**Technology Options During COVID-19: Web-based Platforms Mentioned by CIL Staff**

The IL-NET National Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA) Center at ILRU is providing support to centers for independent living and statewide independent living councils as we all navigate the unprecedented times of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. We are sharing these resources below in support of the communities you serve. Please email us at [ilru@ilru.org](mailto:ilru@ilru.org) with examples of how you are communicating with consumers in your communities and the resources you have found helpful. Visit the [ILRU Resources on COVID-19](https://owa.memorialhermann.org/owa/redir.aspx?C=T_TtGLiiclAEQe3uLzZQptnS-ClMZ3IsSOuBizWg9wonojg5NtfXCA..&URL=https%3a%2f%2furldefense.com%2fv3%2f__http%3a%2f%2fr20.rs6.net%2ftn.jsp%3ff%3d001jy667DkvebpseIMzCt0q-IbZtPXkPcvVL3fnFSn84x_3sjCLrkdi7EzJq84Cw2AyVbwtgYn_WAvhbQPC8afsHmVecFeMPefuTeT4VoMgBpCWsA92Pje7oNco-P8LmBcP3LkY3MrzUhgj-nb2Aq7kpsdhDC2C9fBwpKIieFIBEoI%3d%26c%3dTKrPHMPRgHRoXeCl0UdTTn64GrAafGrLG_UPANm5V7XwUI2-6hxE0g%3d%3d%26ch%3dmjwMGyNQhgByoOABoIhhO5kWHeCNk7Cmpj7-fHA-1egh6Vwj8pOapw%3d%3d__%3b!!IPhZlOogwbDdv1o!HTAFLWKo2U4LQBzqjM-b1pYZfCWRJKRSlFmMhYSaGiu5MgI30KBT-a_GbpR9KuU7zdpWZuUl2g%24) webpage for daily updates.

Each organization is responsible for ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local laws and directives. These materials have not been reviewed by ACL; therefore, no assumptions should be made regarding compliance or cost allowability.

A variety of web-based platforms are being utilized to help many CILs provide services remotely and to support staff communication as they work remotely. Below are a list of web-based platforms and communication applications that have been mentioned by CIL staff as technology options during COVID-19. ***Please note that ILRU does not endorse the use of any particular web-based platform or technology and is only providing this information as a resource to the field.***

Help us learn more about the use of technology in CILs during the COVID-19 pandemic and any barriers you have experienced, by completing the IL-NET’s Survey on COVID-19-Related CIL Technology Use and Barriers. **To go directly to the survey, click on this link:** [**https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5551813/CIL-Technology-Use-and-Barriers-During-COVID-19**](https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5551813/CIL-Technology-Use-and-Barriers-During-COVID-19)

* **Zoom** (<https://zoom.us/>) provides a great way for all staff to electronically check-in and share challenges, ideas, information, and resources. Some CILs are also checking in with consumers served within the last year to ask them what they need, what their situation is, and suggest resources. Zoom is also excellent for teaching an IL skills or other class, or holding a peer support group. A free Zoom version times out after 40 minutes. Consider purchasing a Zoom license for longer video and audio conferencing. Tech Soup ([www.techsoup.org](http://www.techsoup.org)) offers a Zoom discount. Search for Zoom how-to training on YouTube.
* **Skype** (<https://skype.com>)is a free app that works well for both one-on-one and group (up to 50 people) video and audio calls. It works via mobile, PC, Xbox and Alexa. There is a small charge to call phones or use SMS messages with either pay-as-you-go or subscriptions. A comparison of Zoom versus Skype is at: <https://www.dgicommunications.com/zoom-vs-skype/>.
* **The Discord App** (<https://discordapp.com>) is a good way to connect employees through voice, video, and text. Although it’s a gaming platform, it is free, and simple and smooth to use and set up. Once it is downloaded, anyone can post, ask questions, make requests, and share resource information. There is the option for both group and individual voice or video calls.
* **Google Meet** (<https://meet.google.com>) is Google’s video conferencing service that connects up to 25 people. Higher paid membership increases that number to 50 or 100. You need a paid G Suite account in order to set up and start [Google Meet](https://www.businessinsider.com/category/google) video conferences, but anyone with a standard Google account can join and participate in a session.
* **Google Hangouts**, (<https://hangouts.google.com>), is free and works well for individual or group meetings, up to100 people.
* **GotoMeetings** (<https://www.GoToMeeting.com/Free-Trial>), can host meetings with up to 250 participants. There is a 14-day free trial with plans currently starting at $12.00 monthly. Other ideas for remote work can be found at <https://www.gotomeeting.com/work-remote>.
* **GoogleChat** is another way to communicate and can be set up in Gmail ([www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com)).
* **Facebook live** broadcasts are another way to communicate with your staff or consumers who are on Facebook.
* **FaceTime** is a video and audio calling service for iPhone, iPad, iPod touch or Mac, to call anyone else using any one of those devices.
* **Bluejeans** (<https://www.bluejeans.com>) offers easy and secure webinars, conference calls, and online meetings.
* **Groupme** (<https://groupme.com>) **is a group messaging app that w**orks on every device and over SMS.
* **Slack** (<https://slack.com>) provides a messaging tool to connect your staff and stay engaged with what is happening. Slack is an instant message communication channel or email alternative that provides a quick, easy way to contact people in your channel (or group) and organize your conversations. Slack may be used in a web browser or via an app.

**Confidentiality**

When using web-based platforms or communication applications to interact with consumers, consider developing a waiver for consumers to sign using an online signature program, such as DocuSign ([www.docusign.com](http://www.docusign.com)) or DigiSigner ([www.digisigner.com](http://www.digisigner.com)). These online signature programs can also help consumers sign their paperwork when opening a new consumer file.

Language should include the fact that staff will do their best to keep information confidential, but with partners or children in the home there is a chance that someone might walk in during a web or phone meeting. During these unprecedented times, complete confidentiality may not always be possible.  Some CILs are using a simple yes or no waiver.