

Reporting Instrument

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Expiration Date: January 31, 2021

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

**SECTION 704
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
For
STATE INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES
PROGRAM**

(Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended)

Part I

INSTRUMENT

**(To be completed by Designated State Units
And Statewide Independent Living Councils)**

Reporting Fiscal Year: 2022

State: CO

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 35 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (P.L. 105-220 Section 410 Workforce Investment Act). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Rehabilitation Services Administration, LBJ Basement, Attention: Timothy Beatty, PCP Room 5057, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20202-2800 or email timothy.beatty@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1820-0606. Chapter 1, Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act.

SUBPART I - ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

Section A - Sources and Amounts of Funds and Resources

Sections 704(c) and 704(m)(3) and (4) of the Act; 34 CFR 364.35 and 364.36

Indicate amount received by the DSU as per each funding source. Enter "0" for none.

Item 1 - All Federal Funds Received

(A) Title VII, Ch. 1, Part B	\$338717.00
(B) Title VII, Ch. 1, Part C - For 723 states Only	\$0.00
(C) Title VII, Ch. 2	\$102710.00
(D) Other Federal Funds	\$835670.00
Subtotal - All Federal Funds	\$1277097.00

Item 2 - Other Government Funds

(E) State Government Funds	\$7875482.00
(F) Local Government Funds	\$280447.00
Subtotal - State and Local Government Funds	\$8155929.00

Item 3 - Private Resources

(G) Fees for Service (program income, etc.)	\$429565.00
(H) Other resources	\$491576.00
Subtotal - Private Resources	\$921141.00

Item 4 - Total Income

Total income = (A)+(B)+(C)+(D)+(E)+(F)+(G)+(H)	\$10354167.00
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Item 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, Medicaid funds, etc.)	\$0.00
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Item 6 - Net Operating Resources

Total Income (Section 4) <minus> amount paid out to Consumers (Section 5) = Net Operating Resources	\$10354167.00
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Section B - Distribution of Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B Funds

What Activities were Conducted with Part B Funds?	Expenditures of Part B Funds for Services by DSU Staff	Expenditures for Services Rendered By Grant or Contract
(1) Provided resources to the SILC to carry out its functions	\$0.00	\$6200.00
(2) Provided IL services to individuals with significant disabilities	\$0.00	\$0.00

What Activities were Conducted with Part B Funds?	Expenditures of Part B Funds for Services by DSU Staff	Expenditures for Services Rendered By Grant or Contract
(3) Demonstrated ways to expand and improve IL services	\$0.00	\$0.00
(4) Supported the general operation of CILs that are in compliance with the standards and assurances set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 725 of the Act	\$0.00	\$53671.80
(5) Supported activities to increase capacity to develop approaches or systems for providing IL services	\$0.00	\$0.00
(6) Conducted studies and analyses, gathered information, developed model policies, and presented findings in order to enhance IL services	\$0.00	\$0.00
(7) Provided training regarding the IL philosophy	\$0.00	\$0.00
(8) Provided outreach to unserved or underserved populations, including minority groups and urban and rural populations	\$0.00	\$0.00
Totals	\$0.00	\$59871.80

Section C - Grants or Contracts Used to Distribute Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B Funds

Sections 704(f) and 713 of the Act; 34 CFR 364.43, and 34 CFR 365 Subpart C

Enter the requested information for all DSU grants or contracts, funded at least in part by Part B funds, in the chart below. If a column is not applicable to a particular grant or contract, enter "N/A." If there were no non-Part B funds provided to this grantee or contractor for the purpose listed, enter "\$0" in that column. Add more rows as necessary.

Name of Grantee or Contractor	Use of Funds (based on the activities listed in Subpart I, Section B)	Amount of Part B Funds	Amount of Non-Part B Funds	Consumer Eligibility Determined By DSU or Provider	CSRs Kept With DSU or Provider
Atlantis Community, Inc	Provision of IL Services	\$0.00	\$872038.00	Provider	Provider
Center for Disabilities	Provision of IL Services	\$0.00	\$793774.00	Provider	Provider
Center for Independence	Provision of IL Services	\$685.26	\$775630.00	Provider	Provider
Center for People With Disabilities	Provision of IL Services	\$0.00	\$699242.00	Provider	Provider
The Independence Center	Provision of IL Services	\$22872.80	\$780923.00	Provider	Provider
Connections for Independent Living	Provision of IL Services	\$13804.80	\$754582.00	Provider	Provider
Disabled Resource Services	Provision of IL Services	\$16309.00	\$693222.00	Provider	Provider
North West Colorado Center for Independence	Provision of IL Services	\$0.00	\$647634.00	Provider	Provider
Southwest Center for Independence	Provision of IL Services	\$0.00	\$690229.00	Provider	Provider
SILC	Provided resources to the SILC to support its functions	\$6200.00	\$49070.00	N/A	N/A

Name of Grantee or Contractor	Use of Funds (based on the activities listed in Subpart I, Section B)	Amount of Part B Funds	Amount of Non-Part B Funds	Consumer Eligibility Determined By DSU or Provider	CSRs Kept With DSU or Provider
DSE - Office of Independent Living Services	Provided resources to the DSE to support its functions	\$0.00	\$260683.00	N/A	N/A
Total Amount of Grants and Contracts		\$59871.90	\$7017027.00		

Section D - Grants or Contracts for Purposes Other than Providing IL Services or For the General Operation of Centers

Section 713 of the Act; 34 CFR 365.1 and 34 CFR 365.20

Describe the objectives, activities and results for each Part B grant or contract awarded for purposes other than IL services or the general operation of centers.

On September 30, 2019, the Office of Independent Living Services at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) was awarded a five-year research project. The Office of Independent Living Services held contracts with five Centers for Independent Living to execute the research project. The goals for the project are to improve education and employment outcomes; increase gross monthly income; and, expand community participation for Coloradans with disabilities. The name of the project is called Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS) and is funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). SEEKS targets people applying for SSA disability benefits while concurrently receiving services from an employment specialist to obtain employment and a comprehensive benefits counselor through the Center for Independent Living system in partnership with DVR. This model combines the expectation that people with disabilities can contribute to the business bottom line in the competitive, integrated workforce, but also seeks to address limited economic resources and social isolation experienced by people with disabilities. The SILC continues to be an active contributor through their participation on the SEEKS Advisory Team. The SILC Chair also serves as the lead for the Advisory Team's Peer subcommittee. Through year three of the project 130 individuals have been enrolled. Section 1.1, D is the amount of funding awarded to the Office of Independent Living Services for year 3 of the project. Not all the funds awarded go directly to the participating CILs.

ACL Funding: Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Networks: Independent Living Services

Based on input and planning with Colorado's Centers for Independent Living and SILC, the Office of Independent Living Services (Office) applied for Expanding the Public Health Workforce within the Disability Networks: Independent Living Services Funding. On March 9, 2022, the Office received an award letter for \$121,081.00 from the Administration for Community Living. Based on input from all the CILs, there was agreement that these funds would be distributed to Colorado's Part B CILs: NorthWest Colorado Center for Independence, South West Center for Independence, Disabled Resource Services and the Independence Center. The Office entered into distinct contracts for \$30,270.25 for each CIL. Here is a description of the purpose of the contracts:

Funds will supplement and not supplant existing Independent Living funding. Funds made available through this Purchase Order Grant Award must be used in association with the following items per the Federal Funder:

1. To recruit, hire, and train public health workers to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare

for future public health challenges. Funds may be used to offset costs of hiring a range of public health professionals, including but not limited to: social support professionals, community health workers, communication and policy experts and "other positions as may be required to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19...."

2. Cover wages and benefits for said public health professionals (directly or through contract), as well as the costs of associated equipment, training, and supplies for these professionals and indirect costs
3. Payments to temporary staff and independent contractors (consistent with the grantee's policies and procedures)
4. Activities to "prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19"
5. Equipment to support the recruiting, hiring, and training of staff supporting public health activities. This could include IT equipment, personal protective equipment, data management and other technology, or other necessary supplies.

State Unit on Aging - Vaccines:

During this federal fiscal year, the Office of Independent Living Services at the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment executed an interagency agreement with the Colorado State Unit on Aging. The purpose of this agreement was to provide assistance with scheduling vaccination appointments, transportation to vaccine sites, direct support services needed to attend vaccine appointment, connection in-home vaccination options, and or education about the importance of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine to individuals with a disability under 60 years of age. As a result, the Office established purchase orders with four Centers for Independent Living to fulfill the contract. The four CILs were Connections for Independent Living, Center for Independence, Center for People with Disabilities, and South West Center for Independence. Each CIL received \$37,500 per contract to fulfill the commitment and purpose.

Office of Independent Living Services:

The activities identified under Section B above were conducted using State General Funds by the Office of Independent Living Services. The Office plans to spend FFY22 Part B dollars on these activities in the second year of the award.

Section E - Monitoring Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B Funds

34 CFR 80.40(a)

Provide a summary of the program or fiscal review, evaluation and monitoring conducted by the state of any of the grantees/contractors receiving Part B funds during the reporting year.

The Office of Independent Living Services (Office) provided program reviews for two (2) Centers for Independent Living (CILs) during the reporting period. Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) 8-85-105 states that CILs must be certified in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act as amended under Title VII, section 725. State rule 9.203.3.C. explains that the Office of Independent Living Services contained within the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will conduct onsite reviews and provide CIL certification not to exceed thirty-six (36) months. The Office conducts these reviews with a CIL director serving as a peer reviewer. Due to COVID 19 limitations, the reviews conducted during this time period were conducted in person and virtually via zoom, google meets, and telephone when appropriate. The Office conducted reviews of the following two CILs: Connections for Independent Living and Disabled Resource Services. All two CILs were found to follow the Independent Living indicators as described under The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended.

As the pass-through entity, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) conducts fiscal compliance audits in collaboration with the Office of Independent

Living Services. The purpose of these audits is to ensure financial compliance with Federal Uniform Guidance and State Fiscal Rules. The Office participates in the financial compliance audits, reviews all reports, and collaborates on corrective action plans with the CILs as appropriate. During the reporting period, the CDLE auditor completed nine fiscal compliance audits for all CILs. Additionally, each year CDLE requires the CILs to complete annual risk assessment forms. These risk assessment forms are used as required by federal uniform guidance and is a tool used by the CDLE FMU for the annual fiscal compliance visits with the CILs.

Additionally, on a monthly basis, the Office hosts monthly financial manager meetings with all the CILs including the CDLE fiscal monitoring unit and the DVR leader of finance and operations. The purpose of the meeting is to answer any questions and provide technical assistance on financial management and compliance.

During this reporting period, four of the nine CILs had executive director changes. Two of the changes were planned and coordinated with the respective CILs' Board at the Independence Center and Center for Independence. Two of the transitions happened over night at Disabled Resource Services (DRS) and South West Center for Independence (SWCI). To support the transition, the Office scheduled weekly meetings with the new executive director and when appropriate with the Board president. Both these CILs are Part B CILs. The intent of the structured meetings was designed to orient the new executive directors of the Statewide Independent Living Services contracts and highlight contract requirements to ensure ongoing compliance during the transition. The Office provided a structured contract orientation and training on monthly invoice and program reports. In both circumstances, the Office requested a transition plan given that the change was unexpected. Based on the executive directors' experience, the Office provided additional guidance in overseeing the contract and program expectations to minimize any risk to the contracts. Both CILs engaged Paula McElwee at ILRU to provide additional mentoring. The Office also established 1:1 meeting times with the new executive director at the Center for Independence to provide orientation and training on the Statewide Independent Living Services contract.

Section F - Administrative Support Services and Staffing

Section 704(c)(2) and 704 (m)(2) and (4) of the Act; CFR 364.22(a)(2) and 34 CFR 364.31

Item 1 - Administrative Support Services

Describe any administrative support services, including staffing, provided by the DSU to the Part B Program.

The Office of Independent Living Services serving as the Designated State Entity (DSE) consists of two full-time staff members; one Program Manager and one Independent Living Program Coordinator. These staff members oversee the execution and monitoring of the nine CILs' contracts with the State. The Office provides CIL certification reviews according to the Rehabilitation Act as amended, on Independent Living standards and indicators. CIL certification is required under State rules to be a contractor for Independent Living services. The Office supports the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) with administrative tasks such as note taking, SILC meeting logistics, invoice processing, and other duties as requested. The Office serves as the fiscal sponsor of the Colorado SILC. These staff provide guidance and technical assistance to the SILC on following federal uniform guidance and navigating the State process to procure needed items such as equipment and professional services. The Office staff meet regularly with the SILC chair to make sure all administrative tasks are being met as needed. The Office staff ensure that SILC nominees are processed through the DSE to the governor's office.

The Office of Independent Living Services (Office) provides several supporting activities to all Centers

for Independent Living. The Office offers a monthly virtual meeting referred to as the Diner Dialogue. This is an hour-long meeting with all the CIL executive directors. The purpose of the call is to provide updates pertaining to the Statewide Independent Living Services contracts such as funding, contract adjustments, and requirements. This time is an opportunity for all the CILs to raise questions and discuss priority matters. Often, the focus of the conversation is funding and new funding. The Office hosts monthly finance manager calls for one hour with CIL finance managers. These virtual meetings are conducted to answer any questions and provide technical assistance on financial management and compliance. Both the CDLE financial monitoring unit and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Finance Leader participate in these meetings.

The Office established monthly check-in meetings for 30 minutes. These check-ins are voluntary. They were established to minimize and bring closure to any lingering questions that CIL may have. These questions may be financial or programmatic. Topics for these meetings range from indirect cost rate proposals and invoicing to vendor opportunities with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and program reports. The Office of Independent Living Services staff are available for point in time support and technical assistance.

In addition to these types of meetings, the Office of Independent Living Services established guidance and support tools. The Office of Independent Living Services website, <https://dvr.colorado.gov/dvr-programs-services/independent-living-services>, provides resources for the CILs. These resources include the following items: Contract Exhibits; Forms & Templates; Operational Guidance Documents; CIL Metrics Reports; Annual Program Performance Reports; and, CIL COVID Vaccination Efforts & Response. One more item that has become very useful is the Executive Direct and Leadership Transition tool. This tool was developed with the CIL directors and identifies some of the tools and orientation the Office of Independent Living Services can provide during leadership transition. This tool is being used with the new executive directors.

Item 2 - Staffing

Enter requested staff information for the DSU and service providers listed in Section C, above (excluding Part C funded CILs)

Type of Staff	Total Number of FTEs	FTEs filled by Individuals with Disabilities
Decision-Making Staff	15	12
Other Staff	63	50

Section G - For Section 723 States ONLY

Section 723 of the Act, 34 CFR Part 366, Subpart D

Item 2 - Administrative Support Services

Section 704(c)(2) of the Act; 34 CFR 364.22(a)(2)

Item 3 - Monitoring and Onsite Compliance Reviews

Section 723(g), (h), and (i); 34 CFR 366.38, 366.40 - 46

Item 4 - Updates or Issues

SUBPART II - NUMBER AND TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS WITH SIGNIFICANT DISABILITIES RECEIVING SERVICES

Section 704(m)(4) of the Act; 34 CFR 364.53

In this section, provide data from all service providers (DSU, grantees, contractors) who received Part B funds and who were listed in Subpart I, Section C of this report, except for the centers that receive Part C funds. Part C centers will provide this data themselves on their annual 704 Reports, Part II.

Section A - Number of Consumers Served During the Reporting Year

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

	# of CSRs
(1) Enter the number of active CSRs carried over from September 30 of the preceding reporting year	787
(2) Enter the number of CSRs started since October 1 of the reporting year	561
(3) Add lines (1) and (2) to get the <i>total number of consumers served</i>	1348

Section B - Number of CSRs Closed by September 30 of the Reporting Year

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

	# of CSRs
(1) Moved	33
(2) Withdrawn	94
(3) Died	9
(4) Complete Goals	188
(5) Other	246
(6) Add lines (1) + (2) + (3) + (4) + (5) to get <i>total CSRs closed</i>	570

Section C - Number of CSRs Active on September 30 of the Reporting Year

Indicate the number of CSRs active on September 30th of the reporting year.

	# of CSRs
Section A(3) <minus> Section (B)(6) = Section C	778

Section D - IL Plans and Waivers

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of consumers who signed a waiver	851
(2) Number of consumers with whom an ILP was developed	497
(3) <i>Total number of consumers served during the reporting year</i>	1348

Section E - Age

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Under 5 years old	9
(2) Ages 5 - 19	58
(3) Ages 20 - 24	83
(4) Ages 25 - 59	707
(5) Age 60 and Older	453
(6) Age unavailable	38
(7) <i>Total number of consumers served by age</i>	1348

Section F - Sex

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Number of Females served	774
(2) Number of Males served	574
(3) <i>Total number of consumers served by sex</i>	1348

Section G - Race And Ethnicity

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

**This section reflects a new OMB directive.
Please refer to the Instructions before completing.**

	# of Consumers
(1) American Indian or Alaska Native	38
(2) Asian	14
(3) Black or African American	38
(4) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5
(5) White	976
(6) Hispanic/Latino of any race or Hispanic/Latino only	136
(7) Two or more races	35
(8) Race and ethnicity unknown	106
(9) <i>Total number of consumers served by race/ethnicity</i>	1348

Section H - Disability

Indicate the number of consumers in each category below.

	# of Consumers
(1) Cognitive	207
(2) Mental/Emotional	189
(3) Physical	570
(4) Hearing	55

	# of Consumers
(5) Vision	121
(6) Multiple Disabilities	169
(7) Other	37
(8) <i>Total number of consumers served by by disability</i>	1348

SUBPART III - INDIVIDUAL SERVICES AND ACHIEVEMENTS FUNDED THROUGH TITLE VII, CHAPTER 1, PART B FUNDS

Sections 13 and 704(m)(4); 34 CFR 364.53; Government Performance Results Act (GPRA) Performance Measures

Subpart III contains new data requests. Please refer to the Instructions before completing.

Section A - Individual Services and Achievements

For the reporting year, indicate in the chart below how many consumers requested and received each of the following IL services. Include all consumers who were provided services during the reporting year through Part B funds, either directly by DSU staff or via grants or contracts with other providers. Do not include consumers who were served by any centers that received Part C funds during the reporting year.

Services	Consumers Requesting Services	Consumers Receiving Services
Advocacy/Legal Services	1807	1778
Assistive Technology	222	194
Children's Services	17	15
Communication Services	90	84
Counseling and related services	38	31
Family Services	40	39
Housing, Home Modification, and Shelter Services	681	627
IL Skills Training and Life Skills Training	1682	1662
Information and Referral Services	5172	5113
Mental Restoration Services	16	16
Mobility training	32	31
Peer Counseling Services	995	975
Personal Assistance Services	126	124
Physical Restoration Services	12	12
Preventive Services	187	182
Prostheses, Orthotics, and other appliances	13	13
Recreational Services	63	61
Rehabilitation Technology Services	1	1
Therapeutic Treatment	4	3
Transportation Services	3474	3467
Youth/Transition Services	503	503
Vocational Services	390	376
Other	1126	1107
Totals	16691	16414

Section B - Increased Independence and Community Integration

Item 1 - 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	479	42	431
Communication	50	8	39
Mobility/Transportation	178	37	133
Community-Based Living	471	50	408
Educational	98	15	75
Vocational	224	44	167
Self-Care	189	44	137
Information Access/Technology	122	30	89
Personal Resource Management	709	125	576
Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institution to Community-Based Living	58	2	55
Community/Social Participation	50	12	29
Other	124	33	72
Totals	2752	442	2211

Item 2 - Improved Access To Transportation, Health Care and Assistive Technology

(A) Table

In column one, indicate the number of consumers who required access to previously unavailable transportation, health care services, or assistive technology during the reporting year. 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 year. 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 year.

Areas	# of Consumers Requiring Access	# of Consumers Achieving Access	# of Consumers Whose Access is in Progress
(A) Transportation	280	226	51
(B) Health Care Services	444	231	213
(C) Assistive Technology	1346	1196	148

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 document that follow-up contacts with these consumers showed access to previously unavailable transportation, health care and assistive technology.

(B) 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.

Section C - Additional Information Concerning Individual Services or Achievements

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

The Independence Center:

The Independence Center continues to strive to provide relevant, helpful, and necessary services to individuals with disabilities throughout our six-county catchment area. We are especially proud of our efforts and achievements during FY 2022. Implementing a new BHAG (Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal), The IC spent the bulk of the year focusing on language and services that will help our consumers be Known, Valued and Included (KVI). As our communities continue to adapt to a 'post-Covid' culture, we achieved tangible impact both in their homes and out in the community. During FY 2022, The IC continued to provide technology and connectivity to consumers in their residences. Consumers received mobile hot spots, Echo Dot units and prepaid/discounted internet access. The expert knowledge base and training of our team members helped provide further personal and technological connection. This ability to independently connect to the outside world has proven helpful in battling the physical and social isolation that remains for so many of our consumers, allowing connection with peers, social groups and family members. The IC was also able to serve our community in several innovative ways through the utilization of a Disabling Barriers grant, implemented through our Peer Support department. This was an important way for our consumers to begin reintegrating into group and public settings. One of our Peer Support specialists, with an extensive recreation and fitness background, was able to introduce our consumers to activities such as adaptive rock climbing, archery, and running. This grant also provided an opportunity for our consumers to gather and attend a once-per-month movie day throughout the summer months. At one point, this group exceeded 50 participants! We were also able to set up and maintain space for gardening at a greenhouse in one of our surrounding counties, allowing our consumers to plant, care for and harvest herbs and vegetables. This proved to be yet another wonderful setting for socialization.

NorthWest Colorado Center for Independence (NWCCI):

NWCCI continues to be an integrated part of the community on a professional and leadership level. We participate in monthly meetings in all 5 counties and receive requests to collaborate on a regular basis. Professionals and community-based organizations from a wide variety of interests and purposes look to us to partner in coordinating complicated situations involving multiple agencies in the communities we serve. We are known for advocating to increase accessibility in the community, and recognized for our expertise in assisting people to navigate benefits systems such as SSI/SSDI and Medicaid. The general public looks to us as a resource when having difficulties with service providers for assistance addressing life's challenges and figuring out solutions. We have a reputation built upon being professional, reliable, and committed to accommodating access to our consumers. The manner in which we provide individual advocacy services exemplifies the Independent Living philosophy and serves as a model for other human service agencies.

Achievements:

Collaborated with the Grand County Library District around their goal to improve their environment for inclusion. We worked with them to do an accessibility study. Although each library is already ADA

compliant, they plan to implement changes identified in the study within the next 3 years to promote county wide equity. We were asked to participate in the study as a disability access consultant because I am a stakeholder who promotes library services and works with a broad range of people who need an accessible environment. (It's also because I worked with GCLD for over a decade and have extensive familiarity with each library... They know I'm a fan who appreciates the bridge they build for people to access technology and educational materials- etc.) While working with individuals to transition out of the nursing home, we assisted in applying for housing at a HUD housing complex in Craig. They were both denied because of criminal history over 20 years old. The main point of argument we had is that reaching back that far is against the Colorado Rental Application Fairness Act.

This act limits the criminal history search to 7 years. We attempted mediation with the housing provider and they would not budge, so we continued to run the situation through the system. We were not able to find any solutions and assisted the consumer with filing a case with the Colorado Civil Rights. The case is currently pending. We have been working with an individual for a while who recently had an accident. This person already had a TBI (traumatic brain injury) and unfortunately they slipped on ice and were hospitalized with brain bleeding. After this the consumer struggled with finding a job and had been feeling isolated by everything. The consumer made some bad choices and ended up in legal trouble, and was starting to fail some requirements of probation towards the end of their sentence. When our IL Coordinator met with the consumer about this it was discovered that nobody was aware of the consumer's TBI and how it factors into their situation. The IL Coordinator offered to assist the consumer with disclosure of their conditions in an effort to make it clear to everyone what the full story was and to make an argument for an alternative to jail time as the approach for taking accountability for their actions. A consumer who has been working with NWCCI since 2018 had been facing ongoing difficulties with her housing. Her apartment complex was recently purchased by a private equity investment firm out of Indiana and the consumer felt that she has become a target for discrimination. Since the takeover, rent prices have skyrocketed and they also began charging residents utilities, with no way to meter them. It used to be a hotel and the rooms were very small. To make things worse, the building had an ongoing cockroach infestation and room maintenance requests were ignored. NWCCI has been advocating for and supporting the consumer by connecting and helping them navigate resources such as DOLA's civil rights division, the Colorado Bar Association, legal aid and many other local and State agencies. The IL Coordinator worked with the consumer to write a letter to the judge and the district attorney. The letter resulted in the probation charges being dropped and the consumer getting a chance to get things back in order.

Further specific achievements include:

- Participated in Deaf Safari Day at the Denver Zoo and engaged with people about services offered by Independent Living Centers around the state
- Planned and held our annual Life Camp event at Easter Seals in Empire. It is a 3 day event with 2 overnights for youth 16-26 where we work with them on team building events, assisting with preparing meals, social and recreational activities and a talent show to round things out.
- Expanded Transportation services to include rides for social and recreational activities
- Collaboration with Local Government about sidewalk improvements
- NWCCI planned a trip to Wyotech with students we had been working with through the year at Hayden Schools. We provided transportation to students and staff from the school to go.
- Families Encouraging Families is a support group for families with children with disabilities. We meet once a month to give parents an opportunity to discuss struggles and share resources and information.

Major Obstacles:

NWCCI has seen a significant reduction in housing availability across our region. The first experience happened when we finally filled our position for an administrative assistant in Steamboat Springs. The individual was currently living on the front range and was looking to move upon taking the job. Even after expanding her search to include Steamboat, Hayden, Craig, and Oak Creek, she was not able to find anything and decided not to take the job. Shortly after this happened it has become common when working with consumers to find housing, that finding a place with any openings at all can take months and that's before starting to look at affordability. As close as a year ago, in most of the communities we serve you could find available housing fairly quickly and would just need to start working through the

affordability aspect.

Lack of access to home healthcare services- Home healthcare services have always been thin in the Northwest region of the state. Even the most basic requests for services, such as a few hours of home making and a few hours of med management per week are being denied or put on waiting lists because there is no staff available to fulfill the request. Staffing shortages and turnover at partner organizations. We have had multiple positions open for a majority of the year. We lost all of our drivers for the transportation program in August 2021. We briefly filled one position for driver for about a month before the person quit, and then did not get another candidate until March. Our posting for an administrative assistant stayed open for nearly a year and we were finally able to hire in May. Cost of living in region has caused pressure on staff and consumers.

Southwest Center for Independence (SWCI)

Achievements and success:

- New staff positions: New Executive Director (Kelsey Bell) and new position- Communications Specialist (Anna Tower-Kovesdi).
- Groups and Classes: Held Applying for SS Disability Classes and Brain Injury Groups. bimonthly. Held Career Destination Classes , Tech 101 Classes, Housing Briefing Classes, Low Vision Groups, and Veteran PTSD Group Meetings. We also started a non Veteran PTSD Group. Attended DAV and SAFE Suicide Prevention Coalition meetings.
- Events: Walk n' Roll Fundraiser (October), La Plata County Veteran Stand Down, Housing Voucher Waitlist Events for La Plata, Montezuma, Archuleta, and Dolores Counties, Annual ADA Picnic, reinstated Walk-In Wednesdays.
- Partnerships and Programs: Partnered with Visit Durango to create a database of accessible stores, hotels, and restaurants.
- Became a sub-contractor for the Disability Navigator program, in partnership with the Human/Social Services offices for our five counties.
- We were awarded several grants, including Rocky Mountain Health Foundation for transportation services and a covid relief grant from Area Agency on Aging.
- We had a purchase order with the Office of Independent Living to do covid vaccine related outreach in our community.

Obstacles:

- The global pandemic.
- Our lease for the Durango office ended and we moved to a new office space.
- The majority of employees have been working from home.
- Employee turnover.
- Inability to have as many in- person events and groups.
- Many consumers don't have technology and/or wifi so have been unable to participate in virtual groups/classes/events.
- Reaching certain populations has been much more difficult during the pandemic, especially our low vision, hard of hearing, elderly, and houseless consumers.
- We receive many poor referrals for consumers who need things we cannot provide such as financial assistance, mental health care, and affordable housing resources.
- Affordable housing issues in our area continue to rise. In La Plata County, a large, long standing homeless encampment was shut down, creating even more need.

Disabled Resource Services (DRS)

LOVELAND OFFICE

In fiscal year, 2021-2022 Disabled Resource Services' Loveland office had several highlights. One of the highlights was that consumers were able to come back into the office and meet one on one with IL Staff. Consumers were more eager to get out of their homes and interact with people in person. Other highlights were that DRS staff was able to assist more people in finding housing. Unfortunately, the City of Loveland enacted a camping ban that led to a major increase of individuals and families

needing emergency housing. DRS worked in collaboration with other area agencies to meet consumer goals.

In addition, The Loveland office continued with assisting the Loveland Municipal courts and the Larimer County Courts with their various programs for disabled at risk individuals. Staff are also working in conjunction with Colorado Continuum of Care and HIMS for housing.

DRS was to provide ARC vouchers for gloves, boots, coats, and hats for those who needed them in both Larimer and Jackson counties. DRS collaborated with Volunteers of America to build ramps so consumers could access their community and keep medical appointments.

DRS assists with Individual goals, Information & Referrals, Independent Living Skills Training, Individual & Systems Advocacy, Transition Services and Peer Support.

Furthermore, the Loveland IL staff is now providing services in two community agencies, the Loveland Resource Center and the Berthoud Life Center, once a week. We hope to increase our awareness in the communities and provide services to those who would not otherwise come to our offices.

Finally, the Loveland office became the Main office for Disabled Resource Services due to the various transitions that were happening. The change just made more sense.

FORT COLLINS OFFICE

DRS has continued to see an increase in consumers coming into the office. Most all staff have returned to working in the office. Once a week staff goes to the Murphy Center for Hope facility and provides services for people with disabilities who are homeless. DRS has worked with consumers all over Larimer and Jackson counties to set goals and achieve them. Staff is also involved with the Brain Injury Alliance and their support groups. In addition, Staff works with Adult Protection and attends their Commission meetings regularly.

ALL STAFF

All staff have worked together to provide community outreach and community presentations. Staff have attended various conferences and workshops to better educate themselves on disability related subjects. More recently staff participated in the White Cane training, Colorado Center for the Blind training, Fall prevention training as well as the Bridges out of Poverty training.

LOAN CLOSET

Disabled Resource Services has seen an increase of loaning out durable medical equipment (DME) over the last fiscal year. Due to the decline in COVID cases, doctors can schedule more surgeries.

DEAF/HARD OF HEARING

Our Deaf/Hard of Hearing specialist served many consumers that use both ASL and are Hard of Hearing wanting Independent Living Services. Staff helped Consumers fill out applications for the Communication Technology Program so they can obtain amplified phones and ring signalers. Staff met quarterly with the Colorado Cross Disability Coalition, Rocky Mountain Health Plans, Hearing Loss Association of America and members of both the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to discuss improving accessibility in Northern Colorado. Staff Gave presentations to many organizations such as D/HH teachers from Poudre School District and Thompson Valley School District, The Quota Club, and the City of Fort Collins Disability Task Force. Staff just received a grant for \$9,999.99 to purchase adaptive equipment for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf Blind persons living in Larimer and Jackson counties.

VISION MATTERS

Our Vision Matters program has a new look. Our program is now called Vision/Disabilities Matter. We changed the name because we wanted to include all the individuals in senior living so that they would be able to engage in our services more often. We have expanded our services to going to nursing homes, independent living facilities, and senior living centers. Our outreach efforts have paid off and our outlook for this program is promising. We have also received and purchased new equipment for our consumers. In addition, DRS provides, monthly support groups, education on ADA, service dogs & training, ADA regulations, as well as adaptive equipment training for blind and low vision consumers.

YOUTH TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

Our Youth Coordinator participated in the Youth Leadership conference. The YLF conference was a success. Our youth coordinator was able to develop relationships with consumers and staff from other organizations. In addition, the youth coordinator was able to assist several consumers on navigating their way around town and with becoming more independent.

TRANSITIONS PROGRAM

Our transitions coordinator is currently in training for our new transitions program. We are excited to get back to providing this core service. In the past there was not enough consumers to support the program. With new staff and new ideas, the transitions program is off to be more successful than ever.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Marketing played an important role in our resource development success. Through a constant presence on social media and e-newsletters, along with direct mail and print material, more people came to know about the good work that has been done by DRS.

Disabled Resource Services was, despite the impact of the pandemic, successful in fundraising efforts in fiscal year 2021-22. Our major fundraiser returned after having to be cancelled the previous year. It raised over \$66,000. Our Year-End Campaign was also deemed a success, raising nearly \$35,000 from 132 donors. The number of new donors offset lapsed donors so the total number of donors remained approximately the same as the previous year.

DRS newsletters, both electronic and print, were sent throughout the year to keep donors and prospective donors informed. Social media posts also brought awareness of how DRS assists its consumers in increasing their quality of life and independence. DRS staff also raised awareness by speaking to service clubs that had donated to our organization.

SUBPART IV - COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND COORDINATION

Section 704(i), (l), and (m)(4) of the Act; 34 CFR 364.26, 364.27, and 364.32

Section A - Community Activities

Item 1 - Community Activities Table

In the table below, summarize the community activities involving the DSU, SILC and CILs in the Statewide Network of Centers (excluding Part C fund recipients) during the reporting year. For each activity, identify the primary disability issue(s) addressed as well as the type of activity conducted. Indicate the entity(ies) primarily involved and the time spent. Describe the primary objective(s) and outcome(s) for each activity. Add more rows as necessary.

Subpart IV contains new data requests. Please refer to the Instructions before completing.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Primary Entity	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Benefits	Collaborating & Networking, Staff Education/Training	CILs	174.75	Staff attend statewide collaborative meetings for certified benefits counselors. Staff work with local and state-wide groups to ensure benefits-related materials are accessible for deaf and HOH Coloradoans.	CIL staff are up to date and informed about changes in Colorado and Federal benefits programs by participating in collaboratives and are therefore well equipped to serve consumers in need of benefits counseling. Benefits information is accessible.
Access to Social/Recreational Opportunities	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	183.75	CIL staff participation in local community collaboratives aimed at increasing social and recreational opportunities for Coloradoans with disabilities	CIL staff are informed about local opportunities for consumers. Consumers are connected to their community socially and recreationally.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Primary Entity	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Vocational/Employment	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	102.50	Work with consumers to achieve employment related goals. Work with employment related agencies across the state to increase opportunities and funding for services. Staff receive training in evidence based methods of employment services.	Staff are connected with local employers and employment services agencies. Consumers achieve employment related goals from staff trained in evidence based methods of emp serv. CILs are reimbursed for employment related services provided to consumers.
Healthcare	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	462.20	To increase access to HC & home health options so PWDs can remain in their homes &/or community of choice 	PWDs have options in how their HC is provided and have skills necessary to advocate for themselves in relation to their healthcare.
Transportation	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	71.25	Improve and increase access to affordable and accessible transportation 	PWDs are able to travel to desired location w/ the appropriate accessibility either w/ trans or by foot
Housing	Collaborating & Networking, Staff Education/Training	CILs	173.00	To ensure that communities have the appropriate amount of affordable & accessible housing options	PWDs are living in integrated and accessible housing settings in the community of their choice
Assistive Technology	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	786.65	To increase PWDs access, knowledge of and use of assistive technology	PWDs Have increased access to AT. CIL staff are trained in most up to date versions of AT and can connect consumers with AT to meet their needs re: living independently in the communities of their choice.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Primary Entity	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Youth Transitioning	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILS, SILC	218.25	To provide youth with disabilities the support and services they require to access: community integrated employment, independent living, and community social activities. Carry out a Youth Leadership Forum which increases self-advocacy.	Youth with disabilities gain the skills necessary to transition into leading independent lives after high school.
Education	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	0.00	Educating PWDs on a variety of independent living topics. Educating the public, via training, on topics related to PWDs including disability etiquette, service animals, hiring practices, etc. 	Consumers have better options re: living more healthily; accessing community options, programs, and services; accessing educational opportunities. Community agencies/bodies better educated on topics related to PWDs.
Emergency Management	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs	79.50	Educate and communicate with community members about emergency preparedness. Advocate for accessible emergency information broadcasting.	PWDs have accessible information regarding emergencies. CIL staff are engaged and informed about emergency management systems in Colorado and can educate consumers.
ADA Compliance	Collaborating & Networking, Outreach Efforts, TA, Comm Ed. & Pub Info	CILs, SILC	14.00	Working with local educational institutions and Denver International Airport to ensure they are in full compliance of the ADA.	Public spaces become as accessible as possible for all PWDs. Local agencies, employers, and spaces are kept accountable.

Issue Area	Activity Type	Primary Entity	Hours Spent	Objective(s)	Outcome(s)
Outreach Related Needs	Collaborating & Networking	CILs	264.25	To educate local partners and outside agencies on CIL mission and services.	Local agencies, organizations, and employers are informed about the CIL's mission and services available for PWDs. As a result, referrals back and forth between CILs and agencies increase opportunities for PWDs.
Staff Training	Professional Development	CILs	17.00	To learn how to help consumers facing poverty identify and leverage their existing resources to move out of poverty into stability.	Through a presentation, group activities, and networking with Community Partnership, Cripple Creek-Victor School District, Workforce Center, and Aspen Center Staff CIL discussed how to build existing resources for those in poverty.
Increasing Access to Community Programs	Community & Systems Advocacy, Community Education & Public Information	CILs	64.75	Participate in roundtables with local congressman and staffers about Veteran needs. Connecting low income PWDs with internet.	Legislators are informed about the needs of PWDs in Colorado. PWDs in rural areas are connected with broadband to access community programs.

Item 2 - Description of Community Activities

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

The Independence Center (IC):

The Independence Center is deeply committed to providing core services to people with disabilities not only in our six-county catchment area, but also across the state of Colorado and nationally. We continue to maintain strong connections locally through relationships with our local Division of Vocational Rehab office, our county Department of Human Services, Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments, and The Resource Exchange. The IC certainly gains greatly through these relationships, but also continues to discover how much we have to offer our community through the learned experience and wisdom of our staff and consumers. On a local level, our staff were able to participate in numerous city events, connecting with local entities and community members to share the available resources offered at The IC. A few of these organizations included Silver Key Senior Services, Mt. Carmel Veterans Service Center, and The United Way. The Independence Center also

increased potential consumer and community service resources through the award of a contract with Connect 4 Health Colorado. This exciting opportunity will allow The IC to increase healthcare literacy and help consumers and community members navigate the healthcare marketplace through in-person as well as community education events. In FY 2022, we strengthened our connections in surrounding counties through activities and events in Cripple Creek at the annual Donkey Days celebration (Teller County) and in Calhan at the County Fair (El Paso County). By engaging in activities at the Aspen Mine Center and the Community of Caring, we have further established a presence as a key service provider to people with disabilities.

NorthWest Colorado Center for Independence (NWCCI)

NWCCI participates in a wide variety of community activities. Regularly recurring meetings based around collaboration and networking with partner organizations in the communities across our region is the most common type of community activity NWCCI engages in. These meetings are a great opportunity to keep up with what is happening with the other organizations and have been helpful in staying connected given the large amount of turnover with partner organizations. We also get requests through the year to collaborate with organizations around accessibility and disability etiquette. We connected with the domestic violence shelters in Moffat and Routt Counties to do usability assessments with them, so they can prioritize the changes they can make to ensure they can accommodate everyone. We attend ISST meetings to offer support and resources to families that may be struggling. These meetings are comprised of support organizations in the community and are based around meeting with the family while having as many resources as possible present. The meeting is also based in person centered planning and puts the family at the center of the meeting to ensure they are an active participant. We have been able to assist families with SSA benefits, Medicaid applications and connections to medical providers and therapy services. NWCCI has also been participating in regular senior services providers meetings. In these meetings, we gave presentations about our programs and how to access state and federal programs. We are participating in a pilot program for a new referral system. We began using the system with partner organizations in Summit and Grand County last year and are expanding it into Routt, Moffat, and Rio Blanco County. Our involvement in the program began with requests from community partners to join. Monthly meetings with Moffat County DVR counselor and Hayden High School special education teacher to keep everyone updated on what is happening with students and making sure things can move forward. These meetings have improved the level of communication and connection between all three organizations. NWCCI is integrally involved with statewide advocacy efforts through a variety of venues and forums including, but not limited to those listed.

Southwest Center for Independence:

Assistive Technology: We have a contract with the local AAA to provide assistive technology to people who are aging, and so we work with health care providers, therapists, and vendors to keep up with what's available and what works for what.

Health Care: Our Southwest Rides Program increases access to health care by providing accessible transportation.

Housing: We were able to open our Housing Voucher Waitlist this winter and had over 100 people apply. Many of those people are already housed. The City of Durango has been reluctant to work on homelessness issues and the ACLU has had to get involved. There's been a lot of publicity around these issues, so we've had a chance to do community education.

Section B - Working Relationships Among Various Entities

Describe DSU and SILC activities to maximize the cooperation, coordination, and working relationships among the independent living program, the SILC, and CILs; and the DSU, other state agencies

represented on the SILC, other councils that address the needs of specific disability populations and issues, and other public and private entities. Describe the expected or actual outcomes of these activities.

YLF- The youth leadership forum is a state collaboration between the SILC, CILs of Colorado and various other service providers such as the division of vocational rehabilitation and the school districts of the counties. This is a five-day forum for transitioning age youth to attend and get a taste of independence. Also, during this time, the youth will learn about their rights as a person with a disability, as well as skills to utilize as they transition into adulthood.

During the training in Glenwood Springs the council learned about the history of the SILC through the important rehabilitation acts of the previous decades that got us to where we are now. During this training the council also learned about the process and structure of creating a state plan for independent living.

SILC congress presentations

During this year, the Office of Independent Living Services and the SILC attended the annual SILC Congress in San Diego during May 2022. Once again, the Office and SILC members were accepted to present at two workshops during this national event. We presented on the following two topics: Becoming a 501c3 and Transitioning Leadership.

After a two-year hiatus, the SILC hosted a Youth Leadership Forum during the summer of 2022. This marks the return to normalcy after the effects of the COVID pandemic. The event was hosted at Colorado State University with seven delegates attending.

In September 2022, the SILC hosting a training session with both the SILC, CILs and the Office. The purpose of the day was twofold:

1. Understanding the State Independent Living Council (SILC) by familiarizing participants with:
 - * the concept of Independent Living philosophy and the Centers for Independent Living (CIL)
 - * the national perspective, what are State Independent Living Councils and why were they created
 - * Colorado's perspective, what role does our SILC play in the Independent Living movement locally
 - * the role of the CIL, the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the SILC
 - * the ultimate outcome from a collaborating SILC, CILs and DVR -what are we striving for
2. What does it mean to operate the SILC as a nonprofit organization?
 - * Brief discussion of how the SILC has operated in the past and why it chose to become a nonprofit (will need help from existing SILC members to speak to this)
 - * What is a nonprofit?
 - * Steps in making the SILC nonprofit operational
 - o Board Roles (three duties)
 - o Officers and committees to start
 - o Rules by which to operate the SILC (policies and procedures)
 - o Resource Development - a critical task
 - * What are your next steps? Commitments from the group

It is important to note the SILC's efforts in putting forth eight nominees to serve on the SILC in 2023. The eight nominees included two nominees to serve on for a second term and six new candidates. All candidates were approved by the governor. Over this reporting period, there were many transitions on the SILC including two members changing roles on the SILC and one member being removed due to nonparticipation. This slate of candidates keeps the SILC at a full roster. The outreach conducted to recruit candidates included an emphasis on communities of color and underrepresented populations.

In September 2022, the Office of Independent Living Services engaged the CIL network, SILC and

other partners including: Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, Colorado Workforce Development Council, JFK Partners at the University of Colorado, Colorado Youth Leadership Forum - Alumni, Mind Source, Colorado Office of Employment First, Red Rocks Community College, Colorado Developmental Disabilities Council, The Cultural Consortium/Family Agency Collaborative, Joan LaBelle, Common Roots, Developmental Disabilities Resource Center, Association for Community Living, Center for Public Health Innovation (CPHI) at CI International, Health Care Programs for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (HCP), Colorado Association of People Supporting Employment First (Colorado APSE), Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Colorado Department of Education, Easter Seals Colorado, and Thrive Center to provide input, plan and submit an application for funds through the Social Security Administration, Interventional Cooperative Agreement Program. This project aims to address: 1. Promoting self-sufficiency by helping people enter, stay in, or return to the labor force, including youth; and, 2. Assisting claimants in underserved communities apply for Social Security Disability Insurance (DI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. If awarded the funding is worth \$2.8 million dollars over a five-year span. The award notification will be in January 2023.

SUBPART V - STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)

Section 705 of the Act; 34 CFR 364.21

Section A - Composition and Appointment

Item 1 - Current SILC Composition

In the chart below, provide the requested information for each SILC member. The category in which the member was appointed can be described, for example, as ex-officio state agency representative, other state agency representative, center representative, person with a disability not employed by a center or state agency, section 121 funded project director, parent of person with a disability, community advocate, other service provider, etc. Include current vacancies, along with the corresponding appointment category for each. Add more rows as necessary.

Name of SILC member	Employed by CIL, State Agency or Neither	Appointment Category	Voting or Non-Voting	Term Start Date	Term End Date
Linda Taylor	CIL	CIL Dir. Rep	Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2022
Staci Nichols	CIL	Employed by CIL	Voting	10/01/2019	09/01/2022
Matt Bohanan	State Agency	State Rep HCPF	Non-Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2024
Susan Donahoo	State Agency	Colorado DVR	Non-Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2024
Caity McManis	Neither	Ind. w/ Dis not employ	Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2024
Charlotte Morgan	Neither	Ind. w/ Dis not employ	Voting	10/01/2019	09/01/2022
Louise Wilson	Neither	Vocational Southern Ute Indian	Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2024
Martha Mason	Neither	Ind. w/ Dis not employ	Voting	10/01/2019	09/01/2022
Ty Smith	Neither	Ind. w/ Dis not employ	Voting	10/01/2021	09/01/2024

Item 2 - SILC Composition Requirements

Please provide the information requested in the chart below. Include any current vacancies in a particular appointment category.

SILC Composition	# of SILC members
(A) How many members are on the SILC?	9
(B) How many members of the SILC are individuals with disabilities not employed by a state agency or a center for independent living?	5
(C) How many members of the SILC are voting members?	7
(D) How many of the voting members of the SILC are individuals with disabilities not employed by a state agency or a center for independent living?	6

Section B - SILC Membership Qualifications

Item 1 - Statewide Representation

Describe how the SILC is composed of members who provide statewide representation.

The SILC is composed of members from across the State of Colorado. Three (3) members, or 33%, are from the Denver Metropolitan area with a population of 2.9 million. Two (2) are from the mountainous region, or 22%. One (1) is from northeastern Colorado, or 11%. Three (3) members are from southwestern Colorado, or 33% of the Council. 45% of the Council members identify as coming from an urban area, and 55% Council members identify as coming from rural or frontier areas.

Item 2 - Broad Range of Individuals with Disabilities from Diverse Backgrounds

Describe how the SILC members represent a broad range of individuals with disabilities from diverse backgrounds.

The SILC membership has a range of disability types. There is a representation from the following disability groups: Behavioral Health, Deaf, Multiple Sclerosis, Anxiety, Autism, and Traumatic Brain Injury

Item 3 - Knowledgeable about IL

Describe how SILC members are knowledgeable about centers for independent living and independent living services.

- * SILC members attended a retreat where they received training about how the SILC plans on transitioning into both a 501c3 nonprofit Board of Directors and a gubernatorial statewide council, history of the SILC both National and State, history of Colorado Independent Living Community and the role of SILC with the SPIL.
- * There are 3 members of the SILC working at CILs, and the CIL rep provides updates and information related to CIL issues and services.
- * CIL Directors in attendance at SILC share about CIL highlights within their catchment area ensuring that SILC members were kept up to date about CIL issues and services.
- * Ongoing training includes: 501c3, operating as a board of directors, Emergency Preparedness, Home Healthcare, SPIL Planning, EDI.
- * SILC sent people to the SILC Congress, National APSE Conference, National APRIL Conference, at all three (3) of these conferences, our members presented on various topics.

Section C - SILC Staffing and Support

Item 1 - SILC Staff

Please provide the name and contact information for the SILC executive director. Indicate the number and titles of any other SILC staff, if applicable. Also indicate whether any SILC staff is also a state agency employee.

N/A on paid staff but we did have a contracted employee that was our SILC/YLF Coordinator. The SILC Chair steps in and provides a lot of administrative support, and we have a SILC cell phone (303)902-5897. Neither the Coordinator nor the Chair are state employees.

Item 2 - SILC Support

Describe the administrative support services provided by the DSU, if any.

The Office of Independent Living Services consists of two full-time staff members: one Program Manager and one Independent Living Program Coordinator. The Office supports the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) with administrative tasks such as note taking, SILC meeting logistics, zoom administration, invoice processing, and other duties as requested. The Office serves as the fiscal sponsor of the Colorado SILC. These Office staff provide guidance and technical assistance to the SILC on following federal uniform guidance and navigating the State process to procure needed items, equipment and professional services. The Office staff meet regularly with the SILC chair to make sure all administrative tasks are being met as needed. The Office staff ensure that SILC nominees are processed through the DSE to the governor's office. The Office staff participate in membership committee meetings to provide administrative support and guidance on the structure received by Colorado's boards and commissions to ensure timely appointments to the SILC. During this year, there has been an importance emphasis to ensure SILC appointments represent all communities in Colorado with a specific focus on minority and underserved populations. The Office staff provided training on strategies to build an inclusive environment and relationship development. The Office staff provided a resource list of over 80 organizations representing and serving communities of color and underserved populations.

Section D - SILC Duties

Section 705(c); 34 CFR 364.21(g)

Item 1 - SILC Duties

Provide a summary of SILC activities conducted during the reporting year related to the SILC's duties listed below:

(A) State Plan Development

Describe any activities related to the joint development of the state plan. Include any activities in

preparation for developing the state plan, such as needs assessments, evaluations of consumer satisfaction, hearings and forums.

The Colorado SILC allots time at every meeting for stakeholder input. We hold meetings with all of the SILC members and gather inputs from the diverse membership throughout the year. We meet with the Centers in the state and gather input from their catchment areas, consumer satisfaction surveys, and any forums they've done. We have tried doing online surveys without much response. Once the document is drafted, it's shared widely to gather more input before it's finalized.

(B) Monitor, Review and Evaluate the Implementation of the State Plan

Describe any activities related to the monitoring, review and evaluation of the implementation of the state plan.

The SILC has many working committees that meet before SILC's quarterly meeting, many times monthly. The Committees of the SILC are: Executive Committee, SPIL and SPIL Evaluation, Finance, Membership and Training, Communications, Public Policy, and the Youth Committee.

- * The Executive Committee sets the agenda for the SILC meetings

- * The SPIL and SPIL Evaluation Committee facilitates the organization, writing, implementation, and evaluation of the SPIL

- * The Finance Committee develops the Resource Budget, monitors SILC expenditures, and makes recommendations for changes in spending

- * The Membership and Training Committee recruits to fill SILC vacancies and nominates officers for fall elections; provides training to new and current SILC members to ensure members are knowledgeable

- * The Communications Committee reviews, standardizes, monitors, updates, researches and distributes all forms of SILC communication.

- * The Public Policy Committee advocates for issues identified in the SPIL, researches and presents information and position statements, and drafts advocacy letters

- * The Youth Committee increases and improves services to youth with disabilities who are served by Colorado CILs; the Youth Committee has a sub-committee, the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) Committee that focuses on operating the annual Youth Leadership Forum.

(C) Coordination With Other Disability Councils

Describe the SILC's coordination of activities with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) established under section 105, if the state has such a Council, or the commission described in section 101(a)(21)(A), if the state has such a commission, and councils that address the needs of specific disability populations and issues under other Federal law. Please state whether the SILC has at least one representative serving as a member of the SRC and whether the SILC has any members serving on other councils, boards or commissions in the state.

The SILC has a governor appointed member to serve on the SRC. The SILC has another member that sits on the Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness, the Behavioral Health Planning and Advisory Council, Mental Health Disorders in the Criminal & Juvenile Justice Systems, and the Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability Advisory Team. All of these councils have a disability focus and a statewide presence.

(D) Public Meeting Requirements

Describe how the SILC has ensured that all regularly scheduled meetings and other public hearings and forums hosted by the SILC are open to the public and sufficient advance notice is provided.

The SILC complies with the Colorado Open Records Act. The SILC not only posts our meetings on our website a minimum of 30 days in advance, but the DSE also sends the notice out to their network of over 200 stakeholders, organizations and individuals. Colorado SILC meetings are a hybrid version, allowing anyone who is interested to participate. This also allows the council to get to know local communities and their needs. Full virtual meetings are held during the winter to rid attendees harsh traveling conditions that often occur.

Item 2 - Other Activities

Describe any other SILC activities funded by non-Part B funds.

SILC used donated funds from our bank account to promote Colorado at SILC Congress by providing a gift basket as a donation to raise funds for SILC Congress. SILC also used personal funds to provide honorariums to hard working volunteers at the 2022 YLF.

Section E - Training and Technical Assistance Needs

Section 721(b)(3) of the Act

Please identify the SILC's training and technical assistance needs. The needs identified in this chart will guide the priorities set by ACL for the training and technical assistance provided to CILs and SILCs.

Training And Technical Assistance Needs	Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important
Advocacy/Leadership Development	
Systems Advocacy	3
Applicable Laws	
Medicaid/Medicare/PAS/waivers/long-term care	10
Data Collecting and Reporting	
Performance Measures contained in PPR/704 Report	8
Financial: Resource Development	
Grant Writing	9
Marketing and Public Relations	
Community Awareness	1
Networking Strategies	
Community Partners	2
Program Planning	

Training And Technical Assistance Needs	Choose up to 10 Priority Needs --- Rate items 1-10 with 1 being most important
Program Design	7
SILC Roles/Relationship to CILs	
Development of State Plan for Independent Living	4
Implementation (monitor & review) of SPIL	6
Role and Responsibilities of Executive Board	5

SUBPART VI - SPIL COMPARISON AND UPDATES, OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF THE REPORTING YEAR

Section 704(m)(4) of the Act; 34 CFR 76.140

Section A - Comparison of Reporting Year Activities with the SPIL

Item 1 - Progress in Achieving Objectives and Goals

Describe progress made in achieving the objectives and goals outlined in the most recently approved SPIL. Discuss goals achieved and/or in progress as well as barriers encountered.

Since this is a new SPIL, this section identifies actions and outcomes on the most recently approved SPIL. The SILC is working on four goals as written under the existing SPIL:

1. Developing a strong and effective IL Network

- * Planned and organized Strategy Planning retreat about the 2023 SPIL, the meeting was a hybrid with DSE, SILC, CILS, and stakeholders. August 2022.
- * Planned and organized Strategy Planning, the meeting was a hybrid with DSE, SILC, September 2022.
- * Planned and organized Strategy Planning retreat about the 2023 SPIL, the meeting was a hybrid with DSE, SILC, CILS, and stakeholders. August 2022.
- * SILC Youth Committee planned and organized in person Youth Leadership Forum for the summer of 2022 through monthly meetings with youth alumni, CIL representation, SILC, and DSE.
- * SILC planned and organized four SILC meetings
- * SILC hosted a meeting about becoming a 723 state where we decided not to become a 723 state.

Outcomes:

- * Hosted Strategy Planning session for the 2023 SPIL in August 2022 with participation from SILC, CILs, DSE, and Stakeholder feedback.
- * Hosted Strategy Planning session September 2022 with participation from SILC and DSE.
- * Held a 2022 in person Youth Leadership Forum for the summer 2022.
- * Implemented two virtual SILC meetings and 2 hybrid SILC meetings one at Denver's CIL Atlantis Community Inc. and the other at Center Towards Self-Reliance. Both hybrid meeting also included Meet and Greets to spread awareness and develop connections for the community, community partners, CIL staff, and SILC board members.
- * Called for volunteers for officers in our August meeting and voted in new SILC officers in our November meeting all officers position have been filled. Our Chair-elect position has been receiving training and participation in chair activities in anticipation of taking on the Chair role.

2. Increasing the Colorado Centers for Independent Living influence in state and national systems advocacy efforts to ensure public policies represent all members of the disability community

Actions:

- * Representative identified by the SILC to participate on the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)
- * SILC hosted Public Policy Committee meetings
- * SILC hosted Youth Committee meetings
- * SILC members participate in the Advisory Team meeting of a federally funded research project called Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS)
- * SILC member chairs the Peer Committee of the SEEKS research project

Outcomes

- * SILC member attended SRC meeting and submitted application to be appointed by the governor to the SRC.
- * Youth at the YLF met Local Commissioner John Kefalas and had the chance to develop policy skills

3. Increasing outreach, community education and employment efforts

Actions:

- * SILC hosted the 2022 Youth Leadership Forum
- * SILC sent members to SILC Congress
- * SILC sent members to National APSE Conference
- * SILC sent members to APRIL Conference
- * SILC participates in monthly CIL metric committee meetings
- * SILC hosted a SPIL workshop to talk about the needs of the state
- * SILC members participate in the Advisory Team meeting of a federally funded research project called Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS)
- * SILC member chairs the Peer Committee of the SEEKS research project

Outcomes:

- * We held a five-day training session with seven delegates. Five of them became alumni and are active in the Youth Committee for planning for next year's Youth Leadership Forum and resource development.
- * SILC had two presentations at SILC Congress
- * SILC had multiple presentations at National APSE Conference and local leaders connected with SILC won awards
- * SILC had a presentation at the APRIL Conference.
- * Past youth alumni have participated in national education, councils, committees, and conferences.
- * CIL metrics committee produced (Ask Peter)
- * The community identified the top needs of the state are Accessible and Affordable Housing, Transportation, and access to appropriate Healthcare.

4. Exploring whether to become a 723 State

Actions: SILC hosted discussion to finalize and document whether or not to become a 723 state July 2022 with DSE and CILs.

Outcomes: This meeting was held on July 21st, 2022. and during the meeting discussion was held and whether Colorado should be a 723 state or not. After a vote and second, the remaining votes were a unanimous NO by ALL CIL directors in attendance.

Item 2 - SPIL Information Updates

If applicable, describe any changes to the information contained in the SPIL that occurred during the reporting year, including the placement, legal status, membership or autonomy of the SILC; the SILC resource plan, the design of the statewide network of centers; and the DSU administration of the SILS program.

On September 27th, 2022, Colorado SILC hosted a two-day strategic retreat with a facilitator who understands both the history of SILC Colorado and National. We also had the DSE participate. The purpose was to develop the next steps to becoming a successful 501C(3) nonprofit, learn about the SPIL, the SILC and history of the Independent Living Community.

On August 16th SILC hosted a SPIL Workgroup to get community input on the needs of Colorado and feedback to help develop goals for the next steps are

* To help improve resource allocation for the network of CILS in Colorado.

a. Increased collaboration to improve awareness (education/advocacy) and understanding of IL services and their impact (Keystone factors) in the lives of Coloradans with disabilities.

* Use the current efforts of the CILs, the SILC and other community entities to focus efforts on four critical areas.

a. Health Care, including supporting services like individually directed PCAs, Behavioral and Mental Health services and others.

b. Housing, including efforts to create a greater understanding of the populations who need and use accessible and affordable housing.

c. Transportation, including a continuing appreciation for and representation of the unique circumstances facing individual CILs in urban, rural and frontier settings.

d. Technology, identify ways to capitalize the use of hybrid (including broadband and other technology) resources to increase participation in CIL based and SILC activities. (Crosswalk: Include regular updates and discussion with stakeholders regarding the efforts of the current Governor's initiative.)

Colorado SILC performed a documented quote for the SILC Coordinator position. We contracted with a past SILC Board member in February 2022. Colorado SILC also started a contract with the Office of Independent Living to act as an independent 501(c)3. However, without the cash reserves and other priorities, the SILC decided not to pursue the contract at that time.

Colorado SILC has recruited 8 new people to join. These people represent different parts of the state and diversity for the SILC. We also had 2 people commit to another 3-year term. Finally, we had a transition of our leadership.

Section B - Significant Activities and Accomplishments

If applicable, describe any significant activities and accomplishments achieved by the DSU and SILC not included elsewhere in the report, e.g. brief summaries of innovative practices, improved service delivery to consumers, etc.

DSE with the collaboration of SILC continues to work on the Securing Employment and Economic Keys to Stability (SEEKS) research project. SEEKS works with people applying for SSA disability benefits while concurrently receiving services from an employment specialist to obtain employment and a comprehensive benefits counselor through the Center for Independent Living system in partnership with DVR. This model combines the expectation that people with disabilities can contribute to the business bottom line in the competitive, integrated workforce, but also aims to address limited economic resources experienced by people with disabilities.

The goal of this research project is to increase monthly income, employment for persons with disabilities and reduce social isolation of individuals with disabilities.

* Objective 1: Connect persons with disabilities applying for SSI/SSDI with competitive employment.

* Objective 2: Provide comprehensive benefits counseling to persons with disabilities applying for SSI/SSDI.

* Objective 3: Increase connections for persons with disabilities who are seeking independent living services.

The purpose of this Stakeholder Advisory Team is to provide input and inform the research project throughout the duration of the program. The Stakeholder Advisory Team offers input in recruiting

participants; creating the data collection tools; and developing protocol for the Institutional Review Board.

Section C - Substantial Challenges

If applicable, describe any substantial problems encountered by the DSU and SILC, not included elsewhere in this report, and discuss resolutions/attempted resolutions, e.g., difficulty in outreach efforts; disagreements between the SILC and the DSU; complications recruiting SILC members; complications working with other state agencies or organizations within the state.

Near the end of 2021 we had a massive concern around our membership with many members being set to term off and difficulty. Recruiting was also becoming a massive concern. At one point we were looking at a council of 5-7 people. However, the leadership really went above and beyond to promote and personally recruit community members and by the time new elections of this year came around we had a full slate of very talented, experienced, and exciting new members.

Colorado SILC understands that our community is part of a larger community as well both our community and other communities have impact on each other, so we developed a commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Our JEDI Statement is as follows:

"Membership on the SILC is based on disability and geography and requires the Governor's approval. At least 51% of people on the SILC must have disabilities. Our work is toward justice, equity and the full inclusion of all people with disabilities. Because disability is equal opportunity, membership recruitment will also seek out new members based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, citizenship, age, sexual orientation, Veteran status, and socioeconomic status. While we ourselves have been marginalized because of our disabilities, it is important that we hear from other marginalized people who also experience disability. We value what insights a diverse Council can bring to the table. We understand that people who feel included and respected are more likely to contribute by creating pathways to full participation for people with disabilities."

When the Governor's Covid restrictions started to lift, and we continued to meet in a new world of both virtual and in-person meetings we adapted to have the SILC meetings as a hybrid. This allowed us to accommodate both people who prefer in-person meetings to function as well as virtual meetings for people who can better attend those. We encourage our council members to still attend in-person when able and provide logistics for those meetings, but the SILC also understands that not everyone can participate for personal reasons. We have been using technology both from the CILs and the SILC to ensure our best around equitable participation of council members and the community.

Section D - Additional Information

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

SUBPART VII - SIGNATURES

Please sign and print the names, titles and telephone numbers of the DSU directors(s) and SILC chairperson.

Ty Smith - Signed Digitally
SIGNATURE OF SILC CHAIRPERSON

01/31/2023
DATE

Ty Smith - Chair of Colorado SILC
NAME AND TITLE OF SILC CHAIRPERSON

(720) 258-5121
PHONE NUMBER

Kristin Corash - Signed Digitally
SIGNATURE OF DSU DIRECTOR

01/31/2023
DATE

Kristin Corash - Director Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilit
NAME AND TITLE OF DSU DIRECTOR

(303) 437-6496
PHONE NUMBER