

# **State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for Vermont for 2017-2019**

## **General Information**

Designated Agency Identification

State:Vermont

Agency:Vermont Vocational Rehabilitation Division

Plan for:2017-2019

Submitted in fiscal year:2016

View grant [90IS0010-01](#) in the Grant Award screen.

# Part I: Assurances

## Section 1: Legal Basis and Certifications

1.1 The designated State unit (DSU) eligible to submit the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL or the plan) and authorized under State law to perform the functions of the State under the State Independent Living Services (SILS) and Centers for Independent Living (CIL) programs.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) 34 CFR 76.104(a)(1) and (2); 34 CFR 364.22(a)

1.2 The separate State agency eligible to submit the plan and authorized under State law to provide vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to individuals who are blind.

Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired (DBVI) 34 CFR 76.104(a)(1) and (2); 34 CFR 364.20(d)

1.3 The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) that meets the requirements of section 705 of the Act and is authorized to perform the functions outlined in section 705(c) of the Act in the State.

Vermont Statewide Independent Living Council 34 CFR 364.21(a)

1.4 The DSU and, if applicable, the separate State agency authorized to provide VR services to individuals who are blind, and the SILC are authorized to jointly develop, sign and submit this SPIL on behalf of the State, and have adopted or otherwise formally approved the SPIL. Yes

1.5 The DSU, and, if applicable, the separate State agency authorized to provide VR services to individuals who are blind, may legally carry out each provision of the plan and will comply with all applicable Federal statutes and regulations in effect with respect to the three-year period it receives funding under the SPIL. Yes

1.6 The SPIL is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. All provisions of the SPIL are consistent with State law. Yes

1.7 The representative of the DSU and, if applicable, of the separate State agency authorized to provide VR services to individuals who are blind, who has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the SPIL and to submit the SPIL jointly with the SILC chairperson is Diane Dalmasse, Director, Vocational Rehab and Fred Jones, Director, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

## Section 2: SPIL Development

2.1 The plan shall be reviewed and revised not less than once every three years, to ensure the existence of appropriate planning, financial support and coordination, and other assistance to appropriately address, on a statewide and comprehensive basis, the needs in the State for:

- The provision of State independent living services;
- The development and support of a statewide network of centers for independent living;
- Working relationships between programs providing independent living services and independent living centers, the vocational rehabilitation program established under title I, and other programs providing services for individuals with disabilities.

Yes

2.2 The DSU and SILC conduct public meetings to provide all segments of the public, including interested groups, organizations and individuals, an opportunity to comment on the State plan prior to its submission to the Commissioner and on any revisions to the approved State plan. Yes

2.3 The DSU and SILC establish and maintain a written description of procedures for conducting public meetings in accordance with the following requirements. The DSU and SILC shall provide:

- appropriate and sufficient notice of the public meetings;
- reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities who rely on alternative modes of communication in the conduct of the public meetings, including providing sign language interpreters and audio-loops; and
- public meeting notices, written material provided prior to or at the public meetings, and the approved State plan in accessible formats for individuals who rely on alternative modes of communication.

Yes

2.4 At the public meetings to develop the State plan, the DSU and SILC identify those provisions in the SPIL that are State-imposed requirements beyond what would be required to comply with the regulations in 34 CFR parts 364, 365, 366, and 367. Yes

2.5 The DSU will seek to incorporate into, and describe in, the State plan any new methods or approaches for the provision of IL services to older individuals who are blind that are developed under a project funded under chapter 2 of title VII of the Act and that the DSU determines to be effective. Yes

2.6 The DSU and SILC actively consult, as appropriate, in the development of the State plan with the director of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) authorized under section 112 of the Act. Yes

### Section 3: Independent Living Services

3.1 The State, directly or through grants or contracts, will provide IL services with Federal, State, or other funds. Yes

3.2 Independent living services shall be provided to individuals with significant disabilities in accordance with an independent living plan mutually agreed upon by an appropriate staff member of the service provider and the individual, unless the individual signs a waiver stating that such a plan is unnecessary. Yes

3.3 All service providers will use formats that are accessible to notify individuals seeking or receiving IL services under chapter 1 of title VII about:

- the availability of the CAP authorized by section 112 of the Act;
- the purposes of the services provided under the CAP; and
- how to contact the CAP.

Yes

3.4 Participating service providers meet all applicable State licensure or certification requirements. Yes

### Section 4: Eligibility

4.1 Any individual with a significant disability, as defined in 34 CFR 364.4(b), is eligible for IL services under the SILS and CIL programs authorized under chapter 1 of title VII of the Act. Any individual may

seek information about IL services under these programs and request referral to other services and programs for individuals with significant disabilities, as appropriate. The determination of an individual's eligibility for IL services under the SILS and CIL programs meets the requirements of 34 CFR 364.51. Yes

4.2 Service providers apply eligibility requirements without regard to age, color, creed, gender, national origin, race, religion or type of significant disability of the individual applying for IL services. Yes

4.3 Service providers do not impose any State or local residence requirement that excludes any individual who is present in the State and who is otherwise eligible for IL services from receiving IL services. Yes

## Section 5: Staffing Requirements

5.1 Service provider staff includes personnel who are specialists in the development and provision of IL services and in the development and support of centers. Yes

5.2 To the maximum extent feasible, a service provider makes available personnel able to communicate:

- with individuals with significant disabilities who rely on alternative modes of communication, such as manual communication, nonverbal communication, nonverbal communication devices, Braille or audio tapes, and who apply for or receive IL services under title VII of the Act; and
- in the native languages of individuals with significant disabilities whose English proficiency is limited and who apply for or receive IL services under title VII of the Act.

Yes

5.3 Service providers establish and maintain a program of staff development for all classes of positions involved in providing IL services and, if appropriate, in administering the CIL program. The staff development programs emphasize improving the skills of staff directly responsible for the provision of IL services, including knowledge of and practice in the IL philosophy. Yes

5.4 All recipients of financial assistance under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with significant disabilities on the same terms and conditions required with respect to the employment of individuals with disabilities under section 503 of the Act. Yes

## Section 6: Fiscal Control and Fund Accounting

6.1 All recipients of financial assistance under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will comply with applicable EDGAR fiscal and accounting requirements and will adopt those fiscal control and fund accounting procedures as may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of and accounting for those funds. Yes

## Section 7: Recordkeeping, Access and Reporting

7.1 In addition to complying with applicable EDGAR recordkeeping requirements, all recipients of financial assistance under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will maintain records that fully disclose and document:

- the amount and disposition by the recipient of that financial assistance;
- The total cost of the project or undertaking in connection with which the financial assistance is given or used;
- the amount of that portion of the cost of the project or undertaking supplied by other sources;

- compliance with the requirements of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act and Part 364 of the regulations; and
- other information that the Commissioner determines to be appropriate to facilitate an effective audit.

Yes

7.2 With respect to the records that are required by 34 CFR 364.35, all recipients of financial assistance under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will submit reports that the Commissioner determines to be appropriate. Yes

7.3 All recipients of financial assistance under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will provide access to the Commissioner and the Comptroller General, or any of their duly authorized representatives, to the records listed in 34 CFR 364.37 for the purpose of conducting audits, examinations, and compliance reviews. Yes

#### Section 8: Protection, Use and Release of Personal Information

8.1 Each service provider will adopt and implement policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, including photographs and lists of names in accordance with the requirements of 34 CFR 364.56(a)(1-6). Yes

#### Section 9: Signatures

As the authorized signatories, we will sign, date and retain in the files of the state agency(ies) and the Statewide Independent Living Council the Part I: Assurances, 1-8, and the separate Certification of Lobbying forms ED-80-0013 (available in [MS Word](#) and [PDF](#) formats) for the state independent living program (Part B) and the centers for independent living program (Part C).

The effective date of this SPIL is October 1, 2016.

#### Section 9: Signature for SILC Chairperson

Name Neal Meier

Title SILC Chairperson

Signed? Yes

Date signed 06/28/2016

#### Section 9: Signature for DSU Director

Name Diane Dalmasse

Title Director, Vocational Rehab

Signed? Yes

Date signed 06/29/2016

Section 9: Signature for Separate State Agency for Individuals Who Are Blind

Is there a Separate State Agency for Individuals Who Are Blind?Yes

NameFred Jones

TitleDirector, Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Signed?Yes

Date signed06/29/2016

# **Part II: Narrative: Section 1 - Goals, Objectives and Activities**

## **Section 1: Goals, Objectives and Activities**

### **1.1 Goals and Mission**

Describe the overall goals and mission of the State's IL programs and services. The SPIL must address the goals and mission of both the SILS and the CIL programs, including those of the State agency for individuals who are blind as they relate to the parts of the SPIL administered by that agency.

Goal Name: Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont

Goal Description:

The State of Vermont maintains a strong vision for the expansion of Independent Living services for people with disabilities. The Independent Living partners include the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Division for the Blind and the Visually Impaired, both of which serve as Designated State Units (DSUs) for the Vermont SILC. The partnership reaches beyond with the inclusion of the SILC fulfilling its responsibilities as defined by the Rehab Act and providing the appropriate input in an effort to assure that the Independent Living needs in the State are being addressed in the best way possible given the afforded resources.

The IL partners, through directions steered by the SILC's ability to gather and assess public input, provide Independent Living services primarily through contracts to Vermont's Centers for Independent Living and the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The DSUs take full responsibility for administering the Part B funds and all contracts developed and administered by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

The goals, as defined by Vermont's IL partners, strive to address the needs of people with disabilities. The respective State Plan for Independent Living identifies the independent living service programs designed to provide the necessary support and infrastructure to potentially achieve the goals. The focus includes increased public awareness of Independent Living, and the removal of systems barriers. Development, support and delivery of Independent Living services; development of services to underserved areas; leadership development; and general education initiatives relative to disability issues and Independent Living will remain a priority. The IL partners in Vermont will continue to focus on issues related to the Olmstead Plan including community integration, personal assistance, transportation, affordable housing, corrections issues and removal of employment barriers. The IL partners also consider emergency preparedness for people with disabilities to be of utmost importance and is working to create a model group of citizens with disabilities that have complete preparedness plans.

The mission of the Vermont Statewide Independent Living Council is to advance the equality with which people with disabilities enjoy, participate in, and contribute to the lives of their communities, families and friends. The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is to help Vermonters with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain meaningful employment and to help employers recruit, train, and retain employees with disabilities. And the DBVI's mission is to support the efforts of people in Vermont who are blind and visually impaired to achieve or sustain their economic independence, self-reliance, and social integration to a level consistent with their interests, abilities and informed choices. Together as Independent Living partners, and with DVR and DBVI serving as the State's Designated State Units for the purposes of the VR and IL programs, Vermont maintains a team that works efficiently and effectively with people's best interest as a priority.

Goal Name:CIL operations and Core services administration

Goal Description:

VCIL, founded in 1979, is a statewide, non-profit organization directed and staffed by individuals with disabilities. The organization is responsible for the operation of Vermont's two Centers for Independent Living. Their goal is to effectively provide the following four core services: information referral and assistance (IR&A), peer counseling, Independent Living skills training, and individual and systems advocacy. The mission of the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) is to work to promote the dignity, independence, and civil rights of people in Vermont with disabilities. VCIL is committed to cross-disability services, the promotion of active citizenship, and working with others to create services that support self-determination and full participation in community life.

VCIL's principal source of funding is through Title VII, Part C of the Rehabilitation Act. It receives additional funding, through contracts with the DSU, under Title VII, Part B of the Act, to conduct systems advocacy activities and to operate a program that helps people with disabilities access assistive technology and funding to relocate from nursing homes to their own homes.

Goal Name:DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services

Goal Description:

DBVI's mission is to support the efforts of people in Vermont who are blind and visually impaired to achieve or sustain their economic independence, self-reliance, and social integration to a level consistent with their interests, abilities and informed choices. Their goal is to effectively provide the following four core services: information and referral, peer advocacy and community outreach, individual and group skills training, and systems advocacy.

DBVI provides comprehensive Independent Living services to Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired, either directly or through contract with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI). These services are funded through Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B, and are available to consumers statewide.

## 1.2 Objectives

1.2A. Specify the objectives to be achieved and the time frame for achieving them.

Goal(s) from Section 1.1	Objective to be achieved	Time frame start date	Time frame end date
Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont  CIL operations and Core services	Housing Objective: Increase the awareness and access to affordable, accessible and integrated housing for Vermonters with disabilities. Educate administration and legislators on needs of housing in the disability community and about consumer choice. Cultivate relationships with local and state housing authorities, housing non-profits and housing advocates. Develop and execute an outreach campaign out to private landlords and developers to provide them with	10/01/2016	09/30/2019



<p>administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>resources and education to improve accessibility. Through outreach efforts, create a pool of appropriately trained carpenters that can complete accessible alterations to homes. Build relationship with technical schools where students are being trained as carpenters, electricians and plumbers to offer education. Explore ways to improve affordability for alternative and/or accessible housing. Identify and promote existing resources to aid affordable housing for PWD?s. Support the Housing First model. Monitor legislative activity.</p> <p>What?s Measurable: Number of units, Vacancy rate, length of waiting lists, length of time on waiting lists. Number of private sector partners re housing lists, numbers of technical schools involved in trades? students education re accessible design/construction.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Coordinate with housing advocacy and disability organizations on housing priorities. Build relationships and coordinate with the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition, Vermont Council on Homelessness, Coalition to End Homelessness, and the Vermont Agency of Human Services Housing Coordinator. Educate new lawmakers on housing issues that affect people with disabilities, SILC and Vermont Center for Independent Living work to with their partners (e.g. Vermont Housing Finance Agency) to identify improved mechanisms for publicizing available housing (or the unmet need). Create section of SILC website for information on contractors. Have a discussion and build a relationship with the Vermont Apartment Owners Association, and other private sector landlords to develop a coordinated strategy on accessible housing. Develop an awareness program for carpenters, plumbers and electricians. Reviewing and commenting on the HUD Consolidated Plan and participate on the HUD Advisory committee. Using Results Based Accountability, review the state?s housing goals and comments where appropriate. Promotion of housing issues, resources and information through social media (website, blogs, facebook,</p>		
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	<p>twitter).</p> <p>Lead Organizations: VCIL, SILC</p> <p>Key Partners: VAHC, Vermont Council on Homelessness, Agency of Human Services Housing Coordinator, State and local housing authorities, Coalition to End Homelessness, Technical schools, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Pathways to Housing, Agency of Human Services, Department of Aging and Independent Living, Department of Mental Health.</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time for VCIL, SILC and volunteers (stipend/mileage reimbursement)</p> <p>Funding Sources: Part B grant for SILC, part C grant for VCIL, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Department of Aging and Independent Living, USDA, HUD, Department of Mental Health.</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p>	<p>Education Objective(s): Provide information and consultation to educators that improves their ability to facilitate an equitable environment for all of their students, including their students with disabilities. Increase adoption rate of Include! Augment Include! by working with partners regarding mental health needs, cultural competence needs and anti-bullying policy. Educate SILC members on seclusion/restraint issues in schools and the high suspension rate of students with disabilities. Research and assess the new proposed funding models of special education.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Post secondary graduation rate, post secondary employment rate, accessibility of individual schools, number of schools using Include! Percentage of time PWDs (students) are included in classroom activities. Numbers of schools (or teachers) that integrate Include! into lessons.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Approach AOE about Include and related anti-stigma activities (for students and teachers), presentations and consultations with educators/school</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>administrators; number of teachers/schools using the Include! materials. Number of complaints of discrimination/bullying (and does it change with schools using Include!). Work with Agency Of Education, Vocational Rehab and Department of Mental Health, VT Federation of Families of Children's Mental Health, VCIL's Youth Transition team, to facilitate adoption of Include, work with Agency Of Education and other partners to develop new content for Mental Health awareness and other new SPIL objectives. Monitor legislative activities.</p> <p>Lead Organization: SILC,</p> <p>Key Partners: Agency Of Education, Department of Blind and Visually Impaired, Vermont Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired, Voc Rehab, Department of Mental Health, VT Federation of Families of Children's Mental Health, VCIL, Green Mountain Self Advocates, Vermont Family Network, Department Rehabilitation of VT, Vermont Coalition of Disability Rights partners, special educators, school officials.</p> <p>Resources needed: Volunteer time of council members (stipend/mileage reimbursement), staff time of SILC employee</p> <p>Funding Sources: Part B grant, Potential for grants from private sources, Voc Rehab-VCIL grant</p> <p>Schedule: Ongoing, Publicize Include! in years 2 and 3</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision</p>	<p>Employment Objective: Assessment of policies and programs designed to support PWD in becoming employed with a focus on social security, state programs, non-profit programs and pilot projects. Facilitate increased employment among PWD's. Educate employers about the favorable ROI of employing PWD's. Provide training and information to PWD's on legal rights, supports and services as they pertain to employment.</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

<p>of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>What's Measurable: Percentage of Person's With Disabilities employed that want to work, number of Person's With Disabilities working in state government, cost related to supporting people with disabilities in employment.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Work closely with Voc Rehab and Governor's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities to establish baseline employment statistics, use existing materials to distribute to Vermont employers about the benefits of employment for PWD's. Develop presentation materials in partnership with the Governor's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities for VT Expo and for distribution among chambers of commerce. Promote the VCIL Title I Employment training for people with disabilities. Monitor legislative activities (federal/state). Promotion and potential participation in the Career ACCESS pilot project.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC, Governor's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities</p> <p>Key Partners: VR, Governor's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities, VT Chamber of Commerce, VCIL, National Council on Independent Living, World Institute on Disability.</p> <p>Schedule: Ongoing, Plan VT Expo Presentations in all years</p> <p>Resources needed: Federal and State grants</p> <p>Funding Sources: Part B Grant, staff time of SILC employee, volunteer hours of SILC council members (stipend/mileage)</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p>	<p>Healthcare Objective(s): Educate medical providers and hospital personnel on disability etiquette and Deaf Culture and laws related to disability. Educate and inform PWDs on how to access healthcare services. Through partnership with VT-211 provide education about information and referral to PWDs. Through</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>ADRC partnership, educate hospitals and work in partnership on Care Transitions projects about providing more information about long-term care options for PWDs. Monitor and comment on policy work related to the new health care system including the Long Term Supports and Services/Choices for Care Medicaid Pathway Workgroup and the State Innovation Model Grant. Advocate for programs or funding to support preventative and wellness activities among PWD's such as yoga, massage and meditation.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Number of trainings provided to Person's With Disabilities. How many individuals served, number of individuals receiving Information and Referral.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Produce and distribute educational and instructional materials. Distribute recently developed Respectful Language materials to providers at same time. Reach out to private sector hospital and healthcare systems to education them on specific needs of Person's With Disabilities.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: VCIL, Vermont Coalition on Disability Rights partners, Green Mountain Self Advocates, Developmental Disabilities Council</p> <p>Key Partners: SILC, VT211, Affordable Care Organizations, Department of Blind and Visually Impaired, Aging and Disability Resource Center, Deaf Vermonters Advocacy Services, Department of Health.</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of VCIL and Department of Blind and Visually Impaired, training (from State)</p> <p>Funding Sources: Federal and State grants</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations</p>	<p>Mental Health Objective: Work with Community partners to educate the public about a person-directed and inclusive approach to Mental Health issues. Work in partnership with peer-directed mental health organizations on policy and programs for people with psychiatric</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

<p>and Core services administration</p>	<p>disabilities specifically through the Wellness Workforce Coalition. Promote the core competency work of the WWC. Facilitate more MH services among corrections population. Create a section of Include! curriculum that educates general student population and promotes inclusion of students with Mental Health issues. Provide resources and education re substance abuse and psychiatric disabilities. Monitor legislative (federal/state) activities and advocate for alternatives and choice within the mental health system and within the corrections systems.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Number of articles posted to SILC website. Number of inmates receiving Mental Health services, numbers of providers that receive educational materials Mental Health services as alternatives to hospitalization and incarceration. Number of people trained in alternative approaches.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Write letters to the editor in key Vermont newspapers and post articles on the SILC website that promote the idea that that services and supports and accommodations, as well as the more traditional treatments of therapy and medication for some people, can be helpful. Promote the idea that an individualized, respectful approach which is driven by the person's own goals, is a public policy direction that first of all does no harm, and is more likely to methodology which is helpful. Work with Wellness Workforce Coalition. and Department of Mental Health to identify existing materials that inform providers about Mental Health services as alternatives to hospitalization or incarceration. Work with Agency On Education to develop instructional material for Include on Mental Health inclusion in schools.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: Department of Mental Health, VCIL, SILC, Wellness Workforce Coalition.</p> <p>Key Partners: VT Association for Mental Health and Addiction Recovery, Vermont Psychiatric Survivors, Disability Rights VT, VCIL, SILC, National Association Mental Illness, Agency Of</p>		
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	<p>Educatin.</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of VCIL, SILC</p> <p>Funding Sources: SILC resource plan, Department of Mental Health/ Wellness Workforce Coalition, Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, VCIL</p> <p>Schedule: Ongoing, Create Include! chapter in year</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>Transportation Objective: Improve transportation options for rural Vermonters. Research ways to increase transportation options on evenings and weekends, targeting particularly underserved</p> <p>regions of the state. Create a personal transportation plan (PTP) for all Vermonters with disabilities. Educate all Vermonters about public transportation options. Hold forums and/or survey PWD to talk about issues within the public transportation system. Educate transportation personnel about how to work with PWD?s. Working with partners, develop and distribute information about Medicaid transportation and how to appeal when transportation is denied.</p> <p>Geographic Scope: Statewide; Northern and Southern Vermont</p> <p>What?s Measurable: Baseline number of trips. % Change in program sponsored trips, number of people attending forum, number of people educated, number of Personal Transportation Plans created.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: With a coalition, create an assessment tool for a personal transportation plan. Operate a pilot program for the personal transportation plan in a selected area of Vermont. Evaluate results of pilot program. Plan for Statewide implementation of personal transportation plan program. Distribute how to work with Person?s With Disabilities brochure and respectful language brochure to transportation personnel. Provide education and</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>technical assistance regarding disability related laws. Invite a cab company to be on Transportation Task Force. Educate transportation personnel on how to work with Person?s With Disabilities. Reach out to Person?s With Disabilities to engage them about gaps in Medicaid Transportation. Monitor and comment on state/federal legislation related to transportation.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC, VCIL</p> <p>Key Partners: VTrans, UVM Transportation Research Department, Regional transportation providers, Department of Vermont Health Access, Medicaid, Person?s With Disabilities, National Council on Independent Living Transportation Subcommittee, Department of Blind and Visually Impaired, Vermont Coalition Disability Rights partners.</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of SILC employee, volunteer hours of council members (stipend/mileage).</p> <p>Funding Sources: VTrans, SILC Resource Plan, Agency of Human Services</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p>	<p>Family Supports Objective(s): Build state capacity to support parents with disabilities to raise their children at home. Reinstitute peer navigators which help provide supports and services to parents with disabilities. Advocate for greater supports for children with disabilities to support future independent living.</p> <p>What?s Measurable: Number of Department of Children and Families social workers trained in supporting parents with disabilities. Amount of funding for Peer Supports obtained through collaborative grant activities or advocacy. Number of parents with disabilities connected to Peer Supports/Peer Navigation.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Educate Legislators and administrators about successes in the past of Peer Navigation/Peer Support and how this can reduce loss of child custody by supporting families. Inform families about on-line resources</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>



	<p>such as the Disabled Parenting Project, Through the Looking Glass, The Association for Successful Parenting, and the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. Post family support information on SILC website. Collaborate with other organizations to submit proposals for grant funding in this area.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: VCIL, Vermont Family Network, VT Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health</p> <p>Key Partners: Department of Children and Families, SILC, Vermont Coalition on Disability Rights</p> <p>Resources needed: Volunteer hours of Council</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>Draft Assistive Technology Objective(s): Identify barriers to obtaining Assistive Technology. Educate Persons With Disabilities about funding opportunities and other programs for Assistive Technology in Vermont so that they can realize their independent living goals. Inform People With Disabilities of resources to assist them when Medicaid/Medicare/Schools refuse to cover medically necessary or educationally necessary Assistive Technology. Provide education to assist People With Disabilities in their rights to appeal in these situations. Provide more options for obtaining assistive technology in rural areas. Monitor and comment on policy conversations within the Administration and legislative (state/fed) activities. Connect and provide input to the Assistive Technology Program.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Baseline number of people that apply for Assistive Technology in a year. Percentage change after education program.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Build a stronger relationship with the Assistive Technology Program, Wayward Wheels, and other AT projects. Take an inventory of existing outlets, funding sources and programs to get Assistive Technology. Distribute existing materials through Department of Aging and Independent Living and Assistive Technology providers as</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>well as post on SILC website. Work with State Rehab Council and Voc Rehab Assistive Technology program to simplify application process.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: Assistive Technology Program, VCIL</p> <p>Key Partners: SILC, State Rehab Council</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time and Council volunteer hours (stipend/mileage)</p> <p>Funding Sources: SILC resource plan.</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>Voting Objective: Educate PWDs about their rights to vote and vote in an accessible environment. All polling places in Vermont should be truly accessible. Identify existing barriers to voting. Develop and distribute materials for PWDs to bring with them to their polling places. These materials could be used inform PWDs about their voting rights as well as to record comments about accessibility. Provide more interactive accessibility at Town meetings. Make sure all PWDs in each polling region know where rides to the polls can be obtained on election days.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Baseline Person's with Disabilities that vote. % change after educational effort.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Obtain and distribute existing VT Elections Division information on Voting at SILC public events and on website. Continue relationship with Secretary of State's office and cross education on disability issues. Seek public input on specific voting places that are not accessible. Have presentation on accessible voting at SILC Quarterly meeting. Coordinate with Personal Transportation Plans to include election transportation. Develop and distribute educational materials before elections. Connect to the #CriptheVote Disability Visibility Project. Promote the Disability Rights VT election hotline on election day. Create a 'polling place' section to Accessible</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>Adventures.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: VT Sec of State, Disability Rights VT</p> <p>Key Partners: VCIL, SILC</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time, Volunteer hours of Council Members</p> <p>Funding Sources: SILC Resource Plan, VCIL, Help America Vote Act</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>Transition Objective(s): Facilitate, with other groups, an increase in youth transition that has a strong focus on independent living which includes peer-directed philosophy within a transition to postsecondary education or employment.</p> <p>What's Measurable: High school and post secondary graduation rate, post secondary employment rate, employment rate after high school, supports and services for Persons With Disabilities in employment.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Take an inventory of existing transition resources in VT. Establish ties to transition programs, become educated in how the SILC can play a role in transition services. Distribute existing materials and lists that make Vermonters aware of available transition resources. Have presentation on new Transition programs at SILC Quarterly meeting from Integrated family services. VCIL and SILC to coordinate communications and education about transition with key partners. Distribute existing educational materials around transition. Co-sponsor an annual event with Voc Rehab to educate youth on preparing to enter the job market and how to maintain a job. Support and promote the youth transition work at VCIL, Vermont Family Network, Vermont Federation and other disability partners. Actively recruit a youth member of the SILC and through VCIL promote the Deborah Lisi-Baker Youth Leader award.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC, Voc Rehab</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>/Department of Blind and Visually Impaired, Agency Of Educations</p> <p>Key Partners: VCIL, Vermont Family Network, Green Mountain Self Advocates, Developmental Disabilities Council, State Rehab Council, Department of Disability and Aging Services, Department Mental Health</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of VCIL, Staff time of SILC, Innovation &amp; Expansion funds</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>Emergency Management Objective: Facilitate improved emergency preparedness by Vermonters with disabilities. Facilitate emergency planning by distributing assessment tools (Go/Stay kit). Tie into Agency of Human Services resource identification as to location of populations with specific needs to insure availability of back-up generation and medically necessary transportation. Ensure that facilities serving Person's With Disabilities in an emergency have appropriate accessible transportation resources.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Number of assessment toolkits purchased, number of assessment toolkits distributed, number of assessment toolkits registered, number of individuals with disabilities with an emergency preparedness plan.</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Continue to purchase groups of 100/200 "Go/Stay" kits/year. Distribute kits of disabled Vermonters in need of a plan in case of an emergency. Assist Person's With Disabilities in completing the assessment tool (Go/Stay kit). Survey people who received kits and training to determine if they developed an emergency preparedness plan. Have annual presentation from Vermont Emergency Management. Work with Agency of Human Services to develop (or use existing) maps of Person's With Disabilities locations in rural areas that might need extra transportation resources during an emergency.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>

	<p>Key Partners: Vermont Emergency Management, VCIL, Agency of Human Services.</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of VCIL and SILC</p> <p>Funding Sources: SILC Resource Plan</p>		
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p>	<p>Cultural Competence Objective: Add Cultural Competence and Diversity training around disability inclusion to existing tools for authorities and peers in partnership with the Vermont Vision for a Multicultural Future and work with the VT Partnership for Fairness and Diversity on projects. Create a section of Include! Curriculum that educates general student population about disability diversity issues, and promotes inclusion of ALL students. Develop and distribute an educational presentation that can be taken on the road; a higher level of civil rights; services should be available to everybody; not just "customized" for Person's With Disabilities. Disability rights organizations in Vermont engage in conversations/forum and training on cultural competency.</p> <p>What's Measurable: Number of presentations given regarding cultural competence</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Develop a presentation re Cultural Competence around disability that can be use to educate a number of organizational categories: peer groups, schools, law enforcement, municipalities and State Government</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC, VCIL, Green Mountain Self Advocates,</p> <p>Key Partners: VT Legislature, VT Chamber of Commerce, Agency Of Education, Vermont Family Network, Vermont Coalition of Disability Rights partners, Vermont LEND.</p> <p>Resources needed: State and federal funds, staff time of SILC employee</p> <p>Funding Sources: Part B Grant, Fundraising</p>	10/01/2016	09/30/2019

<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p>	<p>Social Inclusion Objective: Make access to non medical and/or social activities easier for PWD's. Add performance spaces to existing database of accessible environments. Educate facilities personnel and events planners on the principles and practices of (inclusive) Universal Design</p> <p>What's Measurable: Numbers of facilities whose accessibility features are added to Accessible Adventures database</p> <p>Necessary Activities: Working with partners and volunteers, enter accessibility data into Accessible Adventures. Complete outreach to disability community and private sector business regarding the value of doing business with Person's With Disabilities and Accessible Adventures as a marketing tool to reach Person's With Disabilities.</p> <p>Lead Organizations: SILC, VCIL</p> <p>Key Partners: Vermont Arts Council, VSA Vermont</p> <p>Resources needed: Staff time of SILC, VCIL, Vermont Arts Council, VSA Vermont</p> <p>Funding Sources: Part B grant, SILC resource plan, fundraising</p>	<p>10/01/2016</p>	<p>09/30/2019</p>
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## 1.2 Objectives

1.2B Describe the steps planned regarding outreach to populations in the State that are unserved or underserved by programs under title VII, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

- Identify the populations to be designated for targeted outreach efforts

Vermont's Independent Living programs will strive to be increasingly responsive to the needs of underserved disability populations and geographic areas that are un-served or underserved. There will be a focus on increased service to people who are a part of these groups or residents of the areas identified. The SILC in collaboration with VCIL and the DSUs will collaborate and work together to determine an updated status regarding underserved areas in Vermont. This objective promotes a philosophy of Independent Living including consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination and equal access. Individual and systems advocacy maximize the independence and productivity of individuals with significant disabilities integration and inclusion. The populations identified for targeted outreach efforts will include people of color, people who are from the LGBTQ community, and youth with disabilities. In addition, there

will be a geographic target in Addison County, Springfield/White River Junction area and the Franklin/Grand Isle region.

- Identify the geographic areas (i.e., communities) in which the targeted populations reside

The SILC, DSUs and VCIL will confer annually to determine goals and strategies that can offer improvement regarding Independent Living services regionally. An approach to provide additional outreach in Addison County, Springfield/White River Junction area and Franklin/Grand Isle county areas will be developed and implemented. Timeline: Annual

- Describe how the needs of individuals with significant disabilities from minority group backgrounds will be addressed

VCIL has completed a cultural competency internal evaluation and has developed strategies for reaching out to people with disabilities who are also people of color or are from the LGBTQ community. The SILC and VCIL will complete outreach to these communities. The SILC and DSUs will require an annual report from all recipients of Part B funds on their outreach work to minority populations and underserved disability groups and the results of their efforts. Timeline: Annually.

DBVI, in its efforts to reach all Vermonters who might benefit from services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, will continue its outreach and education efforts to underserved Vermonters. An area of particular priority includes the increasing ethnic and racial minority populations. DBVI will continue to develop collaborative relationships with the following in an effort to improve its outreach to minority populations in Vermont: the Vermont State Refugee Coordinator, Minority Health Director at Vermont Department of Health, Community Health Center in Burlington, Vermont Partnership for Fairness and Diversity (Formerly ALANA), Brattleboro Aids Project, Abenaki Self-Help Association, and the Rutland providers group. All of these have a strong connection with minority groups in Vermont. Translated brochures in multiple languages will continue to be provided to the groups for distribution to individuals with limited English proficiency

### 1.3 Financial Plan

Describe in sections 1.3A and 1.3B, below, the financial plan for the use of Federal and non-Federal funds to meet the SPIL objectives.

#### 1.3A Financial Plan Tables

Complete the financial plan tables covering years 1, 2 and 3 of this SPIL. For each funding source, provide estimated dollar amounts anticipated for the applicable uses. The financial plan table should include only those funding sources and amounts that are intended to support one or more of the objectives identified in section 1.2 of the SPIL. To the extent possible, the tables and narratives must reflect the applicable financial information from centers for independent living. Refer to the SPIL Instructions for additional information about completing the financial tables and narratives.

Year 1 - 2017 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
Title VII Funds	0	0	0	0

Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B	90000	222000	150000	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C	0	0	839761	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)	0	225000	0	0
Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	5000	0	0	0
Other Federal funds - other	0	250000	149772	0
Non-Federal funds - State funds	0	75000	1261240	0
Non-Federal funds - Other	0	0	141500	0
Total	95000	772000	2542273	0

Year 2 - 2018 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
Title VII Funds	0	0	0	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B	90000	222000	150000	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C	0	0	839761	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)	0	225000	0	0
Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	5000	0	0	0
Other Federal funds - other	0	250000	149772	0
Non-Federal funds - State funds	0	75000	1261240	0
Non-Federal funds - Other	0	0	141500	0
Total	95000	772000	2542273	0



Year 3 - 2019 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
Title VII Funds	0	0	0	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B	90000	222000	150000	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C	0	0	839761	0
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)	0	225000	0	0
Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	5000	0	0	0
Other Federal funds - other	0	250000	149772	0
Non-Federal funds - State funds	0	75000	1261240	
Non-Federal funds - Other	0	0	141500	0
Total	95000	772000	2542273	0

### 1.3B Financial Plan Narratives

**1.3B(1) Specify how the part B, part C and chapter 2 (Older Blind) funds, if applicable, will further the SPIL objectives.**

Part B and Chapter 2 funds will further the SPIL objectives, as these funds are the primary source of funding for SILC operations and Independent Living services contracts that are awarded to Vermont's Centers for Independent Living. VCIL operates two centers for Independent Living: VCIL North & VCIL South. Together they serve the entire state of Vermont with offices in Montpelier, Bennington, Brattleboro, Rutland, Burlington, Morrisville and White River Junction. The CILs provide four core independent living services to individuals and groups of individuals with disabilities: information, referral and assistance; Independent Living skills training; peer counseling; and individual and systems advocacy. The Part B funds that are contracted by the DSU to VCIL in an effort to further SPIL objectives support the Centers work with the The Sue Williams Freedom Fund which provides funding for services and equipment to help people with disabilities achieve or maintain independence in their own homes. Part B funding is also contracted for information and assistance, outreach, Peer Advocacy Counseling (PAC), skills training, and community and consumer based systems advocacy activities.

VCIL operates two centers for Independent Living: VCIL North & VCIL South. Together they serve the entire state of Vermont with offices in Montpelier, Bennington, Brattleboro, Rutland, Burlington, Morrisville and White River Junction. The CILs provide four core independent living services to individuals and groups of individuals with disabilities: information, referral and assistance; Independent Living skills training; peer counseling; and individual and systems advocacy. The Part B funds that are

contracted by the DSU to VCIL in an effort to further SPIL objectives support the Centers work with the The Sue Williams Freedom Fund which provides funding for services and equipment to help people with disabilities achieve or maintain independence in their own homes. Part B funding is also contracted for information and assistance, outreach, Peer Advocacy Counseling (PAC), skills training, and community and consumer based systems advocacy activities.

DBVI provides comprehensive Independent Living services to Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired, either directly or through contract with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI). These services are funded through Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B, and are available to consumers statewide. They include: information and referral services related to life skills training; mobility training; transportation services; physical rehabilitation; adaptive aids and appliances; benefit programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Veterans Benefits, personal assistance, and Children with Special Health Needs; and community resources such as VABVI, Councils on Aging, VCIL, support groups, the Disabilities Law Project, etc. DBVI, through the contract with VABVI, provides orientation and mobility services in and outside the home; training in using low vision strategies, self-care, performing activities of daily living, and using accessibility aids; and rehabilitation teaching. Skill-building services such as socialization, self-care, performing activities of daily living, and career development, specifically targeted to adolescents and young adults are included in the focus. DBVI provides, directly or through contract, opportunities for peer counseling, psychotherapeutic and adjustment counseling, loss/grief counseling, and counseling for substance abuse, short-term crisis, and other issues.

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI) is under contract with DBVI to provide services under Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act -- Independent Living services for Older Individuals who are Blind and visually impaired. For the past 19 years, VABVI has conducted the Low Vision and Rehabilitative Services Project, a statewide program offering low vision and rehabilitative services, adjustment counseling, and independent living skills training to Vermonters who are visually impaired and age 55 and older. This program also provides optometry services through the use of professionals and utilizes volunteers in providing other services. VABVI's Information and Referral Service with Statewide Toll-free access provides callers with information regarding assistive technology, rehabilitation and mobility training, benefits programs, civil rights, transportation, health care, personal assistance, community resources, and other topics of interest to individuals who are blind or visually impaired living in Vermont.

**1.3B(2) Describe efforts to coordinate Federal and State funding for centers and IL services, including the amounts, sources and purposes of the funding to be coordinated.**

The SPIL activity that coordinates Federal and State funding for CILs is a contract awarded to VCIL recommended by the SILC contract and administered by DVR. VCIL is contracted by the DSU to perform IL services related to the Sue Williams Freedom Fund and peer advocacy outreach. Additionally, that contract includes \$51, 250 of general legislative funds from the Vermont State Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living to provide IL services.

The OIB Funds included in the financial plan, are contracted to the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired to offer direct services related to rehabilitation and independent living skills training. The program provides services to people who are blind or visually impaired and over the age of 55.

**1.3B(3) Describe any in-kind resources including plant, equipment or services to be provided in support of the SILC resource plan, IL services, general CIL operations and/or other SPIL objectives.**

The DSUs ? The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired receives, accounts for, and disburses funds received by the State under Chapter 1 in accordance with the SPIL. They provide administrative support services for the part B State IL services (SILS) program and the part C, Chapter 1, CIL program. Appropriate record keeping is assured with respect to any funded programs. DVR provides IL services through a contract with VCIL and is available to provide

technical support and training upon request. DBVI provides IL services through a contract with VABVI and is available for training and technical support. DVR also supports the SILS by maintaining a liaison position that facilitates communication and coordination between the SILC and the DSUs. Additionally, there is an administrative assistant that provides some basic clerical support to the SILC when necessary.

**1.3B(4) Provide any additional information about the financial plan, as appropriate.**

Vermont began adjusting financial plans for Title VII, Part B and Part C due to projected level funding. This is reflected in the Financial Plan found in section 1.3 of this SPIL. After careful consideration, the Vermont SILC decided to reduce its Resource plan expenditures and continue to level fund its planned for services that are carried out with Part B funds. This includes a 5% reduction in Other federal funds that are allocated by the Vermont Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired. The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired is also performing a budget reduction exercise because of the projected reduction of Federal Older Blind dollars.

The SILC Resource Plan accounts for about 36% of the Part B award for Vermont (222,000). The justification of this percentage being over 30% is as follows: Vermont is a minimal allotment State and a rural state as well. Programs, outreach efforts and a centralized information center (our website(s)) are critical to keep Independent Living services available under these circumstances. The SILC employs minimal staff and is reliant on a series of informational websites to manifest our Independent Living policies. Funds have been allocated to websites and maintenance just as we've undergone the huge change from paper records to electronic records. The SILC sponsors and supports a series of events across the state and throughout the year. Travel is reimbursed for SILC members that advocate at these events and the SILC provides financial support for the informal organization that manages many of the statewide gatherings. Still, the largest use of the Part B grant is to support the lone Vermont CIL so that they can administer direct services.

## **1.4 Compatibility with Chapter 1 of Title VII and the CIL Work Plans**

### **1.4A Describe how the SPIL objectives are consistent with and further the purpose of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act as stated in section 701 of the Act and 34 CFR 364.2.**

Through collaborative efforts with the CILs and the DSUs, attendance at appropriate events addressing disability issues and promoting the Independent Living Philosophy will remain a priority. Participation through dissemination and input of information and education will empower individuals to become more independent and productive.

Tracking and oversight of the Vermont Olmstead Plan through communication and collaboration with other agencies and organizations that assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the SPIL shall be an ongoing process. Monitoring of personal care, housing, transportation, incarceration, and employment as it relates to the ability for individuals with disabilities to maintain their independence in the most integrated community settings will assist in determining the best use of financial resources towards this goal.

Leadership development, especially among youth, is of critical importance in the ongoing struggle to promote the independent living movement. Historical perspective and orientation toward the IL movement play a large role in outreach activities that will engage individuals with disabilities to take leadership positions.

### **1.4B Describe how, in developing the SPIL objectives, the DSU and the SILC considered and incorporated, where appropriate, the priorities and objectives established by centers for independent living under section 725(c)(4) of the Act.**

VCIL decided to change their timeline for developing a strategic plan to align their planning with the SPIL. SILC, the DSU and VCIL decided to use the issue areas laid out in the Vermont Olmstead Plan as a starting point for the planning process. The SPIL was developed with very active involvement by VCIL's Executive Director and staff holding community meetings to solicit input, developing a web based survey, using social media to collect suggestions for the SPIL and holding public hearings. Public hearings were held at various sites throughout the state. There was an open conference line and VCIL used their Twitter account to update Followers of as the public hearing was going. VCIL is using the data collected during the public hearing to set an updated Strategic Plan and new three year work plan.

## **1.5 Cooperation, Coordination, and Working Relationships Among Various Entities**

Describe the steps that will be taken to maximize the cooperation, coordination and working relationships among the SILS program, the SILC, and centers; the DSU, other State agencies represented on the SILC and other councils that address the needs of specific disability populations and issues; and other public and private entities determined to be appropriate by the SILC. The description must identify the entities with which the DSU and the SILC will cooperate and coordinate.

Vermont fosters cooperation, coordination and working relationships that will support the Independent Living movement. The small size of the State is conducive to cooperative working relationships. The SILC has active representation from the Vermont Center for Independent Living and from the Designated State Units. These mandated representatives, along with the DSU's liaison to the SILC, participate in the quarterly council meetings, and are also active with committees and workgroups when appropriate. The need for representation by SILC members, CIL staff and DSU representatives will be assessed and appointments made, as appropriate, to a variety of working groups such as the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights board of governors; the State Rehabilitation Council; the Medicaid Advisory Board; and other task forces. In this last year, the SILC, VCIL and other groups have made a very serious effort to align the goals of the State Olmstead plan with the goals of the 2014 - 2016 SPIL and also the goals of the VCIL strategic plan. Working together in this way to align our goals saves resources and ensures that we are not duplications efforts. There is a commitment to collaboration in an effort to improve opportunities and equality for people with disabilities while trying to increase Independent Living services in Vermont.

## **1.6 Coordination of Services**

Describe how IL services funded under chapter 1 of title VII of the Act will be coordinated with and complement other services to avoid unnecessary duplication with other Federal, State, and local programs, including the OIB program authorized by chapter 2 of title VII of the Act, that provide IL- or VR-related services.

The IL partners in Vermont recognize the importance of coordination with regard to the focus and programs that address special education, vocational education, developmental disability services, public health, mental health services, housing and transportation. The Centers for Independent Living and the DSUs maintain communication and provide reporting that prevents duplication of services. This is also an area that benefits from Vermont's small size and its greater potential for statewide internal awareness of the status of services and their effectiveness.

The State takes steps that maximize the communication, cooperation, coordination, and working relationships among -

a) the SILS program, the SILC and CILs; and

b) the DSU(s), 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, including Indian Tribal Councils, determined to be appropriate by the SILC.

The State ensures that services funded under Chapter 1 will complement and be coordinated with other services to avoid unnecessary duplication with other Federal, State, and local programs, including the IL program for older individuals who are blind funded under Chapter 2 of Title VII.

The State coordinates Federal and State funding for CILs and SILS, and includes coordination of services with the veterans' services and programs under XVIII - XX of the Social Security Act.

## **1.7 Independent Living Services for Individuals who are Older Blind**

Describe how the DSU seeks to incorporate into, and describe in, the State plan any new methods or approaches for the provision of IL services to older individuals who are blind that are developed under the Older Individuals who are Blind program and that the DSU determines to be effective.

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI) is under contract with DBVI to provide services under Title VII, Chapter 2 of the Rehabilitation Act, Independent Living for Older Individuals who are Blind and visually impaired. For the past 22 years, VABVI has conducted the Low Vision and Rehabilitative Services Project, a statewide program offering low vision, rehabilitative services, and orientation & mobility, adjustment counseling, information & referral and independent living skills training to Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired and age 55 and older. This program also provides optometry services through the use of professionals and utilizes volunteers in providing other services

VABVI's Information and Referral Service with Statewide Toll-free access provides callers with information regarding assistive technology, rehabilitation and mobility training, benefits programs, civil rights, transportation, health care, personal assistance, community resources, and other topics of interest to individuals who are blind or visually impaired living in Vermont.

## Part II: Narrative: Section 2 - Scope, Extent, and Arrangements of Services

### 2.1 Scope and Extent

2.1A Check the appropriate boxes in the SPIL Instrument table indicating the types of IL services to be provided to meet the objectives identified in section 1.2 of this SPIL, and whether the services will be provided by the CILs or by the DSU (directly and/or through contract or grant).

<b>Table 2.1A: Independent living services</b>	<b>Provided by the DSU (directly)</b>	<b>Provided by the DSU (through contract and/or grant)</b>	<b>Provided by the CILs (Not through DSU contracts/grants)</b>
Core Independent Living Services - Information and referral	Yes	Yes	Yes
Core Independent Living Services - IL skills training	Yes	Yes	No
Core Independent Living Services - Peer counseling	Yes	Yes	Yes
Core Independent Living Services - Individual and systems advocacy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Counseling services, including psychological, psychotherapeutic, and related services	No	Yes	No
Services related to securing housing or shelter, including services related to community group living, and supportive of the purposes of this Act and of the titles of this Act, and adaptive housing services (including appropriate accommodations to and modifications of any space used to serve, or occupied by, individuals with significant disabilities)	Yes	No	Yes
Rehabilitation technology	Yes	No	Yes
Mobility training	No	Yes	No
Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services	No	Yes	Yes

Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services	No	Yes	Yes
Surveys, directories and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation, accessible transportation and other support services	Yes	No	Yes
Consumer information programs on rehabilitation and IL services available under this Act, especially for minorities and other individuals with disabilities who have traditionally been unserved or underserved by programs under this Act	Yes	No	Yes
Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities	No	Yes	Yes
Supported living	No	No	Yes
Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation	No	Yes	Yes
Physical rehabilitation	No	Yes	Yes
Therapeutic treatment	No	No	Yes
Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices	No	No	Yes
Individual and group social and recreational services	Yes	No	Yes
Training to develop skills specifically designed for youths who are individuals with significant disabilities to promote self-awareness and esteem, develop advocacy and self-empowerment skills, and explore career options	No	Yes	Yes
Services for children with significant disabilities	No	Yes	Yes
Services under other Federal, State, or local programs designed to provide resources, training, counseling, or other assistance of substantial benefit in enhancing the independence, productivity, and quality of life of individuals with significant disabilities	Yes	No	Yes

Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with significant disabilities for similar services in the future	No	No	Yes
Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities	Yes	No	Yes
Other necessary services not inconsistent with the Act	Yes	Yes	Yes

2.1B Describe any service provision priorities, including types of services or populations, established for meeting the SPIL objectives identified in section 1.2.

#### Vermont Center for Independent Living

VCIL is a statewide center for Independent Living with a central office in Montpelier and branch offices in Bennington, Brattleboro, Burlington, Morrisville, Rutland and White River Junction. Its principal source of funding is through Title VII, Part C of the Rehabilitation Act. It also receives Title VII, Part B Funds through a contract administered by the Vermont Division of Vocational Rehabilitation which supports initiatives as outlined in the Vermont SPIL, including the Sue Williams Freedom fund, peer advocacy and services to underserved areas. VCIL provides the following four core independent living services to individuals and groups of individuals with disabilities: information, referral and assistance; Independent Living skills training; peer counseling; and individual and systems advocacy.

#### Information, Referral & Assistance (IR&A)

VCIL offers information, referral & assistance that serves all of Vermont and responds to requests for information on disability-related topics and issues. There is a dedicated IR&A specialist and all program staff are responsible for responding to IR&A questions. Knowledgeable specialists with good listening skills and data search abilities provide callers with up-to-date information about resources for Independent Living such as housing, assistive technology, personal assistance, transportation, employment, rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, health care, and federal and state programs (such as public assistance, Medicaid, Social Security, Vocational Rehabilitation, Medicare, etc.).

VCIL continues to work as a part of the Vermont Aging and Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRC). VCIL's IR&A specialists are required to become certified through the Alliance of I& R systems (AIRS), which has a certification program that evaluates the competence of I&R practitioners. In addition, VCIL has established a comprehensive resource center at its central office that provides information on topics of interest to Vermonters with disabilities. VCIL's library contains hundreds of books, articles, periodicals, videotapes, audiotapes, and computer disks, as well as information about resources that can be downloaded from the World Wide Web, DIMENET, and other on-line services.

#### Independent Living Skills Training

VCIL offers skills trainings through workshops and facilitated groups at its central office, branch offices, and accessible meeting spaces throughout Vermont. Topics covered include: managing personal assistance; civil rights and Independent Living; consumer rights and responsibilities, advocacy skills, preparing meals and sexuality and relationships. In addition, peer advocacy counselors provide individual training to peers in self-advocacy, accessing community resources, and other skills necessary for maintaining an independent lifestyle. Skills trainings are offered in a community meeting setting where peers work with other peers. The skills learned are then adopted in the community. An example of a skills training offered



annually is How to Work with your Legislator. Each year this skill building workshop is offered in different locations throughout the state. After the workshop, peers meet with their local legislators to test their new skills.

### Peer Advocacy Counselors

PACs provide information, support, and training in self-advocacy to persons with disabilities, including individuals who are Deaf or hard of hearing, enabling them to achieve self-help goals and learn skills for living as independently as possible. The overall mission of the Peer Advocacy Counseling Program is to increase the independence, dignity, and human rights of people with disabilities in dealing with the issues that affect their lives, through the provision of information and peer support. VCIL has two peer advocacy counselors who focus on the needs of Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons and on a cross-disability basis. Locally-based peer advocacy counselors meet with peers in their homes in communities throughout Vermont and at VCIL's office locations throughout the state. VCIL also offers, in several locations, support groups through which peers assist and empower each other, plan recreational activities and work on skill building activities.

Advocacy is the centerpiece of VCIL's efforts to achieve systems and community change. In addition to training consumers in strategies for individual advocacy, VCIL conducts a wide range of activities to improve public policy and the delivery of services affecting people with disabilities, particularly in the areas of personal assistance, employment, health care, and transportation. These include:

#### Convening and supporting consumer task forces

? Developing an annual Advocacy Agenda

? Informing grassroots advocates of issues and advocacy needs through peer alerts, newsletters, and public presentations

? Conducting legislative and grassroots advocacy supporting state general fund appropriations for programs that enhance the Independent Living options and opportunities for people with disabilities in Vermont

? Representing consumer interests on policy committees and boards such as: Vermont Access Board, Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition, DAIL Advisory Board, Governors Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, State Rehabilitation Council, Vermont Assistive Technology Coordinating Council, Regional Long Term Care Coalitions, the SSI Mandatory Managed Care Advisory Committee, Medicaid Waiver regional teams, regional transportation boards, committees, and councils, and New England ADA Technical Assistance Center

? Monitoring and testifying at legislative and regulatory hearings

? Working with members of the Deaf community to increase communication access and the availability of certified ASL interpreters in Vermont

? Conducting non-partisan voter registration and education activities

? Working in coalition with other organizations through the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights and other cross-disability and single-disability groups.

VCIL has focused peer counseling programs in these areas:

- Youth Leadership Program: serves high school students and young adults with disabilities who are motivated to learn independent living skills and self-direction in their lives, to successfully transition from school to community integration, and to mentor their peers, in turn.

- Deaf Independence Program: serves as an important resource for Vermonters who are Deaf or hard of hearing to reach personal and professional goals in education, employment, communication, recreation, finance, and housing, while providing a resource for legal or other issues that might arise in reaching these goals.

- AgrAbility: Provides Information and Referral for farmers, as well as on-site home and agricultural assessments, and recommends ways to safely continue to farm after acquiring a disability. This may include how to restructure work tasks or operations, explore alternative enterprises, and/or modify farm equipment and tools.

#### Other VCIL Services:

VCIL operates four programs that provide consumers with financial and technical assistance in order to obtain assistive technology, personal assistance, and home modifications, which can enable them to achieve Independent Living goals.

The Sue Williams Freedom Fund (SWFF) is funded through a contract awarded annually by the United States Department of Education and dispersed by the DSU. Consumers are assisted in developing Independent Living plans, identifying the resources that will meet their needs (assistive technology, personal assistance, transportation, and other goods and services), and purchasing these goods and services from vendors and providers. Program staff also coordinates with vendors, volunteers, and sources of additional funding, materials, and/or labor; maintain quality control; review and update program procedures as needed; and authorize payments to providers.

The Sue Williams Freedom Fund, a partnership supported by the IL partners, provides assistive technology and other purchased services that help individuals with disabilities move out of nursing homes or other restrictive setting or increase their independence and community participation.

The Home Access Program (HAP) assists consumers in modifying home entrances and bathrooms to make them accessible. The HAP staff review applications for assistance; helps consumers develop plans for access modifications; coordinates with local contractors, volunteers, and sources of additional funding, materials, and/or labor; networks with funding agencies and other providers; and advocates for affordable housing. VCIL has income caps for our Home Access Program, as required by the primary funding source, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board. HAP staff provides Home Access information, peer counseling, technical assistance and advocacy assistance to individuals of all ages, but provide assistance funding to those who fall within the specific poverty guidelines set by the State.

The Meals on Wheels Program, which is for people with disabilities 60 years of age and under, assists those with chronic conditions who are unable to prepare their own meals and have no one to help with meal preparation. The program ensures that qualified individuals receive at least one hot meal a day and provides a daily check-in (often the only contact a person has), which provides an opportunity to identify any additional needs. The program is set up to meet nutritional needs in 3 different ways; emergency, short term and long term. Funding is provided through the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living.

#### Division For The Blind And Visually Impaired

DBVI provides comprehensive Independent Living services to Vermonters who are blind or visually impaired, either directly or through contract with the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually

Impaired (VABVI). These services are funded through Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B, and are available to consumers statewide. They include:

DBVI, through its four regionally-based rehabilitation associates, provides: information and referral services related to life skills training; mobility training; transportation services; physical rehabilitation; adaptive aids and appliances; benefit programs such as Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, Veterans Benefits, personal assistance, and Children with Special Health Needs; and community resources such as VABVI, Area Agencies on Aging, VCIL, support groups, the Disabilities Law Project, etc.

DBVI, through contract with VABVI, provides orientation and mobility services in and outside the home; training in using low vision strategies, self-care, performing activities of daily living, and using accessibility aids; and rehabilitation teaching. Also provided through contract with VABVI are skill-building services such as socialization, self-care, performing activities of daily living, and career development.

DBVI provides, directly or through contract, peer counseling, psychotherapeutic and adjustment counseling, loss/grief counseling, and counseling for substance abuse, short-term crisis, and other issues.

DBVI's rehabilitation associates provide advocacy assistance to individual consumers in obtaining services such as Medicaid, Medicare, SSI/SSDI, Veterans Benefits, housing, assistive technology, medical assistance, etc. DBVI addresses systems advocacy need through collaborative research and demonstrations of new technology and through the identification of new resources for transportation.

DBVI also provides, directly or through contract, the following services:

? Case management;

? Rehabilitation technology assessments: evaluation and recommendations for technical solutions to vision loss;

? Transportation: assistance in obtaining and paying for transportation necessary to achieve independent living goals;

? Physical rehabilitation: assistance in paying for medical services, eyeglasses and contact lenses, medical equipment and supplies, optical aids, hearing evaluations and hearing aids;

? Assistive devices and appliances: assistance in paying for items such as Braille and audible timepieces, calculators, note-takers, tape recorders, tactile labeling devices, canes, needle-threaders, tactile and large-print telephones, etc;

? Recreational services: participation in group activities; provision of adapted aids such as Braille and large-print games and playing cards;

? Services to family members; information regarding disability, medical awareness training, etc.

2.1C If the State allows service providers to charge consumers for the cost of services or to consider the ability of individual consumers to pay for the cost of IL services, specify the types of IL services for which costs may be charged and for which a financial need test may be applied, and describe how the State will ensure that:

- Any consideration of financial need is applied uniformly so that all individuals who are eligible for IL services are treated equally; and

- Written policies and consumer documentation required by 34 CFR 364.59(d) will be kept by the service provider.

Indicate N/A if not applicable.

N/A

## 2.2 Arrangements for State-Provided Services

2.2A If the DSU will provide any of the IL services identified in section 2.1A through grants or contractual arrangements with third parties, describe such arrangements.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, serving as one of the Designated State Units, provides Independent Living services, using Part B Funds and a contractual arrangement with VCIL to fulfill the responsibilities defined as core services.

VABVI is the primary service provider contracted by the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired, to provide the services identified in section 2.1A, which include a priority focus on orientation and mobility, rehabilitation teaching, peer group support, and training in the use of low-vision devices. These contracts are awarded annually.

2.2B If the State contracts with or awards a grant to a center for the general operation of the center, describe how the State will ensure that the determination of an individual's eligibility for services from that center shall be delegated to the center.

The DSUs, the SILC, VCIL and VABVI have an understanding that assures that the direct provider of IL services will be responsible for appropriate systems for eligibility determination, IL service assessment, plan development and program operations using Part B grant funding administered by the State.

## **Part II: Narrative: Section 3 - Design for the Statewide Network of Centers**

### 3.1 Existing Network

Provide an overview of the existing network of centers, including non-Part C-funded centers that comply with the standards and assurances in section 725 (b) and (c) of the Act, and the geographic areas and populations currently served by the centers.

Currently, Vermont has two CILs (VCIL North and VCIL South, SPIL Signatory) that comply with the standards and assurances of Section 725 of the Rehabilitation Act. The Vermont Center for Independent Living, with a central office in Montpelier, operates offices in Bennington (southwest), Brattleboro (southeast) and Burlington (northwest), White River Junction and Morrisville. Field-based peer advocate counselors strive to provide Title VII, Part C services statewide.

### 3.2 Expansion of Network

Describe the design for the further expansion of the network, including identification of the unserved and underserved areas in the State and the order of priority for serving these areas as additional funding becomes available (beyond the required cost-of-living increase).

Vermont has coverage of IL Services throughout the entire state. Offices are not available in every region, but access to services is available through a central call in number. Regions identified as underserved during this plan are Addison County, Springfield/White River Junction region and Franklin/Grand Isle counties. As additional funding becomes available the priority would be to enhance services in White River Junction, than Addison County and following in Franklin/Grand Isle counties.

### 3.3 Section 723 States Only

3.3A If the State follows an order of priorities for allocating funds among centers within a State that is different from what is outlined in 34 CFR 366.22, describe the alternate order of priority that the DSU director and the SILC chair have agreed upon. Indicate N/A if not applicable.

N/A

3.3B Describe how the State policies, practices and procedures governing the awarding of grants to centers and the oversight of these centers are consistent with 34 CFR 366.37 and 366.38.

N/A

## **Part II: Narrative: Section 4 - Designated State Unit (DSU)**

### 4.1 Administrative Support Services

4.1A Describe the administrative support services to be provided by the DSU for the SILS (Part B) program and, if the State is a Section 723 State, for the CIL (Part C) program. Refer to the SPIL Instructions for additional information about administrative support services.

The DSEs ? The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Division for the Blind and Visually Impaired receives, accounts for, and disburses funds received by the State under Chapter 1 in accordance with the SPIL. They provide administrative support services for the part B State IL services (SILS) program and the part C, Chapter 1, CIL program. Appropriate record keeping is assured with respect to any funded programs. DVR provides IL services through a contract with VCIL and is available to provide technical support and training upon request. DBVI provides IL services through a contract with VABVI and is available for training and technical support. DVR also supports the SILS by maintaining a liaison position that facilitates communication and coordination between the SILC and the DSUs. Additionally, there is an administrative assistant that provides some basic clerical support to the SILC when necessary. These departments are within Agency of Human Services, which will provide policy guidance for the SILC, while VR and DBVI continue to provide fiscal support handling our Part B grant as before.

4.1B Describe other DSU arrangements for the administration of the IL program, if any.

The VT SILC's chosen DSE is the Vermont Agency of Human Services (AHS) with ongoing administrative support to be provided by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) in the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) within AHS.

## **Part II: Narrative: Section 5 - Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)**

### 5.1 Resource plan

5.1A Describe the resource plan prepared by the SILC in conjunction with the DSU for the provision of resources, including staff and personnel, made available under parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII, section 101(a)(18) of the Act, and from other public and private sources that may be necessary to carry out the functions of the SILC identified in section 705(c). The description must address the three years of this SPIL.

- Refer to the SPIL Instructions for more information about completing this section.

For more information click the icon.

In conjunction with the DSE, the SILC will prepare a Resource Plan (SILC Budget) for the provision of resources, cash or in-kind, including staff and personnel, rent, supplies, telephone expenses, travel, and other expenses (e.g., child care, personal assistance services, and compensation to a member of the SILC, if the member is not employed or must forfeit wages from other employment, for each day the member is engaged in performing SILC duties) that will be necessary to carry out the functions of the SILC during the term of the SPIL.

The SILC operates with one contracted executive director based on an agreement of an average of thirty-two hours per week. This contract requires that the executive director provide administrative and management function and office space. The contracted professional assumes expenses for regular office and operational costs, does not receive benefits, and is responsible for all relevant taxes and insurance. The DSEs provide for some additional administrative support and the use of equipment services such as the high-speed copier and the mail system. There are conference rooms located at the Waterbury State Complex (where the DSEs are located) which are often used for committee and council meetings. These rooms are also used for other small professional meetings. The DSU (DVR) appoints a staff person within the division to serve as a liaison between the SILC and the DSUs.

5.1B Describe how the following SILC resource plan requirements will be addressed.

- The SILC's responsibility for the proper expenditure of funds and use of resources that it receives under the resource plan.

The SILC will be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds and the use of resources it receives as defined by the approved SILC Budget.

- Non-inclusion of conditions or requirements in the SILC resource plan that may compromise the independence of the SILC.

No conditions or requirements are included in the SILC Budget that will compromise the independence of the SILC.

- Reliance, to the maximum extent possible, on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the State plan.

While assisting the SILC in carrying out its duties outlined by the SPIL, staff and other personnel assigned to the SILC under the SILC Budget will not be assigned duties by the DSE(s) or other agency or office of the State that would create a conflict of interest.

## 5.2 Establishment and Placement

Describe how the establishment and placement of the SILC ensures its independence with respect to the DSU and all other State agencies. Refer to the SPIL Instructions for more information about completing this section.

The SILC is not established as an entity within any State agency, including the DSE(s), and is independent of the DSE(s) and all other State agencies. Following is a brief description of the legal status and placement of the SILC:

The SILC is a free-standing body whose members are appointed by the Governor. It selects and supervises its executive director, who is a subcontractor of the DSE(s). The SILC is responsible for the hiring and firing decisions of their executive director, and for the ED's supervision. Although it has autonomy and is self-governing, the SILC receives some administrative support from the DSEs

## 5.3 Appointment and Composition

Describe the process used by the State to appoint members to the SILC who meet the composition requirements in section 705(b). Refer to the SPIL Instructions for more information about completing this section.

The SILC has appointed membership and nominating committees that are responsible for the recruitment of new SILC members and officer nominations respectively. There is an ongoing assessment of representation regarding geographic areas, disability groups and skills that are present on the SILC. This is the base for a recruitment process and the prioritization of potential new members.

People who are interested in serving on the SILC must complete an application process and attend at least one Council meeting. The membership makes recommendations to the full council for their endorsement. If the full Council supports an appointment through council vote, their application is then forwarded on, via administrative channels at the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, to the Governor with a request for appointment.

The Vermont SILC consistently remains in compliance with the composition of its voting membership. Recent years have presented a challenge with regard to recruitment and unfortunate circumstances that have resulted in the loss of membership. All required disability groups are represented on the Vermont SILC. The SILC, in addition to the files maintained at the Governor's office and at the DSE, maintains an accurate record-keeping system that tracks membership and term-limit compliance. SILC members are eligible and limited to two consecutive 3-year term limits.

The SILC nominating committee is responsible for developing a slate of nominations for officers for the SILC, including the chair, annually. Officers, including the Chair positions, are voted on by the full Council.

## 5.4 Staffing

Describe how the following SILC staffing requirements will be met.

- SILC supervision and evaluation, consistent with State law, of its staff and other personnel as may be necessary to carry out its functions.



The SILC staff consists of one part-time contracted executive director. The Council selects, supervises and evaluates the executive director. The DSE facilitates and administrates the contract.

- Non-assignment of duties to SILC staff and other personnel made available by the DSU, or any other State agency or office, that would create a conflict of interest while assisting the SILC in carrying out its duties.

None of the personnel that support SILC duties have any conflict of interest while assisting in the operations of the SILC.

## **Part II: Narrative: Section 6 - Service Provider Requirements**

Describe how the following service provider requirements will be met:

### 6.1 Staffing

- Inclusion of personnel who are specialists in the development and provision of IL services and in the development and support of centers.

The staff of service providers will include personnel who are specialists in the development and provision of IL services and in the development and support of CILs.

The Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (VABVI) staff are required to have attained a degree as well certification in orientation and mobility, vision rehabilitation therapy and low vision specialization.

The Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) employ staff that are well-versed in disability issues, inasmuch as the majority of staff have significant disabilities themselves. Upon hire, all staff must attend an orientation of VCIL and the Independent Living Movement. All staff must read and comprehend the orientation manual, policy manual, and procedures manual.

- Availability, to the maximum extent feasible, of personnel able to communicate (1) with individuals with significant disabilities who rely on alternative modes of communication, such as manual communication, nonverbal communication devices, Braille, or audio tapes and (2) in the native languages of individuals with significant disabilities whose English proficiency is limited and who apply for or receive IL services under title VII of the Act.

Availability, to the maximum extent feasible, of personnel able to communicate (1) with individuals with significant disabilities who rely on alternative modes of communication, such as manual communication, nonverbal communication devices, Braille, or audio tapes and (2) in the native languages of individuals with significant disabilities whose English proficiency is limited and who apply for or receive IL services under title VII of the Act.

To the maximum extent feasible, VCIL and VABVI (or any entity being contracted by the DSUs using Part B funds) will make available personnel able to communicate with individuals with significant disabilities who rely on alternative modes of communication, such as manual communication, nonverbal communication devices, Braille, or audio tape, and who apply for or receive IL services under the SPIL. Communication differences are also accommodated in the native languages of individuals with significant disabilities whose English proficiency is limited and who apply for or receive IL services under the SPIL.

- Establishment and maintenance of a program of staff development for all classes of positions involved in providing IL services and, where appropriate, in administering the CIL program, improving the skills of staff directly responsible for the provision of IL services, including knowledge of and practice in the IL philosophy.

Both VCIL and VABVI (or any entity being contracted by the DSUs using Part B funds) maintain staff development programs for all classes of positions involved in providing IL services and, if appropriate, in administering the CIL program. The staff development program will emphasize improving the skills of staff directly responsible for the provision of IL services, through orientation and training in the IL philosophy.

- Affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with significant disabilities on the same terms and conditions required with respect to the employment of individuals with disabilities under section 503 of the Act.

VCIL and VABVI (or any entity being contracted by the DSUs using Part B funds) have taken affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities on the same terms and conditions required with respect to the employment of individuals with disabilities under section 503 of the Act, as shown by the number of staff with disabilities in both organizations

## 6.2 Fiscal Control and Fund Accounting

- Adoption of those fiscal control and fund accounting procedures as may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of and accounting for funds made available through parts B and C of chapter 1 of title VII of the Act, in addition to complying with applicable EDGAR fiscal and accounting requirements.

Fiscal control and accounting procedures used by VCIL and VABVI (or any entity being contracted by the DSEs using Part B funds) shall require reports that allow tracing of expenditures to show funds have been used as proposed and not in violation of any restrictions and prohibitions. Specifically, quarterly request and expenditure reports are sent quarterly to the DSEs.

## 6.3 Recordkeeping, Access and Reporting

- Maintenance of records that fully disclose and document the information listed in 34 CFR 364.35.

VCIL and VABVI (or any entity being contracted by the DSEs using Part B funds) maintains records which identify the source and application of funds received, and also contain information pertaining to the grant awards and authorizations, obligations, un-obligated balances, assets, liabilities, expenditures, and income.

The service providers submit quarterly program progress and financial reports which: identify grant objectives; summarizes quarterly and year-to-date activities and expenditures including statements of funds raised to date; document progress made, including significant accomplishments and/or challenges and anticipated difficulties in completing individual project objectives; and address the status of the full scope of work represented by the grant.

All recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 1 will maintain records that fully disclose the amount and disposition by each recipient of the proceeds of such financial assistance; the total cost of the project or undertaking in connection with which such financial assistance is given or used; the amount of that portion of the cost of the project or undertaking supplied by other sources; and understand the compliance requirements of Chapter 1 and 34 CFR Parts 364, 365, 366, and 367. Using responsible business practices, contracted entities maintain such other records as the Secretary determines to be appropriate to facilitate an effective audit.

- Submission of annual performance and financial reports, and any other reports that the Secretary determines to be appropriate

All recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 1 will submit reports with respect to records required in section 7.3 of the SPIL, as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

- Access to the Commissioner and the Comptroller General, or any of their duly authorized representatives, for the purpose of conducting audits, examinations, and compliance reviews, to the information listed in 34 CFR 364.37.

All recipients of financial assistance under Chapter 1 will afford access to the Secretary and the Comptroller General or any of their duly authorized representatives, for the purpose of conducting audits and examinations, to all records maintained pursuant to section 7.3 of the SPIL immediately above and any other books, documents, papers, and records of the recipients that are pertinent to the financial assistance received under Chapter 1.

#### 6.4 Eligibility

- Eligibility of any individual with a significant disability, as defined in 34 CFR 364.4(b), for IL services under the SILS and CIL programs.

Individuals with significant disabilities are eligible for services provided under the SPIL.

To be eligible, an individual is one:

- (1) Who has a significant physical, mental, cognitive, or sensory impairment;
  - (2) Whose ability to function independently in the family or community or whose ability to obtain, maintain, or advance in employment is substantially limited; and
  - (3) For whom the delivery of IL services will improve the ability to function, continue functioning, or move towards functioning independently in the family or community or to continue in employment.
- Ability of any individual to seek information about IL services under these programs and to request referral to other services and programs for individuals with significant disabilities.

All service providers shall provide, upon request, information regarding IL services available under their programs and provide referrals to other programs that provide services to individuals with significant disabilities, as appropriate.

- Determination of an individual's eligibility for IL services under the SILS and CIL programs in a manner that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 364.51.

Full consultation with applicant or appropriate representative, or providing an opportunity for this consultation

Notification is provided in writing of the action taken and the applicant's rights and the means by which to appeal

Provision to applicant a detailed explanation of the availability and purpose of the Client Assistance Program, including contact information

Referral to other agencies and facilities, including the State's VR program, if appropriate

The service provider shall review an applicant's ineligibility at least once within 12 months after the determination and whenever the provider determines the applicant's status has materially changed. This review is not required if the applicant has refused the review, is no longer present in the state, or his/her whereabouts are unknown.

- Application of eligibility requirements without regard to age, color, creed, gender, national origin, race, religion, or type of significant disability of the individual applying for IL services.

All services providers shall ensure that age, color, creed, gender, national origin, race, religion, or type of significant disability will not be a consideration in determining an individual's eligibility for receiving IL services.

- Non-exclusion from receiving IL services of any individual who is present in the State and who is otherwise eligible for IL services, based on the imposition of any State or local residence requirement.

No service provider shall impose any State or local residence requirements for eligibility that excludes an individual who is present in the State and is otherwise eligible for IL services.

### 6.5 Independent Living Plans

- Provision of IL services in accordance with an IL plan complying with Sec. 364.52 and mutually agreed upon by the individuals with significant disabilities and the appropriate service provider staff unless the individual signs a waiver stating that an IL plan is unnecessary.

VCIL ILP/Waiver Procedures: The following are organization wide procedures for having peers receive, complete and return their Independent Living Plan (ILP) or signing a waiver, if they waive their right to an Independent Living Plan. Each program may implement this in their most efficient way, but the paper work used and what data is entered into the database must be consistent across all programs.

? Once a peer has been referred to a program or sent an application, the ILP (signature only) form (form#) is sent to the peer with a stamped return envelope

? When the above form is received from the peer the original goes to the Database Coordinator who is responsible for entering it in the database (Individuals screen). This form becomes a part of the peers Consumer Service Record (CSR).

? If the peer has chosen to have an Independent Living Plan (ILP), this will trigger the use of the ILP/Goal form (form #). Program staff will work with the peer to develop specific goals (working across all programs) that will constitute the peers ILP. These specific goals, the RSA category, and dates, but NOT individual steps are to be entered into the database by program staff. (Goals should reflect the peer's efforts toward more independence and ?not the provision of a specific service.)

? This form is a working document between the peer and program staff. Goals may be added or withdrawn as the peer deems appropriate and those changes must be entered into the database by program staff. Because goals are entered into the database this document is NOT part of the peer's formal CSR and should stay with the peer and program staff. Do not send to the database coordinator.

? If the peer has chosen to waive their right to a plan (waiver), no other paper work is needed; however, goals still must be entered into the database by program staff.

? The database coordinator will print the peer's goals and attach the signature page and place this in the peers CSR. This document is the peer's Independent Living Plan (ILP) as it would include all goals from all programs.

The State provides IL services under Chapter 1 to individuals with significant disabilities in accordance with an ILP mutually agreed upon by an appropriate staff member of the service provider and the individual, unless the individual signs a waiver stating that such a plan is unnecessary.

### 6.6 Client Assistance Program (CAP) Information

- Use of accessible formats to notify individuals seeking or receiving IL services under chapter 1 of title VII about the availability of the CAP program, the purposes of the services provided under the CAP, and how to contact the CAP.

#### Protocol for Notifying VCIL Peers of the Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Individuals with significant disabilities who are seeking services or receiving services from VCIL will be notified of the Client of the Client Assistance Program under the following protocol:

1. The initial contacts with VCIL for services are routed through the Information and Referral Program or a Peer Advocacy Program staff person. Individuals who express dissatisfaction with or concerns about services they have sought or received from VCIL will be told about the Client Assistance Program and given contact information. A follow-up letter will be sent with a Client Assistance Program brochure enclosed.

2. When a peer enters a program- Peer Advocacy Counseling or other direct service programs, they will be sent a letter describing the Client Assistance Program with a brochure included.

3. VCIL peers receiving services will again be reminded of the existence and availability of the Client Assistance Program when they terminate their relationship with the program.

VABVI: Information regarding CAP is relayed to the consumer during the intake process. It is discussed and then mailed in a packet of information as part of this entire process.

#### 6.7 Protection, Use and Release of Personal Information

- Adoption and implementation of policies and procedures meeting the requirements of 34 CFR 364.56(a), to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information, including photographs and lists of names.

? All personnel files and applications are maintained as confidential for the required period of time.

? VABVI: All signed release of information forms are kept in confidential consumer files.

? VCIL will respect the privacy of the people they work with and hold in confidence all information obtained in the course of relationships with peers, whether that information is obtained through written records or through personal encounter. The principle of confidentiality will be maintained in all programs, functions and activities of VCIL.

? A. VCIL will maintain confidentiality and privacy with regard to information, records, and discussions of or about any individuals they serve. The very fact that an individual is served by VCIL must be kept confidential. This means that employees, consultants, Board members, and volunteers shall not disclose any information about a person, including the fact that the person is or is not served by this organization, to anyone outside of this organization unless written permission for such disclosure has been granted by the person.

? B. The only exception to this policy is when VCIL is required by law to disclose such information, as in situations of adult abuse.

? C. Program coordinators and managers are responsible for ensuring that access to peer files is restricted and that confidentiality is maintained by program staff at all times.

? D. Breach of confidentiality by any employee will be regarded as unacceptable job performance.

## Part II: Narrative: Section 7 - Evaluation

Describe the method that will be used to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the plan in meeting the objectives established in Section 1. The description must include the State's evaluation of satisfaction by individuals with significant disabilities who have participated in the program.

### Section 7: Evaluation

Goal(s) and the related Objective(s) from Section 1	Method that will be used to evaluate
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>The SILC will establish and maintain a method for the evaluation, monitoring and review of the goals, objectives and overall effectiveness of the SPIL. This process will include assessment for meeting the State's objectives and timelines, and satisfaction of individuals with disabilities regarding access and use of IL services. Tools will be used and further developed to access statistics and assess results that may not be available through other reporting mechanisms. An annual survey, specific to the SPIL goals and objectives will be developed and disseminated through the SILC, DSUs, VCIL and VABVI.</p>
<p>Expansion of Independent Living in Vermont</p> <p>CIL operations and Core services administration</p> <p>DBVI provision of Core Independent Living services</p>	<p>The State agrees to annually submit the required results of DSU(s) and SILC evaluation of activities, including the most recent evaluation of Title VII consumer satisfaction, with the annual performance report to RSA. SPIL goals and objectives are reviewed regularly by the SPIL workgroup which includes members of the SILC and DSUs. A full and detailed reconciliation done annually</p>



## **Part II: Narrative: Section 8 - State-Imposed Requirements**

8 State-Imposed Requirements

Identify any State-imposed requirements contained in the provisions of this SPIL.

N/A