access 2 Independence receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. Access 2 Independence receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B. A2i also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds. A2i receives funds from the City of Columbus for home modifications. Other contracts with different state and other organizations various programs, Assistive Technology scholarships, Durable Medical Equipment Reuse, nursing home transition and home modifications.
- Evaluation Process: Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys both external and internal, Annual Financial Audits, Board Financial Reviews. ACL PPR review, AAA annual review and DAS review.

Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network, Inc. Center for Independent Living, Inc. (BAIN, Inc.) (SPIL Signatory)

Geographical Area: 25 Counties served. The counties makeup 10,185 Square miles per the Georgia land area in square miles, 2010 by County. Per <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/united-states/quick-facts/georgia/land-area#table>

- o 2 of the 25 counties have partial Urban/Rural Areas (Dougherty & Lowndes) with the remaining 23 being rural.
- o The 25 county population at the last census 2010 was 600,056 (https://www.georgia-demographics.com/counties_by_population).
- o Counties Served: Atkinson, Baker, Berrien, Brooks, Calhoun, Clay, Clinch, Colquitt, Cook, Decatur, Dougherty, Early, Echols, Grady, Lanier, Lee, Lowndes, Miller, Mitchell, Seminole, Terrell, Tift, Thomas, Randolph, and Worth.
- **Funding Sources/Oversight Entity:** BAIN, Inc. Bainbridge is funded with Federal Part C thru ACL ILA, State and Part B thru GVRA. Part C CARES Act funds are also funded thru ACL. BAIN, Inc. receives Federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds. State funds provide for nursing home transition and Assistive Devices. Other donated funds thru local agency. BAIN, Inc. Valdosta receives State Funds via GVRA.
- **Evaluation Process:** Monthly Reviews, Monthly Reports, Surveys, both Internal and External. Annual Single Audit, Board Financial Reviews, ACL PPR Annual Review and DAS Review.

Middle Georgia Center for Independent Living, Inc. (d.b.a. Disability Connections (SPIL Signatory))

- **Geographical Area:** 12 counties; The counties make up of square miles; 3,915.44 as per the Georgia Land area in square miles, 2010 by County. <https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/unitedstates/quick-facts/georgia/land-area#table>
 - o 4 of the 12 Counties have partial Urban/Rural Areas (Macon-Bibb, Houston, Peach, Baldwin). The other 8 counties are Rural per the national data census. References: https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/DataFiles/53180/25565_GA.pdf?v=0and <https://patch.com/georgia/eastcobb/urban-vs-rural-counties-ranked-atlanta-metro>.
 - o The 12 county population at the last census 2010 was 509,270 (https://www.georgia-demographics.com/counties_by_population) which has seen a significant increase.
 - o Counties Served: Baldwin, Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson.
- **Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity:** Disability Connections receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. Disability Connections receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B. Disability Connections also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds, Older American Act. Other contracts with different state and other organizations various programs, Assistive Technology scholarships, Durable Medical Equipment Reuse, nursing home transition and home modifications.
- **Evaluation Process:** Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys both external and internal, Annual Financial Audits, Board Financial Reviews. ACL PPR review, and DAS review.

Disability Resource Center – DRC (SPIL Signatory)

- **Geographical Area:** 13 counties; The counties make up of 3514 square miles; 10 of the 13 counties are designated as rural per <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>.
 - o Counties Served: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White.
- **Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity:** DRC receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. DRC receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B.

DRC also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds, Older American Act. Other contracts with state entities provide federal funds from VR funds and Department of Consumer Affairs. State funds provide for nursing home transition and home modifications. DRC, also, receives private funds through Electric Membership Corporations within their service area.

- Evaluation Process: Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys both external and internal, Monthly Reconciliation through outside Accounting Firm, Yearly Review of Procedure by outside Accounting Firm, Board Financial Reviews, ACL PPR Review and DAS review.

Disability Action Center of Georgia, Inc., dba disABILITY LINK (SPIL Signatory)

- Geographical Area: 12 counties; The counties make up of square miles; 3686.77 as per the Georgia Land area in square miles, 2010 by County.
<https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/unitedrg>-states/quick-facts/georgia/land-area#table>
 - o 3 of the 12 Counties fit the loose definition of rural (Fayette, Rockdale, and Newton Counties). The other 8 counties have a mix of Rural and Urban populations as per the national data census. References:
https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/DataFiles/53180/25565_GA.pdf?v=0 and
<https://patch.com/georgia/eastcobb/urban-vs-rural-counties-ranked-atlanta-metro>.
 - o The 12 county population at the last census 2010 was 4,743560 (https://www.georgia-demographics.com/counties_by_population) which has seen a significant increase.
 - o Counties Served: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnet, Henry, Newton, Rockdale Counties.
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: disABILITY LINK receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. disABILITY LINK receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B. disABILITY LINK also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds, Older American Act. Other contracts with different state and other organizations support different internship programs, youth programs, ICWP services, nursing home transition and home mods.
- Evaluation Process: Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys both external and internal, Annual Single Audit, Board Financial Reviews. ACL PPR review, and DAS review.

Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE) (SPIL Signatory)

- Geographical Area: 11 counties; The counties make up of 5848 square miles; 5 of the 11 Counties are designated as rural per <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>
 - o Counties: Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, Tattnall, Toombs
 - o The 11 county population at the last census in 2010 was 691,340.
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: LIFE receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds; LIFE receives federal funds via the state (Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency) ACL ILA Part B funds; LIFE receives federal funds via Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services, which includes Money Follows the Person, Older American Act; LIFE receives state funds from Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services to provide nursing home transitions and assistive technology; LIFE receives funds through a contract with Coastal Regional Commission to collaborate with the Darien ADRC on AT demonstration/training; LIFE receives funds from United Way of the Coastal Empire for the Students for LIFE youth transition program; LIFE receives funds through a local organizational grant to provide home modifications.
- Evaluation Process: Annual entity-wide audit conduct by independent CPA, monthly reviews, monthly reports, end of year report to ACL documenting all services and community efforts provided, bi-monthly board financial reviews, GVRA reviews, DAS reviews, surveys both external

and internal

Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE) Satellite Office

- Geographical Area: 9 counties; The counties make up of 4580 square miles; 7 of the 9 Counties are designated as rural per <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>
 - o Counties: Appling, Bacon, Brantley, Candler, Charlton, Long, Pierce, Wayne, Ware
 - o The 9 county population at the last census in 2010 was 170,545.
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: LIFE receives federal funds via the state (Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency) ACL ILA Part B funds.
- Evaluation Process: Annual entity-wide audit conduct by independent CPA, monthly reviews, monthly reports, end of year report to GVRA, bi-monthly board financial reviews, surveys both external and internal

Multiple Choices Center for Independent Living Inc. SPIL Signatory

- Geographical Area: 10 counties; the counties make up 2994 square miles; 3 of the 10 are designated as rural according to; <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>
 - o Counties Served: Barrow, Clarke, Elbert*, Greene*, Jackson*, Madison, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe and Walton. *rural counties
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: MCCIL receives the following funds; federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act. MCCIL receives federal funds via state for ACL ILA Part B. MCCIL also receives federal funds via GA Department of Aging from Community Transition, Assistive Technology.
- Evaluation Process: Monthly reviews & reports, monthly reconciliation through outside Bookkeeper, External surveys, Quarterly Board Financial Review, Yearly Review of Procedure by outside Accounting firm. DAS and PPR reviews.

Northwest Center for Independent Living-NWCIL. SPIL Signatory

- Geographical Area: Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk, Walker and Whitfield
 - o 8 of the counties are considered non-rural using the link.
 - o 7 would be rural.
 - o Serve 15 counties - 5045 square miles -
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: NWCIL receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. WOIL receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B. NWCIL also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging/Older Americans Act, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds. Also receive AT funds from DAS. State funds provide for nursing home transition and home mods.
- Evaluation Process: Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys, Annual compilation, Board Financial Reviews. ACL PPR review, annual DAS review.

Walton Options for Independent Living (WOIL) (SPIL Signatory)

- Geographical Area: 16 counties; the counties make up of 6130 square miles; 11 of the 16 Counties are designated as rural per <https://www.fns.usda.gov/rural-designation>.
 - o Counties Served: Richmond, Columbia, Burke, Jenkins, Emanuel, Jefferson, Johnson, Lincoln, Hancock, Glascock, McDuffie, Screven, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington, Wilkes
- Sources of Funding/Oversight Entity: WOIL GA receives direct federal funding through the ACL ILA Part C and Part C CARES Act funds. WOIL receives federal funds via the state for ACL ILA Part B. WOIL also receives federal funds via GA Division of Aging, which includes Money Follows the Person Funds, Older American Act. Other contracts with state entities provide federal funds from

Tech Act, Chapter 2 Older Blind, VR 110 funds. State funds provide for nursing home transition and home mods. Two local foundations support operations.

- *Evaluation Process: Monthly Reviews, Monthly reports, Surveys both external and internal, Annual A 133 Single Audit, Board Financial Reviews. ACL PPR review, annual Chapter 2 and DAS review.*

Counties Unserved: Ben Hill, Bleckley, Butts, Carroll, Coffee, Crisp, Dodge, Dooly, Heard, Irwin, Jeff Davis, Lamar, Laurens, Macon, Merriweather, Montgomery, Pike, Schley, Spalding, Sumter, Telfair, Treutlen, Troup, Turner, Upson, Wheeler and Wilcox.

In the aggregate, the CILs served an average of 2,442 people per year over the last 3 years. Of this population, 61% were people with physical disabilities; 12% were people with vision impairment; 8% with mental or emotional disabilities; 9% with multiple disabilities; 9% with cognitive disabilities; 1% with hearing disabilities and 1% other or unspecified disabilities. In terms of age, the vast majority served were adults with 46% between the ages of 25 - 59 and 48 % age 60 and older. 3% of those served were between the ages of 5 - 19 and 3% were between the ages of 20 - 24. Race/ethnicity of CIL consumers served included 34% white, 61% Black, 1% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Asian and 2% unknown.

3.2 Expansion and Adjustment of Network

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 statewideness of Network

Georgia will adopt the existing findings and recommendations from the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL), that minimum annual funding for each Center for Independent Living should be set at \$570,000. Priority for establishing a new CIL(s) should be establishing a CIL to provide services to individuals located in the area with the greatest need. CIL Directors and Boards of Directors, in collaboration with SILGA, shall be responsible for planning to build capability of existing CILs and/or expand services or service areas by establishing branch offices and/or satellites of existing CILs.

Georgia's main priority is to support the needs of existing Centers for Independent Living (CIL) in their efforts to establish an effectual statewide network of Independent Living services. The priority for additional Part C dollars is to proportionally distribute additional available Part C funds to bring all the CILs to the \$570,000 Part C recommended base funding level. The counties for expansion should be provided based on the plan for increasing state fund coverage.

Part C Base and Expansion dollars

SPIL to focus on building center operational capacity of existing centers in regard to new additional Part C funding. Each CIL, with the exception of two Centers – (Atlanta Metro Disability Link and Columbus Access to Independence) to be brought up to a Part C level funding of \$570,000 to increase operational capacity and presence in current service areas as the existing funding underserves current areas. Atlanta Metro minimum base operational should be \$1,000,000 to strengthen operational capacity, and at the discretion of the Metro Center, increase geographical diversity and presence in the Atlanta Metro area. Columbus, Access To Independence minimum PART C would be \$250,000 as it serves one Part C county.

To achieve this goal any Part C fund increase that are not one time funds with expiration or part of the annual COLA, or part of increase due to population, would be proportionately distributed with 1 share per Part C county the Center serves with the Atlanta Metro CIL, disABILITY LINK counting twice in the division.

Upon achievement of all centers reaching the established base level Part C funding, and provided there is at least \$300,000 available for competition, centers serving adjacent counties through state dollars or Part B dollars may compete for the PART C funds in order to expand Part C services in the delegated counties. Competition should be limited to existing Part C centers in good standing and an application to serve not less than 3 counties nor more than 10.

Action/process for distribution of funds relinquished or removed from a Center and/or if a Center closes. Part C funds relinquished or removed from an existing CIL shall be used to redistribute funds between the remaining CIL's, until such time funds are reinstated to create a new Center from where the funds originated. In the event a Center closes, the CIL Directors and the SILC would identify what counties within the closed CIL's region could be temporarily supported by the surrounding CIL(s); and funding would be dispersed accordingly. The funding would be accounted for separately and not added to supporting CIL funding source for their current service area but in support of the originally funded counties. The CIL Directors, in collaboration with the SILC, would work together to open another CIL to support the originally designated area. Physical location of closed CIL may be problematic for surrounding CIL(s); nonetheless, all efforts will be made to momentarily absorb the selected counties and funding.

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

Should current Subchapter C funding be reduced, the CIL Directors will meet and create a suitable disbursement formula based on current facts related to identifying needs, funding allocations, geographical area, State funding for expansion of IL services in Non Part C counties and submit plan for approval to ACL. Should Subchapter B funding be reduced during the course of the plan, funds will be reduced by the percentage amount of the full grant year award.

Plan for changes to Center service areas and/or funding levels to accommodate expansion and/or adjustment of the Network.

The General Assembly's investment of \$750,000 would establish four outreach offices so that all of our state's people have the opportunity to achieve independence. Expanding outreach and itinerant services are essential for Georgia's current Centers for Independent Living to reach people with disabilities who live lives of isolation in our state's poorest and most rural counties.

1. Access2Independence in Columbus - expand IL Services in the following 5 Counties: Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Schley & Sumter. These counties are home to about 90,000 Georgians.
2. Disability Connections in Macon - expand IL Services to 13 Counties in South Central Georgia: Ben Hill, Bleckley, Coffee, Dodge, Irwin, Jeff Davis, Laurens, Montgomery, Telfair, Treutlen, Turner, Wheeler and Wilcox. Over 250,000 Georgians live in these counties.
3. disABILITY LINK in Atlanta – expand IL Services to 6 counties to the south of Metro Atlanta: Butts, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding & Upson. Nearly 200,000 Georgians live in these counties.
4. NW GA CIL in Rome - to expand IL Services to three counties to the Southwest of Metro Atlanta: Carroll, Heard & Troup. Nearly 200,000 Georgians live in these 3 counties.

Currently, Georgia has two satellite offices that are state funded; and demographic aggregate are not reflected in this plan.

Plan for one-time funding and/or temporary changes to Center service areas and/or funding levels.

Any one-time funding will be proportionately distributed to the existing CIL network following the percentages in main priority to be used to maintain and/or increase the capacity of the CILs. Temporary changes to CIL service area(s) and/or funding levels would be detailed and agreed upon by the SILC and CILs in a SPIL amendment.

3.3 CARES Act Utilization of One-Time Funds

Access 2 Independence – Funds will be used to offset payroll, provide AT to students who do not have the means to complete school work from home, purchase equipment / AT for employees to effectively work from home during shelter in place, provide food to consumers who are having trouble shopping or are unable to leave home due to COVID-19. We are also Dial-a-Ride passes to those consumers who are having trouble making it to doctor's appointments and for essential travel.

Bain, Inc. - Funds will be used to assist consumers in BAIN Bainbridge CIL 11 county service area. Services under this funding is COVID-19 related supplies, assistive technology/devices, transportation assistant to assure health equity, activities that assist individuals with disabilities to stay in or return to a community-based setting which can lead to home modifications. These services and resources will support individuals with disabilities and staff to connect with services and supports to remain safe, integrated in the community and activities intended to address COVID-19 related needs.

Disability Connections – MGCIL will be expanding improving technology systems and environmental improvements regarding safety for consumer service delivery, operations and consumers. MGCIL will also be utilizing funds for transitioning individuals and/or preventing institutionalization and congregate settings for individuals with disabilities increasing access in home environments and technology to promote independence, safety and connectivity to services, resources and family. Some funding may be utilized as stated for additional counties as slated for future expansion counties and county served by part B funding.

disABILITY LINK – Funds will be used to increase technology for reaching consumers: Staff laptops for remote work assignments, upgrading server for faster speed, upgraded phone systems that allow staff to take phones home when teleworking, upgrading video/audio technology.

Direct support technology and COVID-19 related supplies and services consumers: Accessibility and training costs, developed funding application and providing support for technology needs for consumers and training costs. Developed funding application for goods and services to address personal needs as allowed. Will be purchasing cabinets for storage of goods, and working on a small pantry with local agencies to address needs. Will purchase needed items for staff and consumers safety and well-being.

Staff: Will be relocating some staff into the "COVID-19" team to address increased needs, hiring additional staff to address increased needs for COVID-19 and employment, increased safety issues, increased outreach. This staff is only through duration of grant (voting, nursing home, community connector, employment, youth, and other needs).

Disability Resource Center – Funds will provide supports relating to deficiencies directly caused by COVID - 19 within our 13 county service area.

Living Independence for Everyone – Funds will redirect staff time to focus on shoring up community supports both through LIFE and through other community-based organizations, allocate funding to provide bridge services like food delivery and temporary utility or rent assistance that would otherwise fall outside of the standard taxonomy of services funded by CILs, and, with the largest share of the funds, investing in home modifications that keep people in their homes and out of shelters, hospitals or nursing homes. With rising death tolls in congregate settings and limited ability to effectuate any change in those environments, LIFE's focus remains on intervention and its spending priorities reflect this commitment.

Multiple Choices – Funds will be utilized by keeping consumers, staff and community in touch with one another in a safe environment, whether at home, in our office or out in the neighborhood, will invest in upgrading our consumers and MCCIL communication technology, so our consumers stay in touch with MCCIL Peer Supporters as well as their personal/private supporters, and will assist with acquiring PPE and essential food products and making

sure consumers receive it.

Northwest Georgia Center for Independent Living – Funds will be utilized in the purchase of AT for staff for remote work and AT for consumers Supplies (PPE care kits, etc.)

Staff - Any other appropriate and allowable expenses related to COVID-19 needs serving people who have disabilities.

Walton Options for Independent Living - Has established guidance based on the FAQ to provide direct support to consumers for food, PPE, medication, housing, assistive technology when it is related to COVID-19 impact. Initially, we also expended funds to sanitize our property and do a deep clean. Additionally, WOIL has been and will continue to upgrade its ability to serve consumers in various ways including remote and virtual. To do so the phone system, computers, and software licenses are being evaluated and updated. We expect to spend about 20% on upgrades. We are having to adjust our working space in order to accommodate staff, this has created a rent and utility increase as we add square footage. This accounts for about 10% of the award. WOIL has also added two temporary positions specifically to address nursing home transition and advocacy for consumers who want to assure they can live in the community and not in a nursing facility. Several staff hours have been increased to support consumers in their goals. Some of the funds are being utilized to support staff positions that were funded by awards that have been placed on hold. These staff are now working within IL.

Section 4: Designated State Entity

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) will serve as the entity in Georgia 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. (Sec. 704 (c)).

4.1 DSE Responsibilities

1. Responsible for monitoring SILC program and budget activities including reviewing monthly programmatic and expenditure reports, and participating in the quarterly evaluation of SILC/SPIL activities.
2. The DSE IL Liaison participates in GILN meetings and activities, provides technical assistance, creates and renews contracts, processes invoices for payment, reviews and recommends requests for budget revisions and facilitates the approval of such requests by the DSE.
3. Keep records and afford access to records as the Administrator finds to be necessary with respect to the programs;
4. Submit additional information or provide assurances as the Administrator may require with respect to the programs;
5. The DSE perform “administrator” duties with the completion and submission of PPR.
6. The DSE IL Liaison, provides technical assistance to the SILC and CILs and participates in the SPIL development and submission.
7. Retain not more than 5 percent of the funds received by the State for any fiscal year under Subchapter B. for the performance of the services outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4)

4.2 Grant Process & Distribution of Funds

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

The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) serves as the DSE. In carrying out its duties and functions as the DSE, GVRA assures that it will receive, account for, and disburse funds received by the State under Title VII, Part B of the Act in accordance with the approved SPIL.

The CILs prepare budget proposals for Part B funds that are submitted to the DSE for approval. The SILC is funded by a mix of I&E and State General Funds; and also submits a budget proposal to the DSE for approval. GVRA then enters into contract with the CILs and the SILC. The funds are distributed through a grant agreement and activities and responsibilities are described in their Contracts. CILs send monthly reports to meet reporting requirements and the PPR annually. The SILC fulfills its reporting requirements by submitting monthly reports and the PPR annually.

GVRA also receives and disperses State funds appropriated for CIL satellite office expansion.

4.3 Oversight Process for Subchapter B Funds

The oversight process to be followed by the DSE

The DSE has a designated a liaison to work with SILCGA to discuss expenditures, program needs, and planning.

GVRA monitors, evaluates, and reviews funds and CIL activity on Part B and State IL grants through monthly reports, financial reports as well as quarterly and annual individual program performance reports submitted by all CILs receiving funding through GVRA.

4.4 Administration and Staffing

Administrative and staffing support provided by the DSE.

The DSE provides an ex officio/liaison to sit on the SILCGA Board. The DSE staff provide administration of all contracts. The DSE will carry out the roles and responsibilities as outlined in the assurances.

DSE does not retain Independent Living federal funds for administrative costs, as the grant received is never enough to cover IL services. No DSE employees will serve as staff to the SILC.

4.5 State Imposed Requirements

State-imposed requirements contained in the provisions of this SPIL including: (45 CFR 1329.17(g)) N/A

- 4.5.1 State law, regulation, rule, or policy relating to the DSE's administration or operation of IL programs
- 4.5.2 Rule or policy implementing any Federal law, regulation, or guideline that is beyond what would be required to comply with 45 CFR 1329

4.5.3 That limits, expands, or alters requirements for the SPIL

There are no state imposed requirements on IL.

4.6 722 vs. 723 State

Check one:

- 722 (if checked, with move to Section 5)
- 723 (if checked, will move to Section 4.4)

4.7 723 States

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.

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.

Section 5: Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

5.1 Establishment of SILC

How the SILC is established and SILC autonomy is assured.

The SILCGA was incorporated as a non-profit has received 501(c)(3) status by the Internal Revenue Service, March 1996, and is independent of all state agencies, including the DSE. The SILCGA is governed by a board of directors with members appointed by the governor. The council operates under its own by-laws. The DSE recognizes the SILCGA as an independent entity in all aspects of interaction. The contract between the SILCGA and the DSE focuses on SPIL activities rather than on day-to-day SILC operations which are clearly the responsibility of the SILC Executive Director and Board Officers. Additionally, SILCGA has its own operating budget and is independently located separately from the DSE. The SILCGA is an established entity that meets the requirements of section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and is registered with the GA Secretary of State's Office.

5.2 SILC Resource plan

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

The SILCGA resource plan includes:

\$210,129 Innovation & Expansion Funds for FY 2021

\$210,129 Innovation & Expansion Funds for FY 2022

\$210,129 Innovation & Expansion Funds for FY 2023

\$xxx Other State Funds

The SILCGA will maintain staff and an office appropriate to the efforts necessary to carry out the work of the Council. The resource plan outlined above identifies the federal and state funds provided by the DSE for the operation and management of the SILCGA in accordance with its federally designated duties and authorities. The Resource Plan supports management and operation of the SILCGA, including but not limited to, staff, IT systems & services and all other routine business services, maintaining not for profit 501(c)3 status, contractual services necessary to meet the designated duties and authorities of SILCGA, board training and development, travel costs and reasonable accommodations for members & staff needed to conduct its duties and activities as authorized in section 705(c). The SILCGA is autonomous and responsible to manage its budget.

SILCGA Staff: Executive Director, one FTE; Assistant Director, one PTE; Housing Coordinator, one PTE; Marketing Coordinator, one PTE; Outreach & Networking/Employment Coordinator, one PTE; Mobility Coordinator, one PTE.

Process used to develop the Resource Plan.

The SILCGA executive director provided current expenses and projected increases to demonstrate the amount of resources essential for the SILC to carry out its responsibilities. The SILCGA resource plan will be re-evaluated each fiscal year to ensure this amount is adequate, necessary, and sufficient for the accomplishment of the SILC's duties and selected authorities.

The SILCGA and the DSE met during SPIL development and will have agreed on the amounts for the SILC Resource Plan. SILCGA and the DSE committed to use of Innovation and Expansion

funds for the SILC Resource Plan.

As an independent and autonomous organization, SILCGA is responsible for management of its budget and any expenditures. The SILCGA agrees,

- To develop, monitor, review and evaluate State Plan for Independent Living
- Have quarterly board meetings; open to the public
- Assure diverse membership on its board and provide leadership training
- Implement resource plan that support SILCGA activities
- Conduct advocacy and educational activities that support full inclusion for individuals with disabilities.
- Collaborate with CILs on expanding existing center capacity and future center expansion
- SILCGA shall not provide independent living services directly to individuals with significant disabilities or manage such services.

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

Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, the SILCGA develops a budget that the SILC Board reviews and approves. This budget is submitted along with proposed contract deliverables to the DSE; these deliverables are based on SILC responsibilities in the current SPIL and functions in 34 CFR 364.21 (g). After the contract is executed, SILCGA submits a monthly programmatic report and a monthly expense report to the DSE Liaison who reviews (a) the monthly report, which reveals progress on SPIL goals and (b) the SILC invoice. Upon approval of the invoice, the SILCGA is reimbursed for the prior month expenditures toward contract deliverables.

Programmatic reports are also sent to the Board on a monthly basis and an annual financial report(s) are provided at Board meetings.

The SILCGA contract with the DSE requires that funds are managed in accordance with state and federal regulations. The contract also requires an annual financial review conducted by a CPA firm, which forwards this review to the DSE and the Office of Audits. SILCGA contracts with a CPA firm to conduct its annual review of financial reports in accordance with state and federal requirements. Financial reports are forwarded to the DSE, the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts and to the SILC board. Additionally, the SILCGA has written financial policies and procedures that specify separation of duties and internal controls designed to assure appropriate of funds.

Payment documents will be processed by the DSE's fiscal department, with funds disbursed to the SILCGA electronically. As required by 45 C.F.R. § 1329.14, the process for disbursing of funds to facilitate SILC operations will preserve the SILC's independence and autonomy. No conditions or requirements will be included in the SILCGA Resource Plan or contract that compromise the independence and autonomy of the SILC.

5.3 Maintenance of SILC

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

All residents of the State of Georgia are eligible to apply for appointment to the SILCGA board of directors. SILCGA Nomination Applications shall be available on the SILCGA website, from the SILCGA office and whenever requested. Appointments to the Council will continue to be made by the Governor, from nominations provided by SILCGA. The SILCGA will continue to solicit applications statewide, review all applications received considering experience & expertise, un/under-represented areas of the state, and diversity. Nominees will be selected, ensuring the maintenance of a majority of people with disabilities not employed by a CIL or state agency, and

approved by the full SILCGA Board of Directors. SILCGA staff will continue to maintain records of appointments and term limits and periodically review them with the DSE and Governor's staff to ensure term records match and term limits are enforced. The SILCGA Chair is elected every three years by the voting members of the Council. The Governor's office makes final appointments to the SILCGA.

SILC Board

The SILC will have at least 1 director of a CIL on the council as a voting member. The SILCGA members and staff will describe the nomination/ appointment process to any potential candidate. A majority of members shall be persons with disabilities and not employed by any state agency or center for independent living. The Council elects the chair from among its membership. The SILC will strive to have representation from all geographic regions in the state to achieve cultural/ethnic diversity, reflective of the population of the state of Georgia. The council will include members from a wide variety of disability categories in order to ensure proper and adequate input from the disability community. If there is an opening on the council because a member is unable to continue in his/her tenure, then the SILCGA Executive Committee and Executive Director will work together to fill that opening as soon as possible. Each member is appointed for a three (3) year term; members can only serve for two (2) consecutive terms.

Staffing

When hiring a new Executive Director, the full Board must approve the hiring, but authorizes the Executive Committee to enter into a written contract of service with an approved candidate for the position of Executive Director and provide guidance to the position through the Chairperson. The Board of Directors has delegated to the Executive Director authority to employ and discharge all other staff of the corporation, whether full-time, part-time, and/or temporary. All staff must recognize that Georgia is an "at will" state, meaning either the employer (the SILCGA) or employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without cause and with or without notice. No supervisor or director is authorized to enter into anything other than an at-will employment relationship with any employee on behalf of SILCGA.

To enhance coordination and collaboration, SILCGA encourages attendance by representatives of state agencies who are non-voting ex-officio members of the Council.

The State will continue to maintain the SILCGA as it has done in the past. The DSE will continue to provide Innovation & Expansion funding and support to ensure the SILCGA is operating and maintained over the course of the SPIL. SILCGA will continue to develop its own budget and will operate with autonomy to fulfill the duties and elected authorities.

Section 6: Legal Basis and Certifications

Designated State Entity (DSE)

The state entity/agency designated to receive and distribute funding, as directed by the SPIL, under Title VII, Part B of the Act is Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency.
Authorized representative of the DSE, Chris Wells, Executive Director.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

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 Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc.

Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

The Centers for Independent Living (CILs) eligible to sign the SPIL, a minimum of 51% whom must sign prior to submission, are: Access 2 Independence, BAIN (Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network), Disability Connections, Disability Resource Center, disABILITY LINK, LIFE (Living Independence for Everyone, Multiple Choices, Northwest Georgia Center for Independence Living, and Walton Options for Independent Living

Authorizations

- The SILC is authorized to submit the SPIL to the Independent Living Administration, Administration for Community Living. **(YES/No)**
- The SILC and CILs may legally carryout each provision of the SPIL. **(YES/No)**
- State/DSE operation and administration of the program is authorized by the SPIL. **(YES/No)**

Section 7: DSE Assurances

Chris Wells, Executive Director, acting on behalf of the DSE, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Vocational Agency; located at: 200 Piedmont Avenue SE; West Tower, Suite 1408 | 14th Floor Atlanta, GA 30334. 45 CFR 1329.11 assures that,

- 7.1 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 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 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 The DSE assures that the SILC is established as an autonomous entity within the State as required in 45 CFR 1329.14;
- 7.5 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 The DSE will abide by SILC determination of whether the SILC want 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 The DSE will fully cooperate with the SILC in the nomination and appointment process for the SILC in the State;
- 7.8. The DSE shall make timely and prompt payments to Subchapter 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 Subchapter B funded SILCs an 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).

The signature below indicates this entity/agency's agreement to: serve as the DSE and fulfill all the responsibilities in Sec. 704(c) of the Act; affirm the State will comply with the aforementioned assurances during the three-year period of this SPIL; and develop, with the SILC, and ensure that the SILC resource plan is necessary and sufficient (in compliance with section 8, indicator (6) below) for the SILC to fulfill its statutory duties and authorities under Sec. 705(c) of the Act, consistent with the approved SPIL.

Name and Title of DSE director/authorized representative

Signature

Date

Electronic signature may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.

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

8.1 Assurances

Shelia Kitchens acting on the behalf of the SILC; Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc. located at: 315 W. Ponce de Leon Avenue, Suite 660. Decatur, GA 30030. 770-270-6860. Shelia Kitchens Sheliasky74@gmail.com 45 CFR 1329.14

- (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;
 - a. The SILC must inform the DSE if it chooses to utilize DSE staff;
 - b. 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.

Section 8.2 Indicators of Minimum Compliance

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(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 timeline for advance notice to the public for SILC “Executive Session” meetings, that are closed to the public, that follow applicable federal and State laws;
 - 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;

1. 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;

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

iii. 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.

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

Shelia Kitchens

Name of SILC Chairperson

Signature

Date

Electronic signature may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.

Section 9: Signatures

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 Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc. 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 October 1, 2020

SIGNATURE OF SILC CHAIRPERSON DATE

Shelia Kitchens
NAME OF SILC CHAIRPERSON

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR DATE

Kirk Holcombe
NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR
Access 2 Independence
NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR DATE

Malissa Thompson
NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR
BAIN (Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network)
NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR DATE

Michael Leverett
NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR
Disability Connections
NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Nancy Peeples

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

Disability Resource Center

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Kim Gibson

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

disABILITY LINK

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Neil Ligon

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

LIFE (Living Independence for Everyone)

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Robin Oliver

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

Multiple Choices

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Maia Santamaria

NAME OF CENTER DIRECTOR

Northwest Georgia Center for Independent Living

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Tiffany Clifford

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

Walton Options for Independent Living

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

Electronic signatures may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.