

Reporting Instrument

OMB Approval No.: 0985-0061
Expiration Date: January 31, 2022

CIL Program Project Performance Report

Fiscal Year: 2019

Grant #: 1904COILCL

Name of Center: Connections for Independent Living

Acronym for Center (if applicable): CIL

State: CO

Counties Served: Logan (CO), Morgan (CO), Washington (CO), Weld (CO), Yuma (CO),
Sedgwick, Phillips

SECTION 1 - GENERAL FUNDING INFORMATION

Section 725(c)(8)(D) of the Act

Indicate the amount received by the CIL as per each funding source. Enter '0' for none.

Item 1.1.1 - All Federal Funds Received

Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B	\$39726.70
Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C	\$127817.00
Title VII, Ch. 2	\$0.00
Other Federal Funds	\$22000.00
Subtotal - All Federal Funds	\$189544.00

Item 1.1.2 - Other Government Funds

State Government Funds	\$693480.00
Local Government Funds	\$0.00
Subtotal - State and Local Government Funds	\$693480.00

Item 1.1.3 - Private Resources

Foundations, Corporations, or Trust Grants	\$710.00
Donations from Individuals	\$881.00
Membership Fees	\$0.00
Investment Income/Endowment	\$5397.52
Fees for Service (program income, etc.)	\$325725.00
Other resources (in-kind, fundraising, etc.)	\$0.00
Subtotal - Private Resources	\$332714.00

Item 1.1.4 - Total Income

Total income = (Item 1.1.1)+(Item 1.1.2)+(Item 1.1.3)	\$1215740.00
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Item 1.1.5 - Pass Through Funds

Amount of other government funds received as pass through funds to consumers (include funds, received on behalf of consumers, that are subsequently passed on to consumers, e.g., personal assistance services, representative payee funds, or Medicaid funds)	\$0.00
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Item 1.1.6 - Net Operating Resources

Total Income (Item 1.1.4) <minus> amount paid out to Consumers (Item 1.1.5) = Net Operating Resources	\$1215740.00
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Item 1.2 - Resource Development Activities

Briefly describe the CIL's resource development activities conducted during the reporting period to expand funding from sources other than chapter 1 of title VII of the Act.

Connections for Independent Living has multiple revenue sources that developed extensively, despite the economic downturn. With the hiring of a permanent Executive Director with a background in funds development, the agency and its board of directors were able to assess the current revenue streams and their growth potential. The highest margins of growth were seen in the Connections fee-for-service program, Interpreting Services (ASL). Interpreting Service contracts were pursued with multiple large employers and health agencies in the Northern Colorado region. To date, Connections utilizes the services of over 60 certified ASL contractors and provides regular ASL interpreting services to large corporations, educational institutions, health providers and judicial municipalities as well as small businesses. Connections developed its annual giving program through participation in Colorado Gives Day as well as a fall 2019 fundraising Talent Show, highlighting talents from many in the community who live with disability. Connections also once again became a qualified vendor for DVR (this had lapsed in previous years.) and began participation in the SEEKS grant with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. As a SEEKS grant service provider, our agency was able to send three ILS team members to training for SSI and SSDI benefits counseling. Connections Board-led finance committee also began the process searching for an investment service provider to move reserve funding out of stagnant or low-interest savings and certificates of deposit, to more lucrative investment strategies. The executive director and finance committee wrote and adopted an UPMIFA compliant finance, investment and spending policy. These policies and strategies will vastly improve the long-term funding stability of Connections and the community it serves.

SECTION 2 - COMPLIANCE INDICATOR 1: PHILOSOPHY

Item 2.1 - Board Member Composition

Enter requested staff information in the table below:

Total Number of Board Members	Number of Board Members with Significant Disabilities
6	4

Percentage of Board Members with Significant Disabilities	67.00%
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Item 2.2 - Staff Composition

Enter requested staff information in the table below:

	Total Number of FTEs	FTEs Filled by Individuals with Disabilities	FTEs Filled by Individuals From Minority Populations
Decision-Making Staff	4	1	1
Other Staff	12	8	3
Total Number of Employees	16	9	4

Item 2.2.1 - Staff With Disabilities

Percentage of Staff Members with Significant Disabilities	56.00%
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SECTION 3 - INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES

Section 704(m)(4)(D) of the Act; Section 725(b)(2) of the Act; Section 725(c)(8)(B) of the Act

Item 3.1 - Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Period

Include Consumer Service Records (CSRs) for all consumers served during the period

	# of CSRs
(1) Enter the number of active CSRs carried over from the preceding reporting period	469
(2) Enter the number of CSRs started since the start of the reporting period	87
(3) Add lines (1) and (2) to get the total number of consumers served	556

Item 3.2 - IL Plans and Waivers

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of consumers who signed a waiver	69
(2) Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed	487
(3) Total number of consumers served during the reporting period	556

Item 3.3 - Number of CSRs Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Period

Include the number of consumer records closed out of the active CSR files during the reporting period because the individual has:

	# of CSRs
(1) Moved	27
(2) Withdrawn	8
(3) Died	6
(4) Completed all goals set	5
(5) Other	54
(6) Add lines (1)+(2)+(3)+(4)+(5) to get total CSRs closed	100

Item 3.4 - Age

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Under 5 years old	1

	# of Consumers
(2) Ages 5 - 19	12
(3) Ages 20 - 24	16
(4) Ages 25 - 59	382
(5) Age 60 and Older	143
(6) Age unavailable	2
Total number of consumers by age	556

Item 3.5 - Sex

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of Females served	313
(2) Number of Males served	243
Total number of consumers by sex	556

Item 3.6 - Race And Ethnicity

Indicate the number of consumers served in each category below. ***Each consumer may be counted under ONLY ONE of the following categories in the PPR/704 Report, even if the consumer reported more than one race and/or Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.***

	# of Consumers
(1) American Indian or Alaska Native	18
(2) Asian	0
(3) Black or African American	13
(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0
(5) White	213
(6) Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/ Latino only	119
(7) Two or more races	3
(8) Race and ethnicity unknown	190
Total number of consumers served by race/ethnicity	556

Item 3.7 - Disability

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Cognitive	109
(2) Mental/Emotional	95
(3) Physical	257

	# of Consumers
(4) Hearing	18
(5) Vision	26
(6) Multiple Disabilities	5
(7) Other	46
Total number of consumers served by disability	556

Item 3.8 - Individuals Served by County During the Reporting Period

List each county within the CIL's service area, as indicated in the CIL's application for Part C funds and the approved SPIL. Add additional rows as necessary. For each county, indicate how many individuals residing in that county were served by the CIL during the reporting period.

County Name	Number of County Residents Served
Logan, CO	5
Morgan, CO	26
Washington, CO	2
Weld, CO	522
Yuma, CO	1
Total number of consumers served by county	556

SECTION 4 - INDIVIDUAL SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Item 4.1 - Individual Services

For the reporting period, indicate in the table below how many consumers requested and received each of the following IL services.

Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Advocacy/Legal Services	68	68
Assistive Technology	12	12
Children's Services	1	1
Communication Services	8	8
Counseling and related services	10	10
Family Services	5	5
Housing, Home Modification, and Shelter Services	283	283
IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training	556	556
Information and Referral Services	1312	1312
Mental Restoration Services	1	1
Mobility training	23	23
Peer Counseling Services	155	155
Personal Assistance Services	1	1
Physical Restoration Services	0	0
Preventive Services	34	34
Prostheses, Orthotics, and other appliances	0	0
Recreational Services	26	26
Rehabilitation Technology Services	1	1
Therapeutic Treatment	2	2
Transportation Services	37	37
Youth/Transition Services	2	2
Vocational Services	40	40
Other	388	388

Item 4.2 - I&R Information

To inform ACL how many service providers engage in I&R follow-up contacts regarding access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology, please indicate the following:

The service provider did **X** / did not ___ engage in follow-up contacts with I & R recipients to document access gained to previously unavailable transportation, health care or assistive technology.

Describe how information and referral services and the other IL core and other IL services are provided to those who request such services in formats accessible to the individual requesting the services. Describe any innovative practices (not mentioned elsewhere in this report) to enhance the availability and effectiveness of IL services.

One great accomplishment of 2020 (finalized in December, but project initiated in May), was the redesign of the Connections for Independent Living website, with a fully accessible and equal access driven widget. Please go to www.connectionscolorado.org and click on the blue person icon (provided by AccessiBe) on any page to access an exhaustive list of accommodations. Our team is also in the process of designing ASL videos for each page of the website. Connections social media was able to give great focus to ASL interpreted content as well as providing options for equal access consumption to a plethora of information, communications and services. Connections make continued improvements in equal access with a large portion of our focus directed on technology related communications in order to anticipate needs for continued stay-at-home orders due to the pandemic.

Item 4.3 - Peer Relationships and Peer Role Models

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has promoted the development of peer relationships and peer role models among individuals with significant disabilities.

Providing technology and support to our peer support group leaders was a priority in 2020. This allowed these peer leaders to provide online meeting format direction to others. One of the key elements of this process was technology support to these leaders through our newly developed Tech-Mate program. This volunteer program also has a few consumers who volunteer to guide others through technology learning and challenges. A wonderful side-effect of the pandemic was the necessity for all volunteers and consumers to be in the safety of their homes, therefore breaking down geographic barriers that once seemed to interfere with this progression.

Item 4.4 - Goals Related to Increased Independence in a Significant Life Area

Indicate the number of consumers who set goals related to the following significant life areas, the number whose goals are still in progress, and the number who achieved their goals as a result of the provision of IL services.

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	In Progress
Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment	116	15	86
Communication	7	1	5
Mobility/Transportation	44	10	25
Community-Based Living	250	39	175
Educational	67	17	44
Vocational	46	4	32
Self-Care	123	45	68

Significant Life Area	Goals Set	Goals Achieved	In Progress
Information Access/Technology	83	32	38
Personal Resource Management	103	48	49
Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living	9	5	3
Community/Social Participation	89	5	73
Other	25	4	17

Item 4.5 - Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care Services, and Assistive Technology

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. Of the consumers listed in column one, indicate in column two, the number of consumers who, as a result of the provision of IL services (including the four core services), achieved access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting period. In column three, list the number of consumers whose access to transportation, health care services or assistive technology is still in progress at the end of the reporting period.

Areas	# of Consumers Requiring Access	# of Consumers Achieving Access	# of Consumers Whose Access is in Progress
(A) Transportation	3	0	3
(B) Health Care Services	1	0	1
(C) Assistive Technology	1	0	1

Note: For most IL services, a consumer's access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology is documented through his or her CSR. In some instances, consumers may achieve an outcome solely through information and referral (I&R) services. To document these instances as successful outcomes, providers are not required to create CSRs for these consumers, but must be able to report that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

Item 4.6 - Self-Help and Self-Advocacy

Briefly describe how the CIL has promoted self-help and self-advocacy among individuals with significant disabilities during the reporting period.

Through our Connections CARES outreach program, we were able to continue offering individuals the ability to access self-advocacy programs, such as our Peer Support groups, which regularly moved to a Zoom format in June of 2020. Connections also continued to provide access to digital meeting spaces through our Technology check-out program, where consumers could check out a laptop and a wi-fi hotspot (lightning pack), we also began a Tech-Mate volunteer program to support people with their technical learning process. Giving our consumers the ability to attend peer support, meetings, telehealth, education sessions and even order groceries via technology has provided a very new and real level of self-advocacy required during a pandemic. We are expanding these programs and

continue to encourage our community members to turn to Independent Living resources to keep them in the self-help loop of improved autonomy.

Item 4.7 - Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements

Please provide any additional description or explanation concerning individual services or achievements reported in Section 4, including outstanding success stories and/or major obstacles encountered.

Obvious major obstacles in serving individuals in 2020 revolved around the remote and distant work environment required to adhere to safety guidelines during the pandemic. Connections for Independent Living (CIL) staff resorted to all means of communication, including phone, printed newsletters, and of course as much technology as we could muster. Challenges in staffing also occurred as we ramped up to serve as a data source for the municipalities we serve, giving information and direction on the wellbeing of those with disabilities in the community as regular services were cut-off. More will be reported on these efforts in our CARES Act report per the instructions of ACL. Offering a one-per week tented outreach in our main office parking lot provided people who could access transportation to our office the ability to have direct contact with an Independent Living Specialist or a Housing coordinator. All other delivery methods were via phone and online meeting spaces.

SECTION 5 - PROVISION OF SERVICES

Item 5.1 - Compliance Indicator 2: Provision of Services on a Cross-Disability Basis

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that IL services are provided to eligible individuals with a diversity of significant disabilities and individuals who are members of populations that are unserved or underserved, without restrictions based on the particular type or types of significant disability and in a manner that is neither targeted nor limited to a particular type of significant disability.

Connections is able to provide services to individuals of diverse ability through partnership with other community based organizations, such as ARC Weld County, United Way and Envision (serving those with cognitive disabilities), and others. Though outreach with these other CBO's has been a collective effort in years past, we found that during the early days of the pandemic, Connections was able to adapt more quickly to a remote service model, therefore we needed to look to unorthodox ways to reach more people who were underserved. Our team began making inroads with providing increased stakeholder information to all the chamber of commerce partners and municipal leaders in our 7 county area. We found that chamber of commerce partners were able to dispense information to a larger audience. We began calling these new partners, "allies" rather than advocates. These new allies were agencies or organizations that could allow us to offer our IL services to a broader outreach. This ability allowed us to reach deeper into the community of those who were in need of service, or could inform how we delivered services.

Item 5.2 - Alternative Formats

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured the availability in alternative formats of all of its written policies and materials and IL services, as appropriate.

Connections offers all written policies and materials and IL services in multiple formats, including languages, ASL, braille and malleable accessible digital formatting via our website through a paid service via AccessiBe. Connections is willing to readily provide any accommodation requested that we do not already provide. Connections provides nearly infallible Virtual Relay Interface for all our ASL interpretation services and in 2021 will have a fully dedicated professionally outfitted studio to provide services throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Item 5.3 - Equal Access

(A) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured equal access of individuals with significant disabilities, including communication and physical access, to the center's services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities, whether publicly or privately funded. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access is provided to any individual with a significant disability regardless of the individual's type of significant disability.

One great accomplishment of 2020 (finalized in December, but project initiated in May), was the redesign of the Connections for Independent Living website, with a fully accessible and equal access driven widget. Please go to www.connectionscolorado.org and click on the blue person icon (provided by AccessiBe) on any page to access an exhaustive list of accommodations. Our team is also in the process of designing ASL videos for each page of the website. Connections social media was able to give great focus to ASL interpreted content as well as providing options for equal access consumption to a plethora of information, communications and services. Connections make continued improvements in equal access with a large portion of our focus directed on technology related communications in order to anticipate needs for continued stay-at-home orders due to the pandemic.

(B) Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has advocated for and conducted activities that promote the equal access to all services, programs, activities, resources, and facilities in society, whether public or private, and regardless of funding source, for individuals with significant disabilities. Equal access, for the purposes of this indicator, means that the same access provided to individuals without disabilities is provided in the center's service area to individuals with significant disabilities.

During the 2020 Election Connections made all ASL interpretation free to any non-partisan group, voter information function, voter forum, and candidate forum to the entire state of Colorado in order to encourage and promote equal access. Connections leadership worked with other CBO's to advocate for voter inclusion and equal access to those with disabilities in northeastern Colorado which ensured that county officials included those with disabilities in voter access planning.

Another way that Connections ensured and advocated for equal access was through continual informational portals asking community members how we could accommodate their needs. We learned through this process that a person with a visual acuity disability was denied access to an accommodation at a large concert venue. This allowed Connections the ability to open a dialogue with the venue and advise them on best practices for accessibility and equal access to the venue for individuals with disabilities.

Connections also spent a large part of 2020 redesigning our branding, which included a focus group of peoples with a variety of disabilities in order to assist us in making good decisions that were based in a desire to give equal access to all community members. These re-branding efforts include sensitivity to visual, hearing, mobility, educational, cognitive and other disabilities in all our signage, logo usage, digital delivery, telecommunications, and remains flexible to new accommodations in the future in order to give the best access to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Item 5.4 - Consumer Information

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL has ensured that consumers have the opportunity to develop and achieve their goals (either with or without an ILP) and that the consumer has the opportunity to express satisfaction with the center and such consumer satisfaction results are evaluated by the center.

In other times, ones where we could see people face-to-face, we would schedule regular appointments to accommodate goal markers for each consumer. With those abilities removed during the pandemic, our Connections team made immediate pivots to ensure that consumers were kept on track. In the

early months, our agency made most of this outreach available via phone, but as we became assured in how we would set up remote services, we gave options of Zoom and other video services to meet virtually with consumers. Providing consumers with technology when they did not have those resources was done through the Technology check-out borrowing program as well utilizing local library technology lending services as well as our Computer voucher program to get technology permanently established with consumers.

Item 5.5 - Consumer Service Record Requirements

Briefly describe how, during the reporting period, the CIL ensured that each consumer's CSR contains all of the required information.

In late 2020 Connections for Independent Living revised the software used to compile and retain our Consumer Service Records with the latest version of MiCIL software. Using an older version of the MiCIL software kept records orderly, but data queries remained challenging. Connections uses a continuous method of analyzing data to better serve our consumers and found that the upgraded version of MiCIL allowed for easier access to aggregated consumer data in order to best inform areas of need and growth opportunity. ILS members utilize MiCIL software for all consumer records keeping. We have integrated DocuSign with MiCIL to obtain signatures or waivers from consumers as well. With the work from home conditions continuing for the foreseeable future, we are grateful to this cloud based application in order to securely and confidentially store and access Consumer Service Records.

Item 5.6 - Community Activities

Community Activities Table

In the table below, summarize the community activities involving the CIL's staff and board members during the reporting period. For each activity, identify the primary disability issue(s) addressed as well as the type of activity conducted. Describe the primary objective(s) and outcome(s) for each activity. Add more rows as necessary.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Community Outreach/State Advocacy	Hosted State Independent Living Council quarterly meeting	12	To bring the SILC board to northeastern Colorado to provide in-person platform for advocacy for IL services	18 community members attended with many utilizing the public comment section of the board meeting to discuss local challenges

Issue Area	Activity Type	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcomes(s)
Connections CARES Outreach issue of limited service availability	Parking lot outreach services	60	Provide in-person outreach services for unhoused community member sand those with limited phone or technology resources to provide information on emergency Section 8 housing vouchers, food assistance, and PPE	Over 50 community members were served in this capacity, giving them resources such as the Computer Voucher and technology check-out programs to assist with connectivity to virtual IL services
Lack of technology services due to pademic	Created the Technology Check out program	250	Provided disabled members of the community with Chrome book laptops and lightning pack wi-fi via Verizon to use in their homes. Each check-out period lasting 30 days. Provided tech support to all through a Tech-mate volunteer program navigator.	Connected more than 30 people with technology while waiting for more permanent solutions to tech-desert issues and isolation. Created a new volunteer opportunity for the organization

Item 5.7 - Description of Community Activities

For the community activities mentioned above, provide additional details such as the role of the CIL staff board members and/or consumers, names of any partner organizations and further descriptions of the specific activities, services and benefits.

During these community activities Connections led the way in outreach and contact-less delivery of services and programs to our consumers. Each community activity was conducted with utmost safety protocol to reduce risk of virus exposure to staff and consumers. Connections worked with a local computer vendor, Greeley Computer Services to obtain technology for consumers. Connections also coordinated outreach efforts with the municipalities, chambers of commerce, Weld Food Bank, 65+Rides senior services, Weld Community Foundation, United Way of Weld County, Colorado Community of the Deaf and Blind, Weld Department of Human Services and the Greeley Downtown Development Authority.

SECTION 6 - ANNUAL PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES

6.1 - Work Plan for the Reporting Period

Item 6.1.1 - Achievements

Discuss the work plan's proposed goals and objectives and the progress made in achieving them during the reporting period.

With the departure of both the Executive Director and Finance Director in August of 2019, it was imperative that Connections search and retain an Executive Director who could responsibly repair dysfunctional financial records, strengthen community relationships, bring together a deeply fractured staff and recruit, retain and train a board of directors. In April 2020, Rochelle Miller was hired, in May, the Board of Directors began the strategic planning process. Internal controls were implemented and a strong training and communications plan began. In June of 2020, an interim Communication Director was hired and the position was filled permanently in August. Each goal was achieved in record time due to the dedication of staff and board in unison. We give immense credit to the office of DVR at Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and specifically, to Mr. Peter Pike and staff. Their support with our financial team, IL team and Executive Director was critical to "righting this ship".

ACL Feedback: This is not a work plan. I will not be requiring you to develop a work plan for this PPR but will for the next PPR. I suggest you contact ILRU for assistance. They do provide a sample work plan on their webpage - https://www.ilru.org/sites/default/files/resources/cil_mgmt_and_operations/MTSTCIL_FY2014_Work_Plan.pdf . Contact ILRU if you have questions regarding the development of your work plan and please provide a work plan in future PPRs.

Item 6.1.2 - Challenges

Describe any substantial challenges or problems encountered by the CIL, and the resolutions/attempted resolutions.

Moving staff to a complete remote and non-located situation proved difficult for the majority of staff. Despite the much needed and utilized resources for technology and support, our staff simply have felt isolated and separated. We work to combat this weekly with any way we can reach out to each other. Weekly one-on-one Zoom meetings are a priority, now more than ever, we hold a weekly "All Hands" zoom meeting and each department/team hold weekly meetings. Our team also established a loose "coffee chat" meeting weekly to keep up with each other on a more personal level. Leadership looks for

continuous ways to make personal contact, through phone calls, texts, greeting cards via regular post, and we've even had special occasions marked with local cookie deliveries (contactless) and meal deliveries. These small tokens of appreciation and connection have supported a team who has worked harder in the past 18 months than ever before.

Item 6.1.3 - Comparison with Prior Reporting Period

As appropriate, compare the CIL's activities in the reporting period with its activities in prior periods, e.g., recent trends.

Although nearly all aspects of Connection's and our CIL activities have gone through some sort of improvement, increase or adjustment in the past year, one thing remains static, the devotion to mission. The mission to serve those with disabilities to the best of our ability has not waived, it has only increased knowing the pandemic effects on those with disabilities is disproportionate to the remaining population. We know our services are required now more than ever and have strived to use this past year to strengthen all areas in order to support, what we assure, will be an increased need for service in the months and years to come.

6.2 - Work Plan for the Period Following the Reporting Period

Item 6.2.1 - Annual Work Plan

List the CIL's annual work plan goals, objectives and action steps planned for the period following the reporting period.

1. Expand and Strengthen the Board of Directors 13%
2. Strengthen CIL financial position through sound financial and business operations/procedures to ensure retention of solid funding sources 35%
3. Retain and strengthen our staff through continuous training and succession planning 15%
4. Develop and implement long-term strategic plan to establish clear priorities and direction 10%
5. Develop and implement a capital improvement plan for the facility. 10%
6. Respond to COVID-19 by providing our staff and consumers the support they need 7%
7. Enhance our fundraising capacity through the establishment and implementation of a Development Plan that outlines specific fundraising strategies and related goals for each strategy 10%

Item 6.2.2 - SPIL Consistency

Explain how these work plan goals, objectives and action steps are consistent with the approved SPIL.

The SPIL for the state of Colorado had a gap in their planning periods between 2019 and 2021, therefore we are following the 2021 planning goals per your request to update this section. The Colorado SPIL goals align with Connections work plan goals and objectives are consistent with

Connections for Independent Living's goals in the following ways:

Goal 1 of the SPIL is to: Develop and strong and effective IL network within the state. Connections has supported this goal with it's top 4 goals of; expanding and strengthening its board of directors, strengthening its financial position and systems, retaining and strengthening staff and developing a long-term strategic plan. These items support each other by creating a strong CIL. Within that goal, work products, such as rejoining the Association of Colorado CIL's, actively participating in weekly discussion meetings with all 9 state CIL centers, supporting other CIL's through staff training sharing and open source of policies and procedures has contributed to a solid interagency network that supports the SPIL goal of a developing a strong IL network.

Goal 2 of the SPIL is to: Increase influence in state and national advocacy systems. Connections has supported this goal by rejoining the Association of Colorado CIL's (ACCIL), with the support of Connections Executive Director serving as the vice-chair. ACCIL actively engages with the state legislature on behalf of and as members of the community with disabilities on all matters, but specifically those with the most impact on the disability community members. Connections also became a specific provider of aggregated data during the early stages of the pandemic. Outreach with over 3,000 phone calls to disabled community members kept municipal and state leaders abreast of access to food, medical care, and all other services in rural communities. Connections was able to leverage the gathering of this data into advocacy for services to be provided and focused towards those in our community with disabilities. We carried this message into early advocacy for inclusion for vaccine access to those with disabilities, when the vaccine was not widely available.

Goal 3 of the SPIL is to: Increase outreach, education and employment to those with disabilities. Connections has done this primarily in direct alignment with Goal 6 in its strategic plan, which was to respond accordingly to COVID-19 by providing out staff and consumers the support they need. Connections began several programs to the community during the pandemic, including tent outreach, called "Connections Cares" events, meeting people outdoors and wherever there was a high volume of requests for service. Connections began the Technology Lending program to all consumers to provide them with a 30-day borrowed tech device (Laptop, tablet, lightning high speed internet device) of their choice. Consumers can borrow each item for up to 30 days with 3 consecutive check out periods allowed per year. Connections began an Technology Voucher donation program that partnered with a local computer store to provide vouchers for a comprehensive laptop computer package. Sixty-three consumers participated in the program and received laptop computers and subsequent support. That support came in the way of TechMate Support, Connect with Friends classes, Technology Literacy classes, and peer support groups that met in digital meeting rooms. Connections also supported this SPIL goal by actively participating in the Colorado Department of Labor (DVR) SEEKS grant, the Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability, has allowed 4 Connections Independent Living Specialists to become certified employment specialists and benefits counselors. The training has improved services for those seeking employment or benefits counseling with employment support. Connections was also able to participate in outreach events for all services due to the pandemic in new and enhanced ways. The revamped and very accessible Connections website focuses on providing remote services to our entire catchment area. Connections staff also increased in the most rural areas of our catchment areas to have a more grassroots approach to outreach and education services. Connections staff has also increased access to intake forms, housing forms, and many other types of "paperwork" that used to be only available by entering the CIL's physical offices. This remote access has increased services to those unable or unwilling to travel over our 13,000 square mile catchment area. Consumers can access this information online and we have seen a huge uptick in online access through our monitoring of digital information tracking and its data. This has allowed Connections to make specific improvements based on digital user needs. Connections staff also regularly survey consumers via more traditional information sources, such as phone, postal mail and in-person follow up. All these methods inform outreach, education and service resources to our consumers.

ACL Feedback: Please specify what SPIL goals align with your CIL goals. Example: Goal 1 of the SPIL is _____ which aligns which Goal 3 of our CIL, _____. Please make this change within ACL Reporting and resubmit. Let me know when you have resubmitted so I can review it again and move toward approving. Thanks.

SECTION 7 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Item 7.1 - Other Accomplishments, Activities and Challenges

Describe any additional significant accomplishments, activities and/or challenges not included elsewhere in the report, e.g., brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc.

It is our belief, that all that Connections and our fellow Colorado CIL's did to survive the pandemic while continuing to serve our consumers was innovative and resulted in a new push for technology literacy that will challenge us continually in the year to come.

SECTION 8 - TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Item 8.1 - Training And Technical Assistance Needs

Training And Technical Assistance Needs	Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important
Advocacy/Leadership Development	
General Overview	7
Applicable Laws	
General overview and promulgation of various disability laws	6
Assistive Technologies	
General Overview	8
Data Collecting and Reporting	
Case Service Record Documentation	9
Disability Awareness and Information	
Specific Issues	10
Evaluation	
Consumer Satisfaction Surveys	5
Innovative Programs	
Specific Examples	1
Networking Strategies	
Community Partners	2
Outreach to Unserved/Underserved Populations	
Minority	3
Rural	4

Item 8.2 - Additional Information

Provide additional information, comments, explanations or suggestions not included elsewhere in the report.

SECTION 9 - SIGNATURES

Please sign and print the names, titles and telephone numbers of the CIL director and board chair.

Rochelle Miller
NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER DIRECTOR _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

Rochelle Miller - Signed Digitally
SIGNATURE OF CENTER DIRECTOR _____ 10/19/2021
DATE _____

NAME AND TITLE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

SIGNATURE OF CENTER BOARD CHAIRPERSON _____ DATE _____