

Connecticut's Independent Living Centers

Making community living possible for Connecticut residents with disabilities, including veterans, seniors and children.

The state's five Independent Living Centers promote community living to help people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to:

- Choose for themselves where to live;
- Earn a living;
- Make decisions about their lives.

ILCs provide services that help people with disabilities:

- Develop lifelong independent living skills;
- Find and maintain housing in their community;
- Develop job readiness skills and accessing employment;
- Transition from school to work;
- Transition out of nursing facilities through Money Follows the Person (MFP) and other ILC programs.
- Gain access to services that prevent the need for placement in a nursing facility;
- Connect to appropriate technology to support independent living;
- Access health care & community supports, recreation, transportation and other resources, and services that promote independence;
- Get benefits counseling;
- Advocate for themselves and others.

Why community living?

- People prefer it.
- It costs less.
- It's a legal right.
- Everyone benefits when everyone can contribute.

FY19: more than 12,800 people contacted Connecticut's ILCs for information and referrals; 919 received core services.

CT's Independent Living Centers

Independence Unlimited
Hartford

Independence Northwest
Naugatuck

Disabilities Network of Eastern CT
Norwich

Access Independence
Stratford

Center for Disability Rights
West Haven

Connecticut Association of Centers for Independent Living www.cacil.net

Independent Living Centers are one of the most cost-effective programs the state of Connecticut supports.

Support funding of Connecticut's Independent Living Centers at \$1.3m

With a modest \$122,400 in state funding per center, the ILCs are a single point of access to services, regardless of the nature or type of disability, promoting self-reliance and independence through services that help individuals.

Budget cuts over the past decade reduced services and increased costs for the state by limiting access for the estimated 347,109 individuals living with disabilities in our state.

- The FY19-20 budget approved last spring appropriated \$612,000 for the five centers, including new money dedicated to services for the deaf.
 - The new funding of \$60,000 per center for deaf services has been welcomed and utilized, but only supports a part time position, leaving people still in need of services.
- Budget cuts over the past decade have reduced service areas and cut programs that the additional dedicated funds did not restore:
 - Cuts reduced service areas from all 169 to only 25 cities and towns;
 - Cut staff, such as community organizers who advocate for transportation, workplace incentives and removing community barriers;
 - Created waiting lists with waits as long as a full year for services;
 - Increased reliance on expensive nursing facilities for individuals who cannot get housing or other supports.
- Despite budget cuts and staff reductions, ILCs are seeing a higher volume of calls for service:
 - ILCs are the safety-net provider for social services for people with disabilities.
 - With cuts in programs -- home heating oil supports for instance -- people with any disability are now referred to ILCs.

To best serve the deaf and others with disabilities, the ILCs should be funded at \$1.3 million for FY21. A modest funding increase of \$130,000 per center would allow ILCs to better utilize existing funding and significantly expand services, including:

- Make part-time staffer dedicated to deaf services full-time;
- Expand services for the deaf;
- Support an additional staff member to provide a wide range of services to people who currently languish on waiting lists.