

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the State Plan for Independent Living?

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The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) is the “blueprint” for how Part B funds will be spent, what Independent Living (IL) services will be provided, and the priorities for the IL network and the statewide network of centers for independent living (CILs). The Plan should reflect the needs of the individuals with disabilities across the entire state and how the IL Network (the SILC and the CILs) will collectively come together to work on goals and objectives that improve the lives of individuals with disabilities.

The SPIL must be reviewed regularly and updated at least every three years.

### Who writes the SPIL?

The SILC is primarily responsible for the development of the SPIL. The SILC Chairperson (and SILC members and staff) work with the directors of all the Centers for Independent Living in the state to develop the SPIL. There must be public input gathered from individuals with disabilities, other stakeholders, and other members of the public before the SPIL is written. To have an effective SPIL writing process, the SILC should have a plan over at least a year to gather public input, work with the CILs to develop the SPIL, gather public feedback on the draft SPIL, and secure approval of the SPIL from the SILC before the Chairperson signs the SPIL. Signatures of more than half of the CIL directors in the state are also required to indicate approval of the SPIL. The SPIL is not something to be completed only by the SILC or CILs and should not be put off until the last minute. (Note: Even when a CIL has more than one grant or location, they are only counted as one CIL for purposes of signing the SPIL.)

The SPIL writing process is one that can bring the IL Network together, strengthen the partnership, and increase the awareness of the needs of people with disabilities across the state.

### What about the DSE?

While the Designated State Entity (DSE) does sign part of the SPIL, they are signing in agreement to serve as the DSE for the state and committing to comply with the DSE Assurances. The DSE is not required to be involved in the development of the SPIL and does not sign (or have authority) to agree to the content or direction of the SPIL, or to approve the SPIL.

### What is included in the SPIL?

Every SPIL Contains the following information:

- Executive Summary – an overview of the content of the SPIL
- Section 1: Goals, Objectives, and Activities - the overall goals and objectives of the IL Network over the course of the three-year period of the SPIL, including the evaluation plan and financial resources anticipated to be available for the IL Network’s work. This section creates the roadmap of how we will work to make progress in achieving the overall mission of the Plan.
- Section 2: Scope, Extent, and Arrangement of Services - the services that will be provided by the IL Network, the outreach plan, and the plan for coordination with other programs and organizations that support community life for persons with disabilities.
- Section 3: Network of Centers – details about the existing network of Centers for Independent Living (CILs) and the plans for any expansion or adjustment of the Network. From this section you can find the information on where each CIL is operating, the funding needs of the IL Network, and plans for changes in CIL funding and/or service areas as well as how increases in funds or one-time funding will be used to support the IL Program.
- Section 4: Designated State Entity (DSE) - information on what state entity will serve as the grantee, or DSE, for the federal Part B funding. This section also describes how the DSE will administer the financial and administrative functions required, including granting and disbursement of the funds, as directed by the SPIL, and the oversight process for those funds
- Section 5: Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) - information on the establishment and operations of the SILC, the SILC Resource Plan. This section outlines how the autonomy of the SILC is ensured and how the SILC will perform the required duties and the authorities in which SILC has elected to engage
- Section 6: Legal Basis and Certifications - certification that the SILC is authorized to submit the Plan, and that the SILC and CILs are legally authorized to carry out all provisions of the Plan. You will find the designation of the entity that will serve as the DSE to receive and distribute the funding as directed by the SPIL. You will also find the list of CILs that are eligible to sign the Plan.
- Section 7: DSE Assurances - the DSE Director’s signature agreeing for the agency to serve as the DSE, to fulfill the DSE responsibilities and to comply with the DSE Assurances.
- Section 8: SILC Assurances and Indicators of Minimum Compliance - the signature of the SILC Chairperson agreeing, on behalf of the SILC, to comply with the SILC Assurances and Indicators of Minimum Compliance.
- Section 9: Signatures - the signatures of the SILC Chairperson and the Directors of the Centers for Independent living agreeing to the content of the SPIL and the intent to fully implement the Plan.

## Why is it important?

There are many reasons that the SPIL is important in your state – here are a few:

- An approved SPIL is required to have in order for any IL funding (both Part B and Part C) to be available to the state.
- It creates a blueprint that can bring all CILs and the SILC together.
- It creates a way for the Network to have statewide impact for individuals with disabilities.
- It reflects the input and needs of individuals with disabilities, giving them a voice in the direction of services, funding, and goals of the IL Network.
- It determines how much funding is needed for the statewide network of CILs, and how funding will be distributed.
- It determines where new CILs are needed and prioritizes where new CILs will be established if funding is made available.
- It identifies unserved and underserved populations that need targeted outreach efforts.

## How do you know if the SPIL is working?

Each SPIL includes an evaluation plan describing how the SILC will monitor, review and evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan. It is the SILC's responsibility to evaluate progress and outcomes of the SPIL at least annually. Due to work that needs to be completed by the CILs in the Plan, the SILC must determine how the monitoring and evaluation will be conducted and coordinated with the CILs. Everyone has a part in ensuring the goals and objectives of the SPIL are moving forward and the SILC needs the help of the CILs in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Plan.

## Can the SPIL be changed?

Yes. The SPIL is a living document and as time goes on, revisions to the Plan may be needed. A major change that creates a new opportunity or barrier to an existing goal or objective may require a change to the Plan. Realizing that a current goal or objective isn't working through the monitoring and evaluation process, or funding changes in the state, may also require changes.

When a change or revision is needed, the SILC will contact ACL to begin the process of amending the SPIL. Depending on the nature of the amendment, it may require additional public input and comment before being approved. It is important to understand the full impact of the amendment before contacting ACL and ensuring the SILC and CILs are aware of and in agreement on what is needed.

## How do I find out more about my state's SPIL?

Every SILC can provide you a copy of the current SPIL. You can look up information on your SILC by [clicking here](#). You can also find out how to attend public meetings about the SPIL or opportunities to provide input on the next SPIL. To find your state's current SPIL, [click here](#).