



**C**enters for Independent Living are consumer-controlled, community-based, cross-disability, non-residential, private, non-profit agencies designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities and provides an array of independent living services.

### **What services or resources does this agency provide?**

Programs vary from county to county, so it is best to check what the Center for Independent Living does in your area. Some examples of the programs offered are listed below:

- Information and Referral- some of the centers perform outreach in the community by participating in expos, disability fairs, and other events. Sometimes, representatives from these centers also speak about various disability issues.
- Advocacy- empowering people with disabilities with the skills to identify and access the resources they need and to which they have a right
- Peer support- getting matched up with a peer who also has a disability for the purpose of understanding the obstacles faced by people with disabilities and offering practical solutions to resolve issues.
- Independent Living Skills Training- staff empower individuals with disabilities by providing them with the knowledge to perform



the daily tasks essential for obtaining and maintaining independence. Life skills can include the following: household budgeting and financial management, writing job applications, job interviews, job etiquette, personal care, basic cooking skills, navigating through the social services system, problem-solving techniques, understanding reasonable accommodations, assistive technologies and personal safety

- Transitioning to Home Based Services- facilitates the transition of people with disabilities from nursing homes and institutions to home and community based living. Also helps youth with disabilities who need assistance transitioning into postsecondary education and into leading a more independent life.



## What areas of Tennessee do they serve?

Centers for Independent Living serve persons across the state in 6 locations:

- disABILITY Resource Center (serving Knox county);
- Empower Tennessee (serving Cheatham, Davidson, Rutherford, Robertson, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson counties);
- Memphis CIL (serving Shelby county);
- Jackson CIL (Madison, Crockett, Gibson, Carroll, Henderson, Chester, Hardin, and Haywood counties);
- TARP CIL (serving Weakley, Henry, Benton, Dickson, Stewart, Montgomery, Houston, and Humphreys counties); and
- TRAC (serving Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea, and Sequatchie counties).

## Is there a cost and, if so, who pays?

There is no cost affiliated with receiving services from a center for independent living.

## For which students might this agency be appropriate?

Students who have goals of independent living after they graduate from high school should consider Centers for Independent Living as a resource to help them make their goal a reality. Likewise, students of any age (and their parents/guardians/teachers) who want to explore how to set and achieve independent living goals throughout their educational experience should consult with a CIL.

## Where can I learn more?

See below for contact information on your local Center for Independent Living.

## Who is eligible to receive their services/ supports and when?

A person who self-identifies as having a disability and seeks to lead a life of independence and optimal self-sufficiency is eligible for independent living services.

## What is the referral process?

### What documents are needed?

There is no referral process.

## What is the family's responsibility?

The family is an advocate the goals of the student and should provide a supportive and empowering environment to allow the student to achieve them at their own pace and in their own way.

## What is the student's responsibility?

Students are in charge of advocating for themselves with the support of organizations like Centers for Independent Living.

## What is the responsibility of an educator?

The educator may share information about their local Center for Independent Living and what type of programs and services they offer as well as to support the culture and language of independence and self-sufficiency



### **How (and when) do you involve them in the transition planning process?**

- Invite a representative from your local Center for Independent Living to come speak to students about the different types of services and programs they offer to live a more independent lifestyle
- Encourage parents and students to attend local events that their Center for Independent Living hosts in the community
- Teachers can compile a list of programs and services offered by their local Center for Independent Living and provide it to parents during the planning process

### **What questions should I ask of my local Center for Independent Living?**

- Is there an age range that centers for independent living serve?
- Is there a limit to how many programs I can participate in?
- Are the waitlists to receive services at a Center for Independent Living?

### **Additional contact information:**

- Visit the Nashville website at:  
<http://empowertn.org/>
- Visit the Knoxville website:  
<http://drctn.org/>
- Visit the Paris website at:  
<http://www.tarp1.org>
- Visit the Memphis website at:  
<https://sites.google.com/site/mcilaction/home>
- Visit the Jackson website at:  
<http://www.jcil.tn.org>
- Visit the Chattanooga website at:  
<http://www.1trac.org>