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| Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council |
| Policies and Procedures |
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INTRODUCTION

These Policies and Procedures are intended to be a quick reference for subjects related to the business of SILC. It is a living document, ready to change when rules, By-Laws, or general Procedures change.

Topics are arranged alphabetically along with ***Policy***, based on Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) By-Laws (Appendix B) or mandate through Federal or State regulations, followed by ***Procedures***, or the way the Policy is implemented. Each topic starts on the next blank page to allow for ease of removing outdated Policy and changing it without disturbing the rest of the manual.

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# Absences from SILC and Committee Meetings

**Policy:** SILC members are expected to attend all SILC meetings unless an absence is unavoidable. The SILC Chair determines an excused absence. If a SILC member has unexcused absences for half of the meetings in a fiscal year, he or she will be asked to resign from SILC. **(By-Laws -Section VI, H, 2)**

Standing Committee Members are also expected to attend all committee meetings. Unexcused absences of SILC members are handled by each Committee Chairperson in the same way as absences from SILC meetings. The replacement of Committee SILC Members is handled jointly by SILC and Committee Chairpersons.

**Procedures:** As soon as the SILC Member is aware that a meeting must be missed, an E-mail should be sent to the SILC Chair with the reason for the absence. The SILC Chair will determine whether there is reasonable cause for an excused absence and respond to the SILC Member by e-mail. If time or circumstance prohibits communication via e-mail, a phone call, followed by written documentation may suffice.

If a member has unexcused absences equal to half of the SILC meetings in the year, the SILC Chair will contact the member to discuss and recommend the member’s resignation. Resignation letters should be submitted simultaneously to the SILC Chair and the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions.

If multiple absences are due to medical issues or a change in employment, a SILC member may request a leave of absence for up to four (4) months. **(By-Laws -Section VI, H, 2)**

# Administrative Support

Policy: To be eligible to receive federal financial assistance under the Title VII Statute, each State shall establish a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC referred to in this section as the ‘Council’). The Council shall not be established as an entity within a State agency. **(Federal Statute -Title VII, Section 705, a)**This means the SILC must maintain its autonomy, yet adhere to State Fiscal Rules and State of Colorado Protocol.

Procedures: Colorado’s Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Office of Independent Living Services (OILS) employs an Independent Living Program Coordinator (ILPC) who serves as a liaison between SILC and DVR. The ILPC provides technical assistance and manages SILC’s administrative tasks that must be conducted by a State employee. SILC members and SILC staff do not have access to the State’s accounting system, State credit cards, State billing paperwork, internal communication processes, or State procurement processes. Additionally, all contracts and agreements using State funds must be approved and executed by a State employee.

The primary administrative tasks to be managed by the ILPC are:

* With the input of the SILC Chair or designee, make arrangements for SILC meetings (hotel, catering, and travel reimbursements);
* Make authorized purchases on behalf of SILC;
* Generally, perform any function necessary to SILC business that requires contractual agreements, communication with the accounting department, internal memos, or other paperwork needed to complete financial transactions;
* Record SILC expenses and share that information with SILC in a timely manner;
* Shepherd SILC membership application and recommendations through the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions.

# Advocacy

Policy: In order to meet its duties regarding the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)as stated in Title VII, Sections 704 and 705, SILC will advocate for the conditions necessary to meet the assurances and goals of the SPIL.

Advocacy is defined as: *a means of educating elected officials, policy makers, news media, and the public about issues that impact the lives of people with disabilities.*

SILC will not engage in lobbying, which is defined as: *asking policy makers or legislators to take a specific action on a specific bill or action item.*

No individual SILC member or SILC staff may declare a position on an issue as the SILC’s position without the approval of the full SILC and permission of the SILC Chair. Priorities are set by SILC and materials are approved by SILC before distribution.

**Procedures:** SILC, typically through the Public Policy Committee, creates position papers or issue briefs that provide factual information about disability issues such as housing, waiver services, health care, and employment. The SPIL provides a framework for issues to be addressed in conjunction with meeting a specific goal or objective of the SPIL.

The Public Policy Committee is responsible for making recommendations to SILC about issues to be considered. The Committee will research the issue, develop a distribution plan, oversee the writing of the document, and implement the distribution upon approval by SILC.

Issue briefs, position papers, and advocacy letters should have a uniform appearance. Printing will be done on letterhead or on professionally designed documents that include the SILC logo. Printing must be done through the State printing office unless a waiver is obtained declaring that the printing office cannot produce the document in a timely manner. The number of copies printed should be no more than 10% above the number designated in the distribution plan.

The Public Policy Committee, with the approval of SILC, may choose to hire a professional writer or designer to produce issue briefs or position papers. The SILC budget typically has a separate line item for this purpose

# Committees & Committee Meetings

Policy: The SILC By-Laws call for standing and ad hoc committees to carry out the work of SILC. (**By-Laws – Section IX, C & D)**The standing committees are:

* Communication and Media
* Executive
* Finance
* Membership and Nomination
* Public Policy
* State Plan and sub-committee Strategic Planning
* Training
* Youth with Youth Advisory Council

Committee responsibilities are detailed in SILC By-Laws. The SILC Chair appoints Committee Chairs and Committee Chairs appoint their members. Ad hoc committees are created by the SILC Chair to do short term or project specific work. A SILC member must chair each SILC committee; non-SILC members may serve along with SILC members on committees. It is the policy of SILC that each member serves on at least one committee.

Procedures:

**Standing Committees**

Each year the incoming SILC Chair reviews the committee purposes and list of members. He or she may appoint new committee chairs. Members will submit a list of three committee preferences. The SILC Chair will assign SILC members to committees, considering both the members’ preferences and the needs of the committees. Changes in the purpose of Standing Committees or adding new Standing Committees must be approved by the full SILC in advance and added to the SILC By-Laws in accordance with the By-Laws change process.

Committee Chairs set up a meeting schedule, develop agendas, oversee committee activities, and distribute committee minutes/notes/reports. Meeting minutes or notes will be distributed to the committee members as soon as possible; committee reports will be generated by the committee chair or designee and sent to the full SILC with its next Council packet (distributed before the full SILC meeting).

Standing Committee Chairs will attend Executive Committee meetings and report on their committee’s work. They will also present a verbal report at the full SILC meeting. A Committee Report template is included with this Procedures Appendix.

Generally, committee meetings are informal. The Committee Chair facilitates or moderates the meeting, but Robert Rules of Order are not followed. Rather than making decisions, committees make recommendations to be considered and when necessary, voted on by the full SILC unless the action has received the Council’s prior approval.

**Ad Hoc Committees**

Established by the SILC Chair, these are time-limited committees that have a specific task to accomplish and then the committee will disband. The decision to create an Ad Hoc Committee should be driven by the need for the task as discussed by SILC. Examples of Ad Hoc Committees could include: By-Laws, annual retreat, and planning.

Ad Hoc Committees may include members from outside SILC, but are chaired by a SILC member. They operate informally and Roberts Rules of Order are usually suspended. Decisions are recommended to SILC unless action has SILC’s prior approval.

The Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes. Written committee reports are shared with SILC and Ad Hoc Committee Chairs may attend Executive Committee meetings as needed to report on progress.

# Communications and Media Committee

**Purpose:** The Committee reviews, standardizes, monitors, updates, researches and distributes all forms of SILC communication. Forms of communication include but are not limited to SILC’s website, social media, flyers, announcements, newsletters, meeting attendance, templates, surveys, and data collection. This Committee researches and makes recommendations for disseminating and transmitting information to SILC members, CILs, organizations, and the public. Members of this Committee work in conjunction with other SILC committees for consistency as well as accessibility, distribution, and collection of information. **(By-Laws – Section IX, C, 6)**

Procedures: The Communications and Media Committee meets by conference call or other telecommunications tool as needed. The Committee strives to have a diverse membership and representation of different disabilities, ages, and geographic locations. It is recommended that the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator attend all meetings.

The Committee Chair creates an annual work plan based on SPIL goals and timelines, sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes.

The Committee Chair provides a committee report at general meetings.

Executive Committee

**Purpose:** The four officers, Chairperson, Chairperson-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer, and Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and chairs of all standing committees shall serve as members of the Executive Committee (EC). For purposes of a quorum, there must be a majority of EC members present, in order to conduct business. The Council, at regularly scheduled meetings, may empower or delegate authority to the Executive Committee to act for the Council on specifically designated issues for which specific action is required prior to the next scheduled Council meeting. **(By-Laws –Section IX, A, 2)**The Executive Committee sets the agenda for general meetings.

Procedures: The SILC Chair serves as Chair of the Executive Committee. In the Chair’s absence, the Chair-Elect fills in for the Chair. Most Executive Committee meetings are conducted by conference call or other telecommunications tool once a month. The ILPC is invited to attend EC meetings, has a standing report on the agenda and can be asked to leave the meeting, if privacy is needed. The Executive Committee makes decisions about issues for which the SILC has delegated their authority. Minutes or notes are sent out to the Executive Committee members as soon as the meeting is completed, but no more than ten (10) working days after the meeting. Approved Executive Committee minutes are an official, public document.

At full SILC meetings, the SILC Chair will report on the activities of the Executive Committee.

**Finance Committee**

**Purpose:** To develop the three-year Resource Budget for SILC that will become part of the SPIL, monitor SILC expenditures, and make recommendations for changes in spending as necessary**. (By-Laws – Section IX, C, 1)**

Procedures: The Finance Committee typically meets by conference call or other telecommunications tool once every quarter, or more often as needed. It is recommended that the SILC Chair and ILPC attend all Finance Committee meetings. The Finance Committee makes budget and spending recommendations, but financial decisions are made by vote of the full SILC.

The SILC Treasurer serves as the Finance Committee Chair and provides a financial report at general meetings.

Membership and Nomination Committee

**Purpose:** Reviews SILC membership to determine compliance with Title VII, Section 705. The committee creates a recruitment plan to target potential members who will meet compliance, fill vacancies, and serve the needs of SILC. This Committee implements the recruitment plan, reviews member applications, interviews potential members, makes recommendations to the Executive Committee.The committee also establishes and monitors the training program for all SILC members.**(By-Laws – Section IX, C, 2)** In addition to recruiting new SILC members, the committee nominates officers for the fall elections.

Procedures: The Membership and Nomination Committee establishes a regular recruitment process that will develop a group of possible SILC members and create a group of possible committee members. Membership needs and recruitment plans are discussed at general meetings. The Membership and Nomination Committee, with the approval of SILC, may hire a professional writer or consultant to produce recruitment materials.

This committee also serves as a nominating committee each fall to seek out nominations for the officer positions and to conduct elections.

The Committee meets on an as-needed basis, typically by conference call. The Committee Chair sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes.

The Membership and Nominations Committee Chair gives a report at full SILC meetings.

The Membership and Nominations Committee also develops, implements and monitors required training as required by the Federal Statute 364 on SILC Requirements.

**Public Policy Committee**

Purpose:

* To work on advocacy issues as identified in the SPIL or as they arise and are approved by SILC;
* To research and present information and position statements approved by SILC and on behalf of SILC to the disability community, policy makers, press and general public, and;
* To draft educational advocacy letters to state and federal policy makers for SILC approval.**(By-Laws – Section IX, C, 3)**

Procedures: This committee meets monthly, usually by conference call or other telecommunications tool. The Committee Chair sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes. Details about the committee’s advocacy efforts are found in the **Advocacy Policy and Procedures** in this manual.

The Chair of the Public Policy Committee gives a report at full SILC meetings.

**State Plan Committee**

Purpose: The State Plan Committee includes the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) and sub-committee, Strategic Planning for the SILC. These two committees work in tandem and serve three purposes:

* To gather information to create a new State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL);
* To monitor and evaluate the progress of the current SPIL; and
* To develop and monitor short and long term goals for the SILC.

In addition to SILC members the Committee will include at least one representative of the DVR (DSE) and two directors of Colorado CILs. **(By-Laws – Section IX, C, 4)**

Procedures: During the development of the SPIL, which can occur up to 18 months before the new SPIL is to be submitted, the committee general meets monthly by conference call or other telecommunications tool and quarterly in person.

After the SPIL is submitted and approved, meetings are held monthly by conference call or other telecommunications tool to monitor the progress of the SPIL. The Committee Chair sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes. The SILC Chair-Elect is the Chair of the SPIL Committee.

The Strategic Planning Committee meets as needed to determine the strategies that SILC will use to meet short and long term goals of the SPIL. This sub-Committee Chair sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes. The Strategic Planning Committee includes the directors of Centers for Independent Living (CILs), SILC members, and a representative from DVR (DSE).

The State Plan Committee Chair and Strategic Planning Chair give reports at full SILC meetings.

**Youth Committee**

**Purpose:**:The Youth Committee’s purpose is to increase and improve services to disabled youth ages 14-26, who are served by Colorado’s Centers for Independent Living (CILs). **(By-Laws – Section IX, C, 5)** Through the CILs’ work, the Committee hopes youth will learn how to advocate on their own behalf, successfully transition to work or some form of post-secondary education, and become our future leaders.

The Youth Committee’s primary role is to carry out SILC’s youth related state plan goals, objectives, and tasks.

**Procedures:** The Youth Committee is made up of volunteer members who either work directly with youth served by Colorado CILs or otherwise have extensive experience working with disabled youth.  This Committee fosters and maintains relationships with other existing youth organizations, ideally within each CIL’s catchment area, using face-to-face, social media, and other culturally appropriate methods of communications.

The Youth Advisory Council (YAC), as an ad hoc subcommittee of the Youth Committee, works closely with the Youth Committee (YC); Youth Committee members may serve as mentors to YAC members. YAC members are 14 – 26 years old with a disability who provide a direct youth voice regarding youth disability and transition services throughout Colorado; YAC members are recruited throughout the state to represent all geographic areas and populations; YAC members may be selected to be a non-voting SILC volunteer intern to attend SILC meetings and provide direct input on how SILC and CILs can expand and improve services.

The Youth Committee meets every few months as needed, typically by conference call or other telecommunications tool. The Committee Chair sets up a meeting schedule, develops agendas, oversees committee activities, and distributes committee minutes or notes. Details about the committee’s work are found in the SPIL and the Committee’s annual work plans.

The Committee Chair gives a report at full SILC meetings.

# Communication with Public

Policy: The SILC Chair is the only person authorized to speak to the public on behalf of SILC. The SILC Chair may designate another SILC member to represent SILC when necessary. Although SILC is made up of individuals with varying opinions, SILC must speak to the public with one voice. On most occasions, the SPIL acts as a guide to SILC’s positions and activities. Any issue outside of the scope of SPIL, must be discussed and approved by SILC before being conveyed to the public. Anyone delegated to speak on behalf of SILC, must voice SILC’s position only. With general information such as the mission, composition, or role of SILC, it is assumed that the Chair will speak without specific approval from SILC.

Procedures: Prior to speaking on an advocacy issue, the SILC Chair (or designated spokesperson) must take the time to be familiar with the issue as it appears in SPIL. Other sources of information include the Public Policy Chair, knowledgeable members, SILC By-Laws, and existing issue briefs or position papers.

SILC members meeting with legislators and other public policy makers are not to represent that communication as being on behalf of SILC without advance approval from the SILC Chair. Under no circumstances shall SILC members speak on behalf of SILC on issues that have not been discussed, or make statements that do not adhere to the SILC position.

Although Committee Chairs may communicate among their committee members, any communication to the public must first be discussed and approved by SILC. After review and approval, SILC may choose to delegate their authority to the Executive Committee.

# Conferences

Policy: SILC will determine which members will be selected, or offered the opportunity, to attend conferences relative to the business of SILC. The attendee selection process is based on benefit to SILC and the State, appropriateness (SILC Chair takes priority for attending the SILC Congress), commitment to SILC, and relevance to member’s committee work or future position with SILC. Conference attendance for any SILC member is subject to available funds and approvals within DVR (DSE).

SILC members who attend conferences at the expense of SILC are required to provide an oral report to the full SILC at the next scheduled meeting, and furnish a report in writing that can be distributed to all SILC members. **(By-Laws - Section X, A-D)**

Procedures: A member may submit his or her name for consideration to the SILC Chair. The SILC Chair will submit the request to SILC. SILC will discuss the benefits of the conference to SILC and the State, and its selection of member(s) to attend the conference.

When a member is designated to attend a conference, the need for travel and conference arrangements must be made through the DVR (DSE) Office. When discussing travel arrangements, the member should be prepared with the dates of the conference, details about the conference hotel, and registration information as well as any disability necessary accessibility accommodations. Travel arrangements and reimbursements will be in accordance with State rules.

A SILC member is considered a representative of SILC and the State when attending a conference. Full attendance at the conference is expected. Whenever possible, the member should share materials collected at the conference with the full membership.

For conference travel reimbursements, please follow the same Procedures as for other SILC travel*. (See* ***Reimbursement*** *Section)*

# Disability Accommodations

Policy: It is the policy of SILC to meet in locations that are physically accessible to all. Sign Language Interpreters will be provided as needed. Alternate formats for printed materials will be provided upon request. Information to this effect shall be included with each full SILC meeting notice and on the SILC website. Teleconferencing may be offered as an accommodation to those members and guests who temporarily cannot travel to the full SILC meeting for health reasons. Any necessary personal assistance may be authorized for payment or reimbursement if the service is pre-approved and negotiated in advance. In general, SILC will pay for services above and beyond standard benefits if the service relates to helping a member during their travel to-and-from a meeting site or at a meeting.

Procedures: Members needing reasonable accommodations to participate in SILC meetings/activities must let the SILC Chair know at least one week in advance. Although this information is often captured during the membership interview, each member should express his or her need for an accommodation at the time of response to a meeting notice. It is important for the member to be specific about his or her needs. A response to any notice that includes an overnight stay should also contain information about accommodations in the hotel room.

Sign language interpreters will be provided for committee and general meetings with seven-day advance notice. Qualified sign language interpreters are available during the Public Comment Section of full SILC meetings, at public hearings, and activities that anticipate public participation with seven-day advance notice.

Alternate formats include large print, disk, or other electronic media. Braille must be requested a week in advance.

Requests for teleconferencing for ill members who wish to participate by phone must be made to the Chair who will decide whether to accommodate the request. These requests should be made at least one week prior to the meeting.

# Electronic Voting

Policy: There are times that SILC must make a necessary decision or purchase between regularly scheduled meetings. Rather than delay those decisions or purchases, the SILC Chair may request a timely electronic vote. Currently the SILC’s primary electronic communication is via e-mail. However, this Policy refers to any electronic media chosen by the SILC Chair and available to all SILC members.

Procedures: The SILC Chair will compose a description of the action under consideration and send the message via e-mail (or other acceptable media) along with a voting deadline. Whenever possible, at least 24 hours will be given for a voting response. However, on occasion a decision may be needed by close of business on the same day.

As with any SILC business, ballots may be distributed to the full SILC membership. However, if SILC has designated its authority to the Executive Committee (EC), only those committee members will vote. In either case, votes received and counted must represent a quorum of the voting population in order to be considered valid. Members should use “Reply to All” when voting by e-mail. If any member does not use “Reply to All,” the SILC Chair will send a vote summary to the membership. Votes received after the deadline will not be counted.

The SILC Chair may also ask for votes on an action by telephone. Although this is not the preferred method, it can be used for expediency. For instance, if the SILC Chair receives most of the vote responses well before the deadline, but needs one or more additional votes for a quorum, he or she may assume that a member has not had access to e-mail and telephone the member for his or her vote.

Actions voted on and approved electronically are subject to all rules, processes, and Procedures followed for SILC action items or purchases. The electronic vote, whether approved or not approved becomes an amendment to the most recent full SILC meeting minutes, or the Executive Committee meeting minutes depending on the voting population. If the vote outcome is associated to EC minutes, the SILC Chair will report the matter with its outcome at the next full SILC meeting.

# Membership

Policy: It is the policy of SILC to recruit and interview potential SILC members before recommending membership to the Governor’s Office. While the Governor may make appointments without consulting with SILC, the goal is to work cooperatively with the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions so that appropriate expertise and representation is reflected in all appointments. SILC operates more smoothly and accomplishes its work if all members are interested and knowledgeable about disability issues, independent living, and statewide concerns of people with disabilities.

Procedures: The Membership and Nomination Committee periodically reviews SILC membership to determine if vacancies are coming up, if compliance is being met, and if the SILC needs to target its recruitment efforts. (***See Membership and Nomination Committee Section***)

Interested parties are sent a Pre-Application form that allows the Committee to quickly assess if the individual meets SILC’s current need. If the person does not meet the current need, he or she may be invited to join a SILC committee as a community member. If the person is a good candidate for membership, an interview is scheduled. The interview team usually consists of the SILC Chair and Membership and Nominations Committee Chair and members from the committee. Interviews are typically done by telephone and interview questions are designed to assess the candidate’s knowledge of independent living, understanding of the role of the SILC, and level of commitment if appointed.

When the initial interview process is complete, the Membership, and Nomination Committee makes its recommendation to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee reviews candidate applications. Acceptable candidates will be invited to attend a full SILC meeting at the expense of SILC. Through a number of recruitment experiences, an in-person meeting with a potential member has proven to be helpful in the decision-making process. Attending a SILC meeting also allows the potential member to determine whether SILC is a good fit.

Following attendance at a full SILC meeting, the candidate will be asked if he or she wants to continue with the application process. The SILC Chair will convey this information to SILC and ask for comments. If there are no serious objections, SILC will vote to accept the candidate for membership. The SILC Chair or Membership and Nomination Committee Chair will notify the candidate that SILC is recommending him/her to the Governor to be appointed onto the Council and invite the candidate to fill out the official online Governor’s Boards and Commissions application and submit a resume’ with the application.

The candidate will be told to expect notification from the Governor’s Office when the appointment is complete.

The SILC Chair or SILC’s designee will notify Office of Independent Living Services (Office) of its recommended candidate. The Office will initiate the internal process with the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions of SILC’s candidate recommendation. Candidates are considered members with full voting rights and responsibilities only when officially appointed by the Governor.

# Center Director Representation

**Policy**: The Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) shall have at least one member represent the Centers for Independent Living on the SILC.

**Procedures:**

* Every third year, the Directors of the Centers for Independent Living shall vote to place one of its own as the SILC Center Director Representative.
* This representative shall represent the issues of the statewide CIL network and bring those issues to the SILC for consideration.
* The CIL representative is a voting member of SILC.
* In the event that the CIL representative cannot attend a SILC meeting, they shall call the Chair prior to the SILC meeting and request that another CIL Director, identified by them; be substituted to attend in their stead in order to participate in any discussions related to CIL. The substitute shall have no vote.

# New SILC Member Orientation

Policy: When new members are appointed by the Governor’s Office of Boards and Commissions to the Council, it is the responsibility of SILC to provide written and oral information about the history, purpose, and operation of SILC.**(By-Laws – Section XI, F, 1)** All new members are required to review this Procedures and attend a new member orientation. During the orientation process, new members are required to sign documents that indicate they understand how the travel and reimbursement process works as well as sign a conflict of interest form.

Procedures: As new members fill vacancies it is important that they understand the independent living philosophy, history, and the programs in Colorado. It is also important that all SILC members understand SILC’s role and member duties. Providing new member orientation is usually the role of the SILC Chair, but it may be delegated to other knowledgeable SILC members.

The primary materials to be covered during the orientation are:

* History and Philosophy of Independent Living (available online or CD)
* SILC Procedures
* SILC By-Laws
* Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, Title VII, Section 705
* SILC’s Strategic and Operational Plans
* Goals and objectives in the SPIL
* SILC Resource Plan and Budget
* Colorado Independent Living Network

New members will become familiar with how SILC business is conducted, SILC’s accountability to stakeholders, and SILC’s required compliance with State Fiscal Rules. In addition, the SILC will enroll new members ILRU’s “Smooth as SILC” Course when it is available. For ongoing mentoring, the SILC Chair will assign new members one of Colorado’s CILs to adopt in order to learn more about CILs and share info with SILC.

New member orientations are scheduled as needed and can be a segment of a full SILC meeting or a stand-alone training.

# Conflict of Interest

**Policy:** All Statewide Independent Living Committee (SILC) members shall disclose any conflict of interest.

**Procedures:**

1. Any duality of interest or possible conflict of interest on the part of any SILC member shall be disclosed to other SILC members and made a matter of the written record, at the initial appointment to SILC; at the annual reaffirmation in June; or when the interest/conflict arises.

2. Any SILC member having a duality of interest or possible conflict of interest on any matter should not vote or use his/her personal influence on the matter. The minutes of the meeting should reflect that a disclosure was made, and that the member abstained from that related vote.

1. The foregoing requirements should not be construed as preventing the SILC member from briefly stating his/her position in the matter, nor from answering pertinent questions of other SILC members since his/her may knowledge be of great assistance.
2. It is further resolved that this policy be reviewed annually and signed by each SILC member.
3. The SILC Chair is authorized and directed to see that this policy is followed.

# Reimbursement

Policy: SILC members are entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred while conducting State business. **(By-Laws – Section XI, J, 1)**State business, for SILC members, is defined as official functions of the SILC such as full SILC meetings, face-to-face committee meetings, travel to conferences at the request and approval of SILC, and other SILC Chair *pre-approved* travel to conduct SILC business. In accordance with State Fiscal Rules, reimbursement will be made for mileage, transportation, and meals not furnished during the activity. In some cases reimbursement may be made for attendant services, child care, and lost wages in accordance with State Fiscal Rules and with pre-approval by the SILC Chair.

The DVR (DSE) can often secure better pricing on supplies, training, conferences, and items needed for SILC. However, in some cases, a SILC member may make purchases or attend a SILC Chair pre-approved training, when the DVR support staff is unavailable to assist in the purchase. These expenses require submitted receipts or an invoice for reimbursement.

Reimbursement will only be made for expenses related to SILC business, approved by SILC Chair, or any purchase made within State Fiscal Rules. *Examples*: personal choice to travel by rental car; personal choice to attend a conference or training related to SILC issues, but not authorized by SILC; purchase of equipment or supplies prohibited by State Purchasing Rules, such as computers, some web-based services, and some communication tools.

Procedures: The State ILPC or SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator will furnish SILC members with the most current State Request for Reimbursement Form, local mileage and per diem rates. These rates reflect the area of the state where a meeting is held. SILC members are required to complete the reimbursement form and return itto the ILPC **within 60 days** of the incurred travel expense. The ILPC will review the request, notify the member of any errors or omissions that need to be corrected, and then submit the completed request form to the State Accounting Office. A check, or automatic deposit (if arranged), will be disbursed to the SILC member in a timely manner. Please note that the State Fiscal Year (SFY) ends on June 30th. All outstanding reimbursement requests must be received by June 23rd in order to be paid from the current SILC budget.

**Note:** Travel reimbursement for meals and incidentals is based on per diem rates and receipts are not necessary. All other purchases require *original* receipts matching the dates of travel.

***Prior Approval:*** Occasionally a SILC member wants to participate in an event or make a purchase on behalf of SILC that has not been discussed and approved during a full SILC business meeting. Approval can be given under certain circumstances. A written request must be made in advance by E-mail or FAX to the Chair of SILC. If the SILC Chair recognizes the value of the purchase, he or she will consult with the SILC Treasurer and ILPC to determine the impact on the SILC budget. A written response either by E-mail or FAX will be sent to the member making the request. In all cases, the ILPC must be informed of the decision so that the SILC budget can be successfully monitored. Purchases, travel, or other expenses made without prior approval or outside of State Fiscal Rules will not be reimbursed.

***Timeliness:*** Requests for reimbursement must be submitted within 60 days of the last day of travel. SILC makes provisions to adequately reimburse members for their travel to meetings and conferences. However, the wide range of possible costs of travel for each individual makes it difficult to estimate the impact that a travel reimbursement will have on the SILC budget. Although the state travel rules allow 60 days, a shorter timeframe is recommended so that remaining funds can be properly allocated. Failure to submit a form on time could result in non-reimbursement. Consistent tardiness in submitting travel forms may be grounds for non-consideration of future conference travel.

**NOTE:** The State of Colorado strictly enforces the 60 day deadline.

# Relationship with DVR (DSE)

Policy: Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act mandates that SILC be separate from its Designated State Unit (DSU). In Colorado the DSU or Designated State Entity (DSE) is the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). The Division expects SILC to abide by the State and Federal program and Fiscal Rules but does not direct, oversee, or have approval authority over the work of SILC. DVR’s ILPC acts as liaison to SILC. As such, that person serves as a non-voting member of SILC and is active on committees. The ILPC position has no authority over SILC, but does facilitate DVR’s services (monitoring budgets, making travel arrangements, other administrative duties) that support SILC’s work.

SILC will respect DVR protocol and convey information and requests through the ILPC. In turn the ILPC will oversee that necessary information and requests are appropriately channeled through DVR.

Procedures: The relationship between the ILPC and SILC is an informal relationship that benefits from frequent communication between the SILC Chair and ILPC about how work gets done within the State. Communication between the ILPC and SILC Chair is critical to the success of their collaborative relationship. It is important that SILC members know that the ILPC has numerous responsibilities throughout the Independent Living Program and may not be able to communicate directly with each SILC member. Communication should be channeled through the SILC Chair unless a member is acting at the request of the ILPC or the SILC Chair. The ILPC attends full SILC meetings and is encouraged to attend SILC committee meetings. However, at any time, SILC may request that the ILPC “step away from the meeting” while issues related to autonomy or problems with DVR are discussed.

# SILC Meetings

Policy: In order to conduct business, the SILC will meet in person a minimum of four times a year, but commonly meets six times during the State fiscal year. **(By-Laws – Section VII, A, 2)** Meeting locations and dates are determined by the SILC Chair***.* (By-Laws – Section VII, A, 1)** The Executive Committee (EC) determines the content of each meeting, including agenda, training topic and speaker(s).

Procedures: The SILC Chair sets the regular on-going schedule for SILC meetings at the beginning of each State Fiscal Year (SFY–July through June). The schedule is shared with members and posted on the SILC website. The Executive Committee (EC) plans each meeting.

***Setting up the Meeting:*** The SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator researches with input from SILC members, possible meeting venues with costs that include appropriate accommodations. EC makes the final decision on the meeting facility and hotel based on the research and the available funds. The DVR (DSE) liaison, ILPC, will make all financial arrangements for SILC meetings requiring a contractual agreement or the transfer of funds such as hotel contracts, interpreting services or van rentals. The SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator electronically distributes to members the meeting agenda and notice. In addition the Administrative Assistant/Coordinator posts on the SILC website meeting notices, collects attendance information, hotel needs, individual accommodations, and meal preferences. The Administrative Assistant/Coordinator compiles and informs ILPC of SILC’s needs. Working with the SILC Chair, the Administrative Assistant/Coordinator composes the meeting agenda and E-mails a meeting packet to the full SILC at least one week before the meeting date. The meeting packet includes hotel information, the agenda, minutes to be approved, notes/minutes/reports from committee meetings, and any other pertinent agenda item.

Center directors, DVR (DSE) staff and significant stakeholders are typically copied on the meeting packet E-mail. Details about the meeting location and the meeting agenda will be posted on the website as soon as the information is available.

***Getting to the meeting:*** Reasonable accommodations are available for members who do not drive (such as ride sharing, taxi, vehicle rental for group travel, etc). Each member is encouraged to make their own arrangements and communicate with the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator their travel plans.

SILC members are expected to arrange their own travel to meetings except in cases where there is a necessity for air travel. All requests for in-state air travel must be submitted in writing to the SILC Chair for pre-approval. E-mail requests and responses are acceptable. All SILC Chair approved in-state air travel must be booked through the ILPC (DSE) using a State approved travel agency. The SILC Chair will submit an approved written request to the ILPC for booking the air travel; after the flight is booked, the ILCP will E-mail the travel itinerary information to the SILC member. If air travel must be cancelled due to an emergency, the ILPC and SILC Chair must be notified immediately. While tickets are issued in the traveler’s name and can only be used by that traveler, the ticket may only be used for SILC business.

***At the meeting:*** SILC members are expected to read the packet materials prior to the meeting and be ready to participate in the full SILC meeting when it commences.

SILC meetings are the basis for essential actions because the process provides an opportunity for Council members to:

* Receive progress reports and updates on SILC activities, plans, and budgets
* Formulate ideas, solve problems and make decisions
* Monitor progress on SPIL goals
* Share ideas and openly discuss SILC’s work; and
* Vote on business matters.

Operating Guidelines for Meetings

* All members will have an opportunity to speak and participate. The Chair will acknowledge one speaker at a time
* Diversity is good; be positive, non-judgmental and open to new ideas
* Seek common ground and understanding
* Be willing to listen and ask questions to reach understanding
* Speak with a purpose and use “I” statements
* State your “headline” first, then the supporting information as necessary
* Use “Yes…and” thinking and statements (not, “Yes…but”)
* There are no silly or wrong ideas – all are important. Therefore, the Secretary will capture “off topic” ideas or issues
* Have fun and use humor
* Use the 80/20 rule – do not overwork an issue or document
* Speak concisely and on topic
* Stay focused – follow and honor time agreements
* Be a good listener and respectful.

**Meeting Agendas:** In advance of the meeting, the SILC Chair and Executive Committee jointly set the proposed agenda for all full Council and Executive Committee meetings. The agenda is the formal schedule for a meeting and customarily is not changed once the meeting begins.

The SILC Chair or designee will conduct the meeting by a process similar to Roberts Rules of Order. Generally decisions are made by a member proposing a motion, the motion needs to be seconded by another member, and the Chair will ask if there is any discussion; after the discussion, a vote is taken, and a majority resolution is reached.

Only SILC members, ILPC (SILC liaison), SILC Youth Committee Intern(s) and the SILC Administrative Assistant / Coordinator sit at the meeting table. Speakers, guests or others sit in the audience unless or until invited by the SILC Chair to join the meeting at the table. Guests are not part of SILC business or conversation unless invited to comment by the SILC Chair.

Each meeting includes a public comment period. Visitors and guests may speak for a limited time during that period, but must sign in to do so. Sign language interpreters are available. Unless otherwise declared by the SILC Chair, public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person and are expected to be related to the agenda or to issues concerning people with disabilities. SILC is not allowed to reply to open public comments but will take the comments under advisement.

The SILC Secretary, usually with the assistance of the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator, will take notes during the meeting to be developed into formal meeting minutes. The SILC Secretary will compose the minutes, have them reviewed by the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator; the drafted minutes will be E-mailed by the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator to the full SILC. SILC members may E-mail any comments, changes, corrections, and additions to the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator who will amend the draft before presenting for approval at the next full SILC meeting.

# SILC Office and Staff

Policy: SILC is a 501(c)3 not for profit council composed of members living and working throughout the State of Colorado who may have limited availability for SILC duties. The SILC acts as the Board of Directors for the not for profit and hires and supervises staff to implement SILC duties.

SILC designates a central office to fulfill volunteer member’s duties and provide a physical location for SILC Staff.

Procedures:

**Office:** The purpose of SILC’s Office is to have a central location to receive U.S. mail and faxes, provide a physical business address for letterhead and website, store equipment and supplies, conduct in-person meetings, open communication between ILPC and SILC, and coordinate the Council’s regular business.

SILC’s Office location and contact information is:

Statewide Independent Living Council

633 17th Street, Suite 1501

Denver, CO 80202

Cell Phone: (303) 902-5897

Office Phone: (303) 318-8590

FAX: (303) 318-8569

Website: www.coloradosilc.org

E-mail: Coordinator@ColoradoSILC.org

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/COSILC

**Staff:**

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

It is the policy of the Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council, Inc. (SILC) an equal opportunity agency, that staff be employed on the basis of qualifications and that all persons receive equal employment opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation or disability in compliance with Federal and State laws and procedures. In accordance with SILC's policy and with fair employment practice laws and regulations, no person is to be denied employment benefits, training, transfer, or opportunity for advancement, nor will there be any discrimination exercised in terms of segregation of employees or those served.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Business hours and days ‑ SILC is open Monday ‑ Friday 8:30 a.m. ‑ 5:00 p.m. In addition the offices may be open at other times at the discretion of the Executive Director. Full‑time work is a minimum 33 hours per week, 7‑1/2 hours per day, with one hour for lunch, each 7‑1/2 hour day. The Executive Director will set staff schedules to accommodate the needs of the SILC office.
2. Employee categories are as follows:
   1. Regular Full-time Employee - One who is assigned a regular position and works the standard work week. These individuals are paid an annual salary.
   2. Regular Part-time Employee - One who is assigned a regular position and works 20 hours or more per week, but less than 33 hours per week. These individuals are paid an hourly wage.
   3. Part-time Employee - One who is assigned to a position but works less than 20 hours a week. These individuals are paid an hourly wage.
   4. Temporary Employee - An individual employed for a specific, limited period of time, either on a full time or part-time basis. These employees will not accrue any leave benefits, such as vacation, sick or personal time. If a temporary employee is hired permanently with the date of permanent employment immediately following temporary service, the employee's "date of hire" will be the first day of permanent service. The length of probation will be at the discretion of the Executive Director.
3. Paid Compensation ‑ Pay is based on a monthly basis. Employees will be paid by EFT on the last working day of the month.
4. Time Sheets ‑ All employees are required to submit signed time sheets in order to receive paid compensation and other benefits. Staff may be required to attend conferences, committees, board meetings, institutes, workshops, etc. as part of their regular work week.
5. Jury Duty ‑ Employees called to serve on a Jury will be given the time off with salary less the full Juror's fee.
6. Orientation ‑ All employees will be required to undergo a period of orientation during the first week of employment. Orientation will consist of both a general orientation to SILC philosophy, history, and activities done by the appropriate staff, as well as, specific departmental procedures done by the Executive Director. A statement will be written on the completion of the orientation and kept in the personnel file.
7. Financial Considerations ‑ A periodic review of salaries and benefits will be completed by the Executive Director in consultation with the Executive Committee. Any projections on salary increments and benefit modifications are contingent on funding resources. Employees should feel free to discuss concerns with their direct supervisor. All appeals can be brought to the attention of the Executive Director. The Executive Director in consultation with the Executive Committee, will make the final decision on salaries. Current salaries and benefits are contained in the grants under which the office is operating and may be reviewed with the Executive Director.
8. Personnel Files ‑ Will be confidentially maintained for each employee by the Executive Director. They will contain any relevant information concerning employment, other than medical information, and all original application material. Payroll information will be maintained by the accounting department and in personnel files. The personnel files are the property of the SILC and will remain with the agency. The files will remain with the agency after the employee has terminated.
9. Confidentiality ‑ Every employee has the right to see their own personnel file. It is the right of only the employee to authorize the use of any information in his/her file. This authorization must be in writing. The Executive Director and the employee's immediate supervisor will have access to the personnel files. Public information concerning the employee will be confirmation of employment, job title, and years of service. Any additional information will be released only upon the specific written request of the employee and will be given only to individuals who are named in such a request.
10. Medical Information - Any medical information and medical related material will be collected and maintained in separate medical files and will be treated as a confidential medical record, in accordance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Fringe Benefits**

1. Social Security/Medicare ‑ All employees of the organization participate in Old Age and Survivors Insurance Provision and Medicare Insurance as prescribed by law.
2. Unemployment Insurance ‑ All employees may be eligible for unemployment insurance if they meet the appropriate requirements.
3. Health Insurance – Health Insurance is currently not provided. This policy will be reviewed as funding allows.
4. Work related education - After successful completion of the probationary period, a full‑time employee may be granted up to four hours per week paid time off for work related education at the discretion of the Executive Director.
5. Annual Review ‑ The Executive Committee in cooperation with the Executive Director will review the Personnel Practices yearly and report their findings to the Board of Directors for approval.
6. Intern and Volunteer Information ‑ All interns and volunteers will be subject to review of personal references and professional references.
7. Firearms Policy ‑ There will be no discharge of lawful or unlawful firearms, on or about the premises of the SILC. No staff, interns, volunteers, members of the Board of Directors, or any other individual conducting business in or about the SILC will be allowed to exhibit or carry firearms, ammunition, explosives, or bearing of any other weapons.
8. Sexual harassment policy - Sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated. SILC interprets sexual harassment as including any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when one of the three following conditions is also present:
   1. submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of the individual’s employment.
   2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
   3. Any employee who believes he/she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately (preferably within 48 hours) to the Executive Director of the agency. The Executive Director will investigate all complaints immediately. If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the employee is encouraged to directly contact the Chairperson of the SILC Board of Directors, who will initiate an investigation of the complaint. If the complaint of sexual harassment is against the Executive Director, the employee should contact the Chairperson of the SILC Board of Directors.
   4. An employee who has been found to have sexually harassed another employee of the SILC will be subject to appropriate sanctions up to and including termination of employment. Similarly, false accusations of sexual harassment can have serious effect on other employees and can also result in disciplinary action of the individual who initiated the complaint.
9. Substance Abuse Policy - The Executive Director shall have the right to suspend, investigate or dismiss, if warranted, any employee who he/she has reason to believe by appearance, odor or behavior is impaired or intoxicated by alcohol or drugs while on the job, or involved in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing or possession of a controlled substance.
10. Safety and Health. SILC regards safety on the job as vital. It is a responsibility shared by employer and employee. Employees should always be alert to unsafe conditions, faulty equipment or other job hazards and report them immediately to the Executive Director. Accidents on the job should be reported to the Executive Director immediately.

**Conditions of employment**

1. The Executive Director will be hired as an exempt employee with the salary negotiated with the Board of Directors as part of the hiring process.
2. Other exempt will be developed in conjunction with the Board of Directors by the Executive Director.
3. All other staff will be non-exempt employees and, if required to work beyond 40 hours per week will be compensated as follows:
   1. For 33 to 40 hours the employee will receive their regular hourly rate.
   2. Time in excess of 40 hours, for employees who are not otherwise exempt, time and a half in salary. Overtime must be preapproved by the Executive Director.
4. Flex Time and Flex Space – Flex time and flex space can be approved to meet the needs of the SILC. Requests for flex time and flex space must be approved by the Executive Committee.
5. Tips, Gratuities, and Outside Compensation ‑ Request for staff to consult, lecture, counsel and/or otherwise advise other individuals or groups about SILC must go to the Executive Director for approval and delegation. Any outside financial compensation will be turned over to SILC, including lecture fees and tips.
6. The SILC will withhold federal and state income taxes and employee's share of FICA and remit the withholdings to the appropriate depository.
7. Independent Contractor ‑ An individual who is hired to provide services on a fee for service basis will be subject to the following conditions:
   1. They are excluded from paid vacation, sick time, personnel time, paid hospitalization, and other non‑mandatory benefits. Independent contractor status is not contingent on number of hours worked per week or length of contractual assignment.
   2. They will receive a 1099 as required by law documenting moneys paid. As independent contractors, SILC assumes no responsibility for their federal or state income taxes, or FICA.

**PROBATION PERIOD**

1. All permanent employees will be on probation for three (3) months from their date of hire. PTO can be accrued but may not be taken during this period.
2. The period of probation will be regarded as an important part of the evaluation process and will be utilized for closely observing an employee's work for securing the most effective adjustment for a new employee to his/her position and the goals and objectives of the organization.
3. It will be the duty of the probationer's supervisor during the period of probation of each employee to evaluate his/her adjustment, capacity, and general acceptability to determine whether the probationer is fully qualified for permanent status.
4. The Executive Director will be evaluated yearly by the Executive Committee in conjunction with the Board of Directors.
5. Change from Probationary to Permanent Status
   1. At the end of two (2) months, the probationer's Supervisor must complete a written evaluation of the probationer. A meeting will be set up by the Supervisor with the employee on probation to discuss the evaluation.
   2. The evaluation will include a place for the probationer to make comments and also will include the signatures of the Supervisor and probationer.
   3. Throughout the three (3) month period the employee will be given specific recommendations in writing if the performance has been unsatisfactory. Copies of these recommendations will be maintained in the personnel file. The purpose of the evaluation(s) is to provide information, warning and support so that at the end of the three (3) months a valid recommendation can be made.
   4. At the end of the three (3) month review the Supervisor or Executive Director will write a statement as to the retention or dismissal of the employee. Copies will be sent to the employee, Supervisor, and retained in the employee's file after approval by the Executive Director.
   5. Employees who are not retained will be terminated by the Executive Director in writing to take effect on the last day of the probation period or with five (5) days notice. He/she will not be entitled to vacation pay or separation pay.
   6. In cases of illness, injury, disability or extended leave or as a disciplinary procedure, the probationary period may be extended with the approval of the Executive Director.

**EVALUATIONS**

1. Annual evaluations will be completed on each permanent employee by his/her Supervisor for the purpose of evaluating performance as is related to the position/job description in keeping with the goals and objectives of the SILC. Specific areas will include, but not be limited to quality of work, job knowledge, initiative, self‑reliance, and work habits.
2. Evaluations may be additionally required in cases where decisions regarding employee performance is desirable such as: promotions, transfers, and disciplinary procedures.
3. Evaluations will include a place for the person evaluated to make comments and will be signed by both the evaluator and the person evaluated. Employees have the right to indicate disagreement with the evaluation.
4. Copies of each evaluation will be given to the person evaluated prior to discussion with supervisor or Executive Director. The original will be retained in the personnel file along with any employee comment.
5. All employees will receive their annual evaluation at the time of their anniversary date.

**TIME OFF AND LEAVE POLICIES**

1. Personal Leave Time (PLT)

Each employee shall earn one and a half (1 1/2) Personal Leave Time (PLT) days per month for the first ten years of service and two (2) PLT days per month for service after ten years. The time earned is proportionate to each employee's employment status.

* 1. Full Time Equivalency.No employee shall be permitted to carry-over more than one year of accumulated Personal Leave Time (18 or 24 days, as applicable, for full-time employees). Any employee who seems likely to exceed a one-year accumulation of personal leave by the end of the calendar year will receive notice that he/she must use the excess or, if applicable, the hours will roll into the Extended Sick Leave bank on December 31, of each calendar year. If the Extended Sick Leave bank has the maximum hours already accumulated, the Personal Leave Time will be forfeited.
  2. All personal leave requests must be received prior approval from the Executive Director or supervisor.
     1. To report Personal Leave Time for sickness, employees are to contact the SILC office no later than 8:30 a.m. (acceptable to leave a message on voice mail).
     2. All planned time off requests of 2 days or more must be submitted by email to staff member’s direct supervisor in advance of the date requested. Approval of the request is dependent upon the operational needs of SILC. An employee cannot use unearned paid time.
     3. Upon leaving SILC, an employee will be paid all earned Personal Leave Time accrued prior to the employee’s termination date.

1. **Family Leave Time**

Family Leave Time will be chargeable to Personal Leave Time, Extended Sick Leave or leave without pay. During an extended leave of absence for Family Leave Time, SILC may hire a replacement on an interim basis.

1. Paid Holidays ‑ SILC will be closed:

* Martin Luther King Day
* President’s Day
* Columbus Day
* Labor Day
* Independence Day
* Memorial Day
* Thanksgiving Day
* Friday after Thanksgiving
* Veterans Day
* Between Christmas and New Year’s Day
  1. One floating holiday will be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director.
  2. If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the day of the paid holiday will be the preceding Friday or the following Monday as determined by the Executive Director.
  3. In the event one or more paid holidays fall within a vacation leave they will not be charged as vacation leave.
  4. If a paid holiday falls on a day in which a regular part‑time employee normally works, he/she will be paid for the hours scheduled to work.
  5. If an unexcused day off is taken immediately before or after a paid holiday, holiday pay will not be given.

1. Bereavement Leave
2. An employee will be entitled to paid-time off in the event of the death of a relative or significant other. Significant other is defined as someone who has made an impact or held importance in their life.
3. Bereavement is five (5) days with approval from the staff person’s immediate supervisor. Certain exceptions can be made on the recommendation from the staff person’s immediate supervisor, with the Executive Directors approval.
4. Critical Illness Leave
   1. An employee will be entitled to paid-time off in the event of critical illness (life threatening, hospice, accident) of a relative or significant other. Critical illness is up to 3 days leave. Certain exceptions can be made with the Executive Director/SILC Chair approval.
   2. On a case by case basis at the discretion of the immediate supervisor and with the approval of the Executive Director/SILC Chair.
5. Leave of Absence Without Pay
   1. Leave of absence without pay or fringe benefits may be granted for reasons that are acceptable to the Executive Director for a period not to exceed six (6) months.
   2. An employee granted such a leave may when possible be reinstated to the same or equivalent position for which he/she is qualified provided that:
      1. the employee returns within 10 days of the completion of the leave, and;
      2. a position is available, or;
      3. a temporary employee has been filling the position previously held.
   3. As the SILC is located in Colorado, an at-will employment state, this policy is not deemed contractual in nature or a waiver of those rights by SILC or the employee.

Employees on leave without pay may continue health insurance during the leave period by contributing 100% of its cost. Upon notification by the employee of the desire to continue insurance, the Executive Director will arrange for coverage. The employee will be advised of the cost and manner of payment. Premium must be paid in advance by one full month to maintain coverage.

* 1. Sick, vacation and personal leave do not accrue during a leave without pay.

1. Jury Duty‑ See Section 5 in General Information

**EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES**

1. All positions, titles, descriptions, for any employee must be approved by the Executive Committee and the Chair of the Personnel Committee prior to the position being filled. The Executive Director shall make recommendations in writing to the Executive Committee and the Chair of the Personnel Committee.
2. Promotions/New Positions/Vacant Positions
   1. Announcements, in accessible formats, of vacant positions within SILC will be posted conspicuously within SILC and distributed to all ILC’s in the State at least one week before being advertised or distributed to other agencies.
   2. All announcements will contain the position title, job description, the salary or salary range, qualifications, where resumes are to be sent, or application made, the final date of application and a statement that the SILC is an equal opportunity employer.
   3. Current employees who qualify are encouraged to apply for vacant positions suited to their education, training, and experience. Current employees must submit their resume to be considered for a vacant position.
3. The Executive Director ‑ Shall be hired by the Board of Directors. The Board shall appoint a search committee of between three (3) and five (5) members. The Chairperson of the Board shall appoint one (1) board member to be Chairperson of the Search Committee. The remainder of the committee is to be made up of other board members.
4. Temporary Positions ‑ May be approved by the Executive Committee and Personnel Committee Chair upon written recommendation of the Executive Director. The recommendation must include the expected duration of the temporary position.
5. Training ‑ All personnel are encouraged to seek job related training and to attend conventions and professional meetings. Time off with or without pay will be made at the discretion of the Executive Director. Requests must be made in writing at least two weeks in advance.
6. Job Announcement Procedures - Job announcements and newspaper want ads will be prepared by the Executive Director.
7. Job vacancies will be posted through email to all stakeholders, on the SILC website and other resources as needed.
8. Application/Hiring Process
   1. Review of resume, curriculum vita, and job applications shall be done by the Executive Director and appropriate staff.
   2. All interviewing is coordinated by the Supervisor who is recruiting.
   3. Interviews shall be completed by the Executive Director and appropriate staff.
   4. All applicants will be subject to review of personal and professional references. Falsification or misrepresentation of facts during the pre-employment interview or in the resume may be grounds for immediate dismissal.
   5. A final recommendation for a candidate to fill a vacancy shall be made by the recruiting Supervisor. The final decision to hire a candidate will be made by the Executive Director.
   6. All successful candidates will be required to prove eligibility to work in the United States.
9. Travel Allowances
   1. When staff are required to attend meetings as part of their job responsibility, they will be reimbursed at the currently approved rate as set by the Council, with prior approval by the Executive Director.
   2. Mileage for job related responsibilities will be reimbursed at the currently approved reimbursement rate, as set by the Council.
   3. Out‑of‑town travel requires prior approval by the Executive Director.
   4. Convention/conference expenses of the Executive Director exceeding 3 days must be approved by the Executive Committee.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

1. It is the SILC's policy to provide effective and acceptable means for employees to bring problems and complaints concerning their well‑being at work to the appropriate persons. Employees are encouraged to settle grievances informally through discussion with the Executive Director. If this does not remedy the situation, any employee may bring up a grievance in the following manner:

Step I ‑ Submit a written statement of the grievance to the Executive Director, including notes of any informal meeting and discussions. This must be completed within five (5) working days of the incident being grieved. The Executive Director has the responsibility of responding to the grievance within 10 working days. If necessary, a meeting will be set up to take place no later than eight (8) working days from the time the grievance was first submitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will render a decision. Written record will be kept of this grievance and resolution and placed in the employee's file.

1. If the Executive Director fails to respond to the grievance, or the employee feels the decision is not acceptable, or if a solution has been reached but is not adhered to, he/she may proceed to Step II.

Step II ‑ Submit a written statement of the grievance to the Executive Committee with a copy to the Executive Director, including notes of any meetings or discussions. This should be completed within five (5) working days of the completion of Step I. The Executive Committee has the responsibility of responding to the grievance within 10 working days. If necessary, a meeting will be scheduled to take place no later than eight (8) working days from the time the grievance was first submitted to the Personnel Committee. The Executive Committee will render a decision. Written record will be kept of this grievance and resolution and placed in the employee's file.

1. If the Executive Committee fails to respond to the grievance, or the employee feels the decision is not acceptable, or if solution has been reached but is not adhered to, he/she may proceed to Step III.

Step III ‑ Employee submits a statement of the grievance with all other pertinent materials to the SILC Chair with a copy to the Executive Committee and the Executive Director. This must be no later than five (5) working days after completion of Step II. The Chair will schedule a meeting with all concerned individuals and the Executive Committee to respond to the grievance 10 working days after receiving the grievance.

1. In light of the facts and data presented, the SILC Chair will render a decision. The Chair will state her/his decision in writing with copies to the Executive Committee, Executive Director, employee and employee's file.
2. If the SILC Chair does not respond to the grievance or the employee is still dissatisfied with the resolution, he/she may proceed to Step VI.

Step VI ‑ Employee submits a statement of the grievance and all other pertinent materials to the Board of Directors with copies to the Executive Committee and the Executive Director. This must be submitted no later than five (5) working days after the completion of Step III. The Chairperson shall schedule a meeting with all concerned individuals and the Board of Directors to respond to the grievance 10 working days after receiving the grievance.

1. After due consideration of the materials and data presented the Board will render a decision in writing with copies to the Executive Committee, the Executive Director and employee. A copy will be maintained in the employee's file. In all cases, the decision of the Board of Directors will be binding.

If the grievance is with the Executive Director, the process will start with Step 3.

**DISCIPLINARY AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES**

1. Any employee exhibiting failure to perform duties at work, failure to follow policies, dishonesty, substance abuse while working, unreported or unexcused absences, serious theft damage to SILC property and/or serious infringement upon the life, health or well being of staff or other individuals at the SILC will be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination by the SILC. Furthermore, such action and/or termination may be undertaken at the discretion of the Executive Director and is not limited to the above if in his/her opinion it is warranted.
2. Disciplinary procedures may be taken as part of the result of a grievance hearing. Procedures may include, but are not limited to:
   * + 1. Suspension with or without pay and/or benefits
       2. Forced paid Vacation
       3. Demotion
       4. Return to a probationary status
3. Termination ‑ In any situation felt by the Executive Director to warrant immediate termination, termination will be without notice.
4. Suspension ‑ When it appears that immediate termination is warranted yet a period for investigating the accusation is needed, the employee may be suspended by the Executive Director with or without pay at the discretion of the Executive Director. Grievance procedures will be followed in the event that the employee does not accept this decision.
5. If the employee is absolved of the charge in this section, he/she will be reinstated and paid for lost days. If the employee is not absolved of these charges, he/she will be terminated as of the date of the immediate suspension by the Executive Director.
6. Resignation (voluntary) ‑ A staff member who resigns is expected to give written notice in the following manner:
   1. Regular full or part-time employee ‑ two weeks
   2. Part time and temporary employee - one week
7. Reduction in Staff ‑ If the staffing pattern necessitates the elimination of a staff position by the Executive Director, the employee must receive one week written notice. The Employee will be entitled to monetary compensation for any unused vacation.
8. As the SILC is located in Colorado, an at will employment state, this policy is not deemed contractual in nature or a waiver of those rights by SILC or the employee.

**DRUG FREE POLICY**

1. All employees are hereby notified that The State Independent Living Council, Inc. will fully comply with the Federal Drug‑Free Workplace Act of 1988.
2. Employees with drug and alcohol problems not only jeopardize their own physical and emotional well‑being, they also risk the health and safety of their co-workers and colleagues. The State Independent Living Council, Inc. through education, intervention and assistance, is committed to maintaining a drug‑free workplace.
3. The SILC strictly prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance on its premises and project sites.
   1. "Controlled substances" refers to the chemicals as identified by the Controlled Substances Act by the Federal government. This includes all so-called "street drugs" (heroin, cocaine, crack, marijuana, speed, acid).
4. Prescribed medications are acceptable as allowed by the individual’s physician.
5. 9‑2 Employees convicted of a criminal drug statute violation occurring in the workplace must notify their immediate supervisor within five (5) days of the conviction.
6. Violations of any of the above agency policies will subject the employee to immediate termination and will disqualify the employee from working on any contract covered by the Act.
7. If the cause of the disability is found to be drug or alcohol related, the employee's supervisor may refer the employee to participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program as a condition of further employment. Addiction to or misuse of prescribed drugs could also subject an employee to disciplinary action or termination.

**THE PERSONNEL POLICIES OF THE STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL, INC. ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME AT THE DISCRETION OF THE FULL SILC.**

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)

Policy: Title VII, Section 705(c) DUTIES-

The Council shall--

* jointly develop and sign (in conjunction with the Designated State Entity -DSE) the State Plan required in section 704;
* monitor, review, and evaluate the implementation of the State Plan;

The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) directs the work of the State’s Independent Living Program on a three-year cycle. The SPIL must have a statewide vision of the independent living needs of people with disabilities eligible for IL services. The SPIL is written by SILC and Executive Directors of the Centers for Independent Living and signed by same plus DVR (DSE).The input of stakeholders is crucial to the development of a successful plan. In addition to the inclusion of stakeholders on the SPIL Committee, SILC conducts public hearings and makes drafts of the plan available to the public in accordance with State and Federal Regulations.

The three-year cycle of the SPIL begins on October 1st, ending on September 30th of the last year of the cycle. Development of the plan ranges from 12 to 18 months and is often supported by ongoing needs assessments mandated in the previous SPIL. Submission of the plan to Federal Administration of Community Living (ACL)/Independent Living Administration (ILA) must be on or before June 30th of the year of implementation. ACL reviews the SPIL, may ask for additional information or changes to the SPIL, and approves the SPIL for publication prior to October 1st. If a SPIL is not approved by ACL, the State risks losing Federal funding for its Independent Living Program.

Procedures: The SILC has a standing State Plan Committee. This committee is comprised of SILC members, DVR (DSE) staff, and two executive directors of Colorado CILs. The SILC’s Chair-Elect is always the Chair of the State Plan Committee, permitting the Chair-Elect to receive an adequate foundation in the work of SILC. Further details of the committee can be found in the Committee Section of this manual.

At the beginning of the SPIL development phase, SILC hosts a joint meeting of the full SILC and all Colorado CIL executive directors. The focus of the meeting is to determine issue areas that need to be addressed in the SPIL and should be central to public hearings and focus groups. The next step is for the State Plan Committee to read the Work Plans of each CIL as they appear in the most recent 704 Reports. The State Plan Committee then gathers information from stakeholders to form a vision and mission for the next three years of the Independent Living Program. Information is gathered through public hearings, surveys, focus groups and interviews. This information is shared with SILC, DVR (DSE) and CILs as soon as draft goals and objectives have been developed.

The process is then turned over to the SPIL Writing Committee, usually made up of the SILC Chair, Chair-Elect, ILPC, SILC Administration Assistant/Coordinator, and SPIL Committee Members. When the entire SPIL draft is complete it is posted on the SILC Website and made available for public comment. After 30 days, the draft may be amended to reflect public input. The final draft is then posted for another 30 days. In some years, there is not enough time for two full postings, but at least one draft must be posted for 30 days before it can be approved by SILC and signed by the SILC Chair, Director of DVR (DSE), and 51 per cent (%) of the CIL Executive Directors.

After the State Plan is approved by ACL/ILA and implemented by SILC and CILs, the State Plan Committee becomes a SPIL monitoring body and reports at least quarterly to SILC and to the public on the progress of achieving SPIL goals and objectives.

# Strategic & Operational Planning

Policy: SILC has two separate yet interrelated planning processes.

* **Long-range planning**, commonly called strategic planning, has a long-term focus that is designed to look over the horizon at things that may be 5-10 years or more in the future for Colorado’s Independent Living Centers and helps SILC prepare for these things.
* **Short-range planning**, called operational planning, has a short-term focus that allows SILC to focus on the next 1-3 years thereby addressing short-term needs and resources to support those needs.

**Strategic Planning** helps define who we are as a council, what our purpose is, where we want to be in the future, and what long-range goals are needed to get us there. Long-range goals usually come from strengths to build on, weaknesses to be strengthened, opportunities to be taken, and threats to be avoided.

**Operational Planning** defines the steps we need to take over the next few years, the resources we will need, who will lead each major task, and how we will monitor and correct our progress along the way.

Procedures: SILC’s Strategic Plan is specifically to achieve SILC’s Mission, support growth and development of SILC as an organization, and direct the work of SILC.

SILC’s Mission Statement, Vision, and Values are:

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

Paving the pathways to full participation for the community of people with disabilities served by Colorado’s Centers for Independent Living.

**VISION:**

The Colorado Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) envisions a Colorado that offers equal and full participation in professional and community life to all people with disabilities.

**VALUES:**

* We recognize the value of all people, and acknowledge their rights to dignity, freedom and inclusion.
* We support a cross-disability, multicultural and disability justice perspective that promotes consumer control.
* We believe that the application of independent living philosophy and the delivery of independent living services creates an environment that supports the potential of all Coloradoans.
* Colorado SILC’s mission, vision and values are built on the fundamental concept of the independent living philosophy, which challenges the long-held view that “people with disabilities need care from their community” to one of “people with disabilities can determine the type of support they need to live in and contribute to their community.”

# Travel

Policy::

***In-State Travel:*** SILC members are expected to make their own arrangements for travel to-and-from SILC meetings. DVR (DSE) will arrange for lodging, meeting rooms, and meals during the meeting. If air travel is necessary for an in-state meeting, and has been approved by the SILC Chair, flight reservations will be made through DVR (DSE).

***Out-of-State Travel:*** Any out-of-state travel is subject to approval by the supervisory chain of DVR (DSE), and then by the State Travel Office. Requests for out-of-state travel must be submitted as early as possible, and no later than 120 days prior to travel in order to clear all necessary authorizations. Travel to the Washington D.C. area is subject to increased scrutiny and should be planned six (6) months in advance. All out-of-state flight reservations must be made through DVR (DSE) by a State approved travel agency.

All air travel must be approved in advance by the State Travel Office. It must be booked within five (5) days of approval from the State Travel Office and will be booked through DVR (DSE) staff.

Rental cars must be pre-approved by the SILC Chair and the written approval submitted to DVR (DSE). Then DVR (DSE) will submit a written request to the State Travel Office; it must be approved before the rental of a vehicle for SILC business. Non-approved rental vehicle charges will not be reimbursed.

The DVR (DSE) Office will also arrange lodging, pay conference registration, and other expenses for out-of-state travel. If travel is made by personal vehicle, as in the case of a nearby regional conference or training, then mileage and other allowable reimbursements will be made. (*See* ***Reimbursement and Conferences****)*

The State cannot provide a travel advance under any circumstances.

Procedures: The Procedures for travel to SILC meetings is clearly described in the ***Meeting*** section. Travel for other SILC purposes requires similar action. An E-mail or FAX, demonstrating pre-approval of travel by the SILC Chair or Executive Committee should be submitted to the ILPC at the DVR (DSE) State Office. It is important that all requests be submitted in a timely manner to allow for State approval and processing. Advance notice also provides an opportunity for comparing prices and taking advantage of bargains, for a smaller impact on the SILC budget.

Air travel requests must be submitted at least 30 days in advance for in-state travel, 30-60 days for out-of-state, and 90-120 days for travel to the Washington D.C. area. When approval has been received from the State Travel Office, tickets must be purchased within five days from an approved travel agency. DVR (DSE) staff will work with you by phone or E-mail to coordinate available flights with your personal and event schedules.

All tickets are E-tickets. An itinerary with flight confirmation number will be sent to SILC member from DVR (DSE) as soon as arrangements are finalized.

All lodging is reserved byDVR (DSE) and charged to a State credit card. SILC members must pay for any incidentals such as Internet connection, in-room movies, or room service charges.

**Travel Advances**

Although no travel advances can be issued, in the case of ***demonstrated need,*** DVR (DSE) will make every effort to prepay as many expenses as possible. For instance, if specialized lift-equipped travel is necessary, and a cash payment is expected, DVR (DSE) will negotiate for prepayment.

Last minute arrangements for travel are often costly, and sometimes, not feasible. Please communicate travel plans and travel needs, along with the appropriate approvals, as promptly as possible to administrative personnel. Although the State attempts to accommodate the travel needs of SILC members, there will be times that late notification will result in the inability to arrange travel.

See also: Meetings, Reimbursement, and Conferences

# Website and Internet Resources

Policy: SILC’s Website address is: [www.coloradosilc.org.](file:///C:\Users\chris\AppData\Local\Packages\Microsoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe\TempState\Downloads\www.coloradosilc.org) The website is used to communicate with stakeholders within the disability community. SILC uses the website to provide information, obtain feedback, and post public notices as required by Title VII. All information posted on the SILC Website must reflect approved positions of SILC. All components of the website must be accessible to people with disabilities and compliant with ADA standards.

Procedures: SILC’s Website serves as the public face of SILC. The SILC Communications and Media Chair along with assistance from the SILC Administrative Assistant/Coordinator are responsible for performing updates, adding new content, revising webpages and format, and maintaining the SILC Master Calendar.

Ideas for website content or changes are welcome from any SILC member. All content, other than regular meeting notices and minor editorial changes, must be reviewed and approved by SILC before being posted to the website.

SILC Members are expected to provide a photograph and short biographical statement for use on the website. All photographs, including those of members require a signed photo release before posting to the website or disseminating to the media or publicly.

Colorado SILC has a Facebook page managed by the Communication and Media Committee. Please follow Procedures for updating the website when requesting to add information to SILC’s Facebook site.

Each member is expected to use and maintain a Colorado SILC E-mail address for SILC business. New members will be assigned a user address.