
**MONTANA
STATE PLAN FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING
(SPIL)**

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as Amended, Chapter 1, Title

VII

PART B - INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Part C - Centers for Independent Living

State: Montana

FISCAL YEARS:

Effective Date: October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2023

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number (OMB 0985-0044). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is

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Executive Summary

The Mission, goals, objectives and Indicators of the Montana 3 year Statewide Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for 2021 -2023 are defined in Section 1 of the State Plan. The mission of the Montana Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the SPIL, is to ensure the development of integrated accessible and inclusive communities that provide opportunities across the state of Montana for all people with disabilities.

The SPIL contains three goals to achieve progress towards the mission during the 3 year plan.

- The SILC and CILs will seed methods and programs to provide appropriate core services in the most efficient and effective manner.
- Policies, procedures and systems are transformed through advocacy, education, training and awareness to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- Montanas with disabilities have access to and receiver quality an appropriate service.

The SPIL contains Objectives and Indicators directed towards the achievement of these goals. The Montana SILC, the network of Montana CILS and the IL Program Manager will work together to evaluate the Indicators outlined in the SPIL. The IL Task Forces that currently exist and adhoc work groups will take advantage of existing strong relationships and develop new work group teams to support IL across Montana.

Montana being geographically large with more cows that citizens with a great deal of the state considered “frontier” Section 2 is vitally important to people living with disabilities across the state. Section 2 describes the scope of services provided, outreach related to unserved and underserved populations, coordination of services and cooperation among CILs and other organizations to support inclusive community living for all Montanans.

The Montana CIL network is explained in detail in Section 3. Along with growth of the network, minimum funding levels, equalization of funding between CILs and distribution of funds.

Section 4 describes the Designated State Entity's (DSE) response to their administrative responsibilities related to the SPIL.

The establishment of the Montana Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), its autonomy, resource plan, appointment process and staffing are detailed in Section 5.

Section 6 provides the legal certifications for the identified entities involved with authorities and responsibilities of the SPIL.

The assurances of the DSE are defined in Section 7. The section also describes the administrative role and responsibilities of the DSE.

Section 8 provides the SILC assurances and indicators of minimum compliance, detailing the functions, authorities and requirements for operating as a SILC.

Finally, Section 9 provides the signatures of the CILs, SILC and DSE authorized representative. Attesting to the commitments and spirit of the SPIL.

Section 1: Goals, Objectives and Activities

1.1 Mission:

Mission of the Independent Living Network and the SPIL.

The mission of Montana's Independent Living network and this SPIL is to promote self-determination and full inclusion of people with disabilities in Montana.

1.2 Goals:

Goals of the IL Network for the three-year period of the plan.

Goal 1: IL Systems operate effectively and efficiently.

Goal Description:

The SILC and CILs will seek methods and programs to provide appropriate core services in the most efficient and effective manner.

Goal 2: Policies, procedures and systems are transformed through advocacy, education, training and awareness to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

Goal Description:

Partnering with public and private entities, the SILC and CILs will promote IL through various media, programs, individuals, corporations, etc.

Goal 3: Montanans with disabilities have access to and receive quality and appropriate services.

Goal Description:

The CILs, supported by the SILC and other agencies, will provide services to persons with disabilities, especially those who are unserved or underserved including Youth with

disabilities age 14-24, Native Americans with disabilities, Veterans with disabilities, and persons with disabilities living in rural and remote areas of the state seeking to live independently.

1.3 Objectives

Objectives for the three-year period of the plan – including geographic scope, desired outcomes, target dates, and indicators. Including compatibility with the purpose of Title VII, Chapter 1.

Goal 1 – IL Systems operate effectively and efficiently.

- **Goal 1, Objective 1:** Ensure that the SILC is compliant with Standards and Indicators (<https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2017-10/SILC%20Indicators%209.2017.docx>) by end of year 1 of this SPIL.
 - Develop essential functions of SILC program manager job description, clearly delineating between DSE and SILC job responsibilities
 - Clearly delineate in the SILC's policies or bylaws, the relationship between the SILC and the DSE per federal guidelines, ensuring that the SILC is not established as an entity within a State agency in accordance with 45 CFR Sec. 1329.14(b)
 - Develop a method for recruiting applicants and receiving applications and, on at least an annual basis, forward a list of qualified, knowledgeable, and diverse candidates, including candidates tribal, youth, veteran, and other underserved/unserved populations, to be appointed by the Governor or designee
 - Engage all SILC members in SILC activities
 - Maintain individual training plans for members that adhere to the SILC Training and Technical Assistance Center's SILC training curriculum
 - Facilitate training to identify short-term and long-range goals, role and responsibilities of the SILC, and Committee Roles by end of year one of this plan
- **Goal 1, Objective 2:** Explore options for increased autonomy of the SILC, including possible 501c3 status or other avenues
 - By the end of the first year of this plan, a Business Plan will be developed
 - By the end of year two of this plan, a Resource Plan will be developed not only for the establishment of a 501c3 but also showing funding for sustainability
 - By the end of year three of this plan, the SILC will review the Business Plan and Resource plan to determine what the best vehicle for meeting the IL needs of people with disabilities is
- **Goal 1, Objective 3:** In partnership with the MT network of CILs, the SILC will explore and seek funding opportunities to meet increasing demand, federal requirements, and enhance IL services.
 - Monitor and seek both private and public national, state and local funding opportunities that meet the individual or systemic needs of people with disabilities in MT

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- Meet semi-annually with MT network of CILs representatives to identify funding needs and collaborate on potential funding/grant applications
 - Seek out and attain training on resource development at least once per year
 - **Goal 1, Objective 4:** In partnership with the MT network of CILs, the SILC will provide training opportunities that align with IL Philosophy.
 - Provide training to its members, CILs, and other providers, on the Rehab Act, WIOA or Independent Living topics at least twice annually
 - Meet semi-annually with the MT network of CILs representatives to discuss and identify statewide IL training needs
 - SILC program manager will stay apprised of and regularly disseminate emerging practices in implementation of the five core and other IL services
 - The SILC and CILs will collaborate to develop a resource, which contains the services provided by each CIL
 - Maintain memberships to national network partners i.e. APRIL and NCIL

Goal 2 – Policies, procedures and systems are transformed through advocacy, education, training and awareness to meet the needs of people with disabilities.

- **Goal 2, Objective 1:** Effect social change through disability education and awareness to the public.
 - Re-establish a public relations and education SILC ad hoc committee, which will work with CIL representatives to develop position papers on topics important to people with disabilities for the purpose of educating decision makers
 - The SILC website is maintained with current SILC details as well as to provide information on IL, upcoming events, and other relevant information to the public
 - Utilize social media and other multimedia tools to disseminate disability related information and training opportunities to the public
 - Utilize PR methods (media, PSA's etc.) to promote targeted disability related information to the public (i.e. Disability etiquette, voting access, service dog education, etc.) based on identified needs
 - Provide education on IL philosophy, disability rights and IL history/culture, and self-determination to the public at least twice annually
 - Collaborate with allies and community partners to expand and coordinate education and grassroots advocacy efforts and ensure all public and private service systems are accessible to and usable by people with disabilities
- **Goal 2, Objective 2:** People with disabilities are provided opportunities to be involved in promoting disability rights at the local, state, and national levels.
 - Work with CILs to promote, train on, and utilize an MTCIL Action Alert system; a training on how to utilize the action alert system will be provided at least once per year
 - Provide outreach and annual training to encourage and support peers, consumers, and the public to get involved in IL grassroots strategies (i.e. getting on local,

state, and national boards/advisory committees, attending community meetings, voting, joining organizations, etc.)

- **Goal 2, Objective 3:** The SILC will partner with and support MT network of CILs efforts to promote systemic change (i.e. housing, transportation, employment, accessibility, etc.)
 - Host annual structured public listening sessions to gather public input on advocacy needs
 - Subscribe SILC members to the MTCIL Action Alert System
 - Encourage SILC members to participate in the Independent Living Task Forces
 - Inform and encourage SILC members of opportunities to get involved with their local CIL
 - Develop white papers on topics important to people with disabilities with the purpose of educating decision makers and the general public

Goal 3 – Montanans with disabilities have access to and receive quality and appropriate services.

- **Goal 3, Objective 1:** The SILC will assist the MT network of CILs to target unserved and underserved populations through the current outreach model.
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to maintain the current CIL/Branch model of service to ensure statewide coverage of IL services
 - In order to expand access to the host of services that may be provided by each CIL and requested by consumers, the SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to work together to render services, even across service area boundaries, in the most effective manner through contracts, MOU agreements, or other terms of agreement between the various CILs
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to conduct outreach to and partner with allied organizations, including in the seven Montana reservations and in frontier and rural geographic service area locations
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to conduct an assessment to identify current unserved or underserved ethnic populations and underserved geographic areas
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to promote the availability and access to technology services for the provision of IL services in rural and remote locations
- **Goal 3, Objective 2:** The SILC provides training and technical assistance in the provision of the five core and other IL services for the MT network of CILs.
 - Provide ongoing training and TA to the MT network of CILs
 - Participate in local, state, and national opportunities to expand CIL capacity to provide services
 - The SILC will engage with the MT network of CILs on an ongoing basis on methods to apply best practices in providing the 5 core and other IL services

- **Goal 3, Objective 3:** Maintain and expand current practices to serve youth who are not identified in the fifth core service.
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to explore and engage in the delivery of Pre-ETS services under WIOA
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to maintain support of the MyTransitions Project and MYLF
 - The SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to coordinate and collaborate with schools and other youth programs serving youth with disabilities

- **Goal 3, Objective 4:** Through the provision of nursing home transition/diversion services, the SILC will work with the MT network of CILs to ensure people with disabilities have the opportunity to live in the community of their choice.
 - Form a collaborative workgroup, which meets on a semi-annual basis, to conduct advocacy and other activities to ensure that nursing home transition services are at least maintained after the MFP grant expires
 - Explore existing models, opportunities and advocacy avenues for MT network of CILs to work towards delivering transition services resembling the MT MFP design and intent

1.4 Evaluation

Methods and processes the SILC will use to evaluate the effectiveness of the SPIL including timelines and evaluation of satisfaction of individuals with disabilities.

Goal(s) and the related Objective(s) from Section 1	Method that will be used to evaluate	
IL Systems operate effectively and efficiently	<p>Objective 1: Ensure that the SILC is compliant with Standards and Indicators by end of year 1 of this SPIL.</p>	<p>By end of year one, the SILC accomplishes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafts a new program manager job description • Establishes policy delineating its relationship with the DSE • Establishes a method for recruiting diverse and qualified SILC applicants • Establishes individual training plans for each SILC member • Semi-annually report during SILC meetings on recruitment and outreach efforts of inclusion of un/underserved individuals for SILC membership • Training to identify short-term and long-range goals, role and responsibilities of the SILC,

		and Committee Roles is completed
	<p>Objective 2: Explore options for increased autonomy of the SILC, including possible 501c3 status or other avenues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A business plan is developed by the end of year one • A resource plan is developed by end of year two • SILC members will review compiled data and make a decision about how to maximize the autonomy of the SILC by end of year three
	<p>Objective 3: In partnership with the MT network of CILs, the SILC will explore and seek funding opportunities to meet increasing demand, federal requirements, and enhance IL services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SILC meets twice per year with CIL representatives to identify funding opportunities and to collaborate on potential grant applications • Training on resource development is taken • Funding opportunities are sought • Progress on resource development is reported to the SILC
	<p>Objective 4: In partnership with the MT network of CILs, the SILC will provide training opportunities that align with IL Philosophy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least two trainings, outside of SILC meetings, are held for members, CIL's, and other providers on independent living relevant topics annually • The SILC meets at least twice annually with CIL representatives to identify training needs • The IL Program Manager disseminates information on additional training opportunities and other relevant IL service information as it becomes available • During SILC meetings, SILC members and CIL's report on trainings they have attended or provided • By end of year three, a resource, which contains the services provided by each CIL is developed and made publicly available • The SILC maintains

		memberships to APRIL and NCIL
<u>Policies, procedures and systems are transformed through advocacy, education, training and awareness to meet the needs of people with disabilities</u>	Objective 1: Effect social change through disability education and awareness to the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public forums annually to identify progress made and future needs for education and awareness • The SILC PR/education committee has been re-formed and is actively working on goals • The SILC website contains up to date information • SILC social media accounts are posted to regularly • Education opportunities on IL philosophy, history, culture or disability rights are provided at least twice annually • CIL's will report at SILC meetings on education/systemic change activities conducted or attended
	Objective 2: People with disabilities are provided opportunities to be involved in promoting disability rights at the local, state, and national levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SILC and CIL members are trained on and promote the use of the MTCIL action alert system at least once annually • Public training on how to utilize the MTCIL action alert system is conducted at least once annually • The legislative/advocacy committee reports at SILC meetings • Activities and outcomes are listed in the annual PPR report
	Objective 3: The SILC will partner with and support MT network of CILs efforts to promote systemic change (i.e. housing, transportation, employment, accessibility, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public listening sessions are held at least once annually to gather public input on advocacy needs • SILC members are actively engaged in the MTCIL action alert system and other IL advocacy efforts and taskforces • SILC members seek out opportunities for involvement at their local CIL and report on such activities at SILC meetings • Position papers are developed on topics important to people with disabilities to educate decision-

<p>Montanans with disabilities have access to and receive quality and appropriate services</p>	<p>Objective 1: The SILC will assist the MT network of CILs to target unserved and underserved populations through the current outreach model.</p>	<p>makers/the public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities and outcomes are entered into the annual PPR report • The SILC conducts consumer satisfaction surveys at least once annually • CIL directors report on outreach activities at SILC meetings • CIL directors report on any changes to statewide coverage of IL services at SILC meetings • CIL directors report on any contracts, MOU's, or other agreements entered into between the CIL's that ensure statewide delivery of services • Consumers in rural and remote locations have better access to IL services via technology as reported in the annual PPR report
	<p>Objective 2: The SILC provides training and technical assistance in the provision of the five core and other IL services for the MT network of CILs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one training event is provided annually to enhance CIL services • CIL and SILC members report at SILC meetings on outreach and collaboration efforts • The SILC program manager provides ongoing TA for CIL's • The SILC program manager informs CIL's of opportunities to expand service capacity as they become available
	<p>Objective 3: Maintain and expand current practices to serve youth that are not identified in the fifth core service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth receive services through the Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF) and Montana Youth Transitions (MYT) as well as through programs sponsored by the CIL's • Collaboration and coordination takes place between schools, CIL's, the SILC, VR, and other youth programs • Activities and outcomes are reported on the annual PPR report

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIL directors report at SILC meetings
	<p>Objective 4: Through the provision of nursing home transition/diversion services, the SILC will work with the MT network of CILs to ensure people with disabilities have the opportunity to live in the community of their choice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A work group, which meets at least twice annually, conducts advocacy and other activities to ensure that nursing home transition services are maintained • A MFP position paper is developed in collaboration between the SILC and CIL's by end of year one

1.5 Financial Plan

Sources, uses of, and efforts to coordinate funding to be used to accomplish the Goals and Objectives. Process for grants/contracts, selection of grantees, and distribution of funds to facilitate effective operations and provision of services.

Fiscal Year(s):					
Sources	Projected Funding Amounts and Uses				
	SILC Resource Plan	IL Services	General CIL Operations	Other SPIL Activities	Retained by DSE for Administrative costs (applies only to Part B funding)
Title VII Funds					
Chapter 1, Part B (including state match)	\$21,823.00	\$335,712.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,817.00
Chapter 1, Part C	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$973,814.00	\$0.00	
Other Federal Funds					
Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Social Security Reimbursement	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
CARESC Act Funding (Part C)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$941,295.00	\$0.00	
Non-Federal					

Funds					
State Funds	\$0.00	\$456,681.00	\$0.00	\$82,000.00	
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
	\$21,823.00	\$792,393.00	\$1,915,109.00	\$82,000.00	

Description of financial plan narrative.

The goals incorporated into this SPIL are supported through the contracts for services with the CILs from Part B, including the state match, listed under IL services; the CIL contracts for services from the state general fund listed under IL services; Part C funds listed under General CIL Operations. During allocation of state funding, issues such as the imbalance of federal funding are taken into consideration in order to equalize the funding among the centers to maintain equal accessibility of IL services throughout the state of Montana.

Part C funds, which are distributed directly to the CILs, are the primary funding source for supporting the operation of CILs and CILs goals. Part C funds are directly granted by ACL to all four Montana Centers for Independent Living. The state unit does not have the required funds to participate in the matching mechanism detailed in the statute; therefore, Part C grants are made directly to the CILs. Summit and MILP receive the majority of the Part C funds available to the state of Montana.

The following estimated projections are made for the Centers for Part B, Part C and State IL General Funds, actual distribution may vary as described previously in this plan to achieve the goal of equalization. (Section 1.5 Financial Plan)

Throughout the 3 years of this SPIL, each year of the SPIL the allocated independent living state general funds will be provided through a contract by the DSE, DETD, as follows:

- \$174,225 for LIFTT,
- \$91,054 for MILP,
- \$164,630 for NCILS, and
- \$26,772 for Summit.

These funds will be used for the core IL services and to provide services for identified underserved populations including Native Americans with disabilities, youth with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, and persons with disabilities living in rural/remote areas.

In addition, for each year of the SPIL, the Montana SILC and DSE (DETD) have designated Part B funds that will be provided through a contract by the DSE, (DETD) as follows:

- \$151,683 for LIFTT,
- \$29,611 for MILP,
- \$148,009 for NCILS, and
- \$6,409 for Summit.

These Part B contract totals include the federal award portion and the state of Montana 10% match as required by the Notice of Award statement.

Finally, the SILC, CILs and DSE recognize the importance of providing IL services to people with disabilities throughout the state. Therefore, the Part C funds will be used to address these services. Part C is allocated by the federal government, and these funds are sent directly to each center. The total Part C amounts are as follows:

- \$115,643 for LIFTT,
- \$320,887 for MILP,
- \$128,913 for NCILS, and
- \$408,371 for Summit.

In addition to Part C funding, the CILs also receive CARES Act funds distributed to the centers as additional Part C funds. This additional funding will be used to address the needs and services due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The total CARES Act amounts are as follows:

- \$111,782 for LIFTT,
- \$310,171 for MILP,
- \$124,608 for NCILS, and
- \$394,734 for Summit.

*CARES Act funds are one-time-only funds and must be expended by September 30, 2021.

It is anticipated that funding levels for Part B, Part C and the State General Fund will not change through the three years of this SPIL.

Section 2: Scope, Extent, and Arrangements of Services

2.1 Services

Services to be provided to persons with disabilities that promote full access to community life including geographic scope, determination of eligibility and statewideness.

Table 2.1A: Independent living services	Provided using Part B (check to indicate yes)	Provided using other funds (check to indicate yes; do not list the other funds)	Entity that provides (specify CIL, DSE, or the other entity)
Core Independent Living Services, as follows:			
- Information and referral	X	X	CIL
- IL skills training	X	X	CIL
- Peer counseling	X	X	CIL
- Individual and systems advocacy			
- Transition services including:			
▪ Transition from nursing homes & other institutions	X	X	CIL
▪ Diversion from institutions			
▪ Transition of youth (who were eligible for an IEP) to post-secondary life			
Counseling services, including psychological, psychotherapeutic, and related services	X	X	CIL
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 disabilities) Note: CILs are not allowed to own or operate housing.	X	X	CIL
Rehabilitation technology	X	X	CIL, DSE
Mobility training	X	X	CIL, DSE
Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services	X	X	CIL, DSE
Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services		X	CIL, DSE
Surveys, directories, and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation opportunities, and accessible transportation, and other support services	X	X	CIL

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	X	X	CIL, DSE
Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities	X	X	CIL
Supported living		X	CIL, DSE
Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation	X	X	CIL, DSE
Physical rehabilitation		X	CIL
Therapeutic treatment	X	X	CIL, DSE
Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices	X	X	CIL
Individual and group social and recreational services	X	X	CIL
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	X	X	CIL
Services for children	X	X	CIL, DSE
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 disabilities	X	X	CIL, DSE
Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with significant disabilities for similar services in the future	X	X	CIL, DSE
Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities	X	X	CIL, DSE
Such other services as may be necessary and not inconsistent with the Act	X	X	CIL, DSE

2.2 Outreach

Identify steps to be taken regarding statewide outreach to populations that are unserved or underserved by programs that are funded under Title VII, including minority groups and urban and rural populations.

- Identify the populations to be designated for targeted outreach efforts

Native Americans with disabilities, youth with disabilities age 14-24, veterans with disabilities, and persons with disabilities living in rural/remote areas

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

Targeted populations reside in all areas of the state. The four CILs provide services in each of Montana's 56 counties and 7 federally recognized Native American reservations and one state and federally recognized Native American community.

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

With the implementation of WIOA, youth aged 14-24 have become more of a focus point for the DSE, SILC, and CILs. The DSE is contracting with schools and MT CILs to provide pre-employment transition services. The CILs are also actively reaching out to youth through various programs such as Building Advocacy and Learning Leadership Skills (BALLS), Youth Opening Doors through Advocacy (YODA), Youth in Motion, and others. The Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF) and the Montana Youth Transitions project are specifically designed to help youth develop the skills needed to succeed in life after high school, such as in college and in the work force.

Having eight federally recognized tribes, Native American populations in Montana have been identified as being underserved. After individuals with disabilities, Native Americans are the largest minority group in the state, making up 6 percent of Montana's population, 60 percent of which live on the 7 federally recognized reservations. Summit Independent Living has one reservation in its service area. Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT) has two reservations in its service area. North Central Independent Living Services (NCILS) has the remaining 5 in its service area. Each of the CILs and the DSE work with the Section 121 directors to address IL issues in Native American communities and Natives living off of the reservations. The IL Network is working on a number of priorities to address the needs expressed by Native Americans with disabilities.

Montana is a large and mostly rural state with some areas of the state being designated as frontier given the low population density. Areas furthest away from the few population centers are often underserved as well. The CILs have branch offices to help ease the difficulty people with disabilities have in obtaining services and addressing issues in their communities and homes. NCILS has offices in Great Falls, Conrad, and Glasgow. Montana Independent Living Program (MILP) has offices in Helena, Butte, and Bozeman. Summit has offices in Missoula, Ronan, Hamilton, and Kalispell, as well as a separate office in Missoula for youth programs. LIFTT has offices in Billings and Miles City to provide services in the eastern part of the state. In addition, LIFTT and NCILS have teamed together to serve the "big open" in the east central part of the state with its population average of only 4 people per square mile.

Veterans with disabilities have been identified as an underserved population in Montana. The SILC and CILs offer assistance to Veterans Service Organizations in their outreach to Disabled Veterans. The Program Manager and CIL representatives in Helena regularly attending meetings of Joining Community Forces (JCF) which provides resources to Service Members, Veterans and their Families. They also are present at various events hosted by JCF such as the Veterans Resource Fair and Memorial Run. The SILC and CILs also cooperate with the Montana Veterans Affairs to provide supports to disabled Veterans throughout the state, often connecting the VA with community resources that may not be available through regular VA channels. Several of the CILs are also listed as a Military Strong Agency. MILP has been providing access to Living Well classes through the VA at Fort Harrison in Helena. They are also cooperating with their recreational therapy programs such as sledge hockey.

2.3 Coordination

Plans for coordination of services and cooperation among programs and organizations that support community life for persons with disabilities.

SILC members are provided with information about the CILs during their orientation. Each CIL also provides an update of their activities during the quarterly SILC meetings. In addition, SILC members are encouraged to periodically visit the CIL nearest to their home. CIL directors are invited to all general SILC meetings and serve on various committees and task forces alongside SILC members and others in the community.

The DSE program manager serves as the liaison between the CILs, the SILC, and the DSE.

The DSE IL program manager does a site visit to each CIL at least every other year. The program manager also attends board and other meetings at the CILs when invited to do so. Along with staff from the CILs and SILC members, the program manager participates in the various task forces and committees and aids in the planning of IL events such as Legislative Day, Rally Day, symposiums and other statewide activities. The DSE program manager, with SILC input, prepares the contracts between the CILs and the DSE to distribute Part B and Montana General Fund monies.

The SILC has representation on the Montana Rehabilitation Council. This provides an avenue of mutual support for Vocational Rehabilitation and IL programs and issues. The Administrator of the DSE assists with the coordination of these various activities.

In order to expand access to the host of services that may be provided by each CIL and requested by consumers, the SILC encourages the MT network of CILs to work together to render services, even across service area boundaries, in the most effective manner through contracts, MOU agreements, or other terms of agreement between the various CILs

Section 3: Network of Centers

3.1 Existing Centers

Current Centers for Independent Living including: legal name; geographic area and counties served; and source(s) of funding. Oversight process, by source of funds (e.g., Part B, Part C, state funds, etc.) and oversight entity.

Montana is a vast state covering approximately 147,000 square miles, divided into 56 counties. There are also seven federally recognized American Indian Reservations in the state and one federally recognized Native American tribe which is "landless."

There are currently four primary CIL offices and eight branch offices that form a network covering every county in the state. The CILs, including their branch offices, provide the five core IL services along with system change advocacy, education, social change, and awareness services. All four CILs receive a mix of Part B and state general fund through contract with the State of Montana. Part C funds are dispersed to the CILs directly by the federal government. The estimated distribution of state funds for Part B and general funds are included in section 1.3, Financial Plan.

LIFTT (SPIL signatory) provides services in 18 counties of vastly varied population size in southeastern Montana. Much of LIFTT's service area includes very rural and sparsely populated areas but also includes highly populated communities such as Billings in Yellowstone County. The service area also includes two Native American Reservations spread across several counties. Those reservations include the Northern Cheyenne and Crow tribes. Currently LIFTT operates a main office in Billings and together with staff contact and community involvement from a home office in Custer County. LIFTT provides outreach to the remaining service area including Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Garfield, Golden Valley, McCone, Musselshell, Powder River, Prairie, Richland, Rosebud, Stillwater, Treasure, and Wibaux counties.

Summit's (SPIL signatory) services are available to residents of Missoula, Ravalli, Mineral, Lake, Sanders, Flathead and Lincoln Counties in western Montana. Missoula and Kalispell are the primary urban areas in this region, while most of the remaining service area is characterized by small towns and sparsely populated rural areas. Although Summits 7-county service area is the smallest CIL region in Montana, Summits region contains nearly 1/3 of the state's population. Summit is headquartered in Missoula with branch offices in Hamilton, Ronan and Kalispell. Summit also has a second downtown Missoula location housing Summits youth programs, which are available to all youth throughout Summits service area. The Lake and Sanders County office is located in Ronan, a community on the Flathead Indian Reservation, the tribal home of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. The Hamilton office is responsible for services in Ravalli County, the main office in Missoula primarily serves Missoula and Mineral Counties, and the Kalispell office serves Flathead and Lincoln Counties. Staff members from the Missoula office also travel to outlying counties to serve consumers in the Self-Directed Community First Choice/Personal Assistance Services program, as well as to assist with delivery of other independent living services and Summit activities as appropriate. Summit also provides Pre-ETS and other youth services at various schools throughout its service area.

NCILS (SPIL signatory) conducts activities to increase the number of people served who are

members of populations that are currently underserved, which includes any consumer living within the seventeen-county service area. NCILS provides IL services within the following seventeen Montana counties of Blaine, Cascade, Choteau, Daniels, Fergus, Glacier, Hill, Judith Basin, Liberty, Petroleum, Phillips, Pondera, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Teton, Toole, and Valley. NCILS service area includes four Native American Reservations, which are the Blackfeet Indian Reservation within the counties of Glacier and Pondera, the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation within the counties of Blaine and Phillips, the Fort Peck Indian Reservation within the counties of Roosevelt, Valley, and Daniels, and the Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation within the counties of Hill and Choteau. The federally recognized Little Shell Band of the Chippewa-Cree, headquartered in Great Falls, MT, is also within NCILS service area.

NCILS maintains one branch office in the town of Glasgow, which primarily serves the most eastern counties of NCILS service area and a second branch office in Conrad, which primarily provides services in Teton, Pondera, Toole, Liberty, and Glacier Counties. Staff members from NCILS also provide outreach to the underserved population of youth with disabilities through the Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF) and the Montana Youth Transitions Project (MYT) office that is located in Lewis and Clark County but provides services for youth state wide. NCILS provides long-term care ombudsman services in Hill, Liberty, Chouteau, and Cascade Counties and provides fiscal management services under the Big Sky Bonanza program statewide.

MILP (SPIL signatory) has three offices: Helena, Butte, and Bozeman, providing services to consumers living in fourteen SW Montana counties. The main office in Helena provides services in Broadwater, Jefferson, and Lewis and Clark Counties; the Butte branch office provides services in Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Granite, Jefferson, Madison, Silver Bow and Powell Counties; and the Bozeman branch office provides services in Gallatin, Meagher, Park, Sweet Grass, Madison and Wheatland Counties. MILP also provides Orientation & Mobility (O&M) direct services throughout the state of Montana, with MOUs for O&M with the other three Montana CILs.

3.2 Expansion and Adjustment of Network

Plan and priorities for use of funds, by funding source, including Part B funds, Part C funds, State funds, and other funds, whether current, increased, or one-time funding and methodology for distribution of funds. Use of funds to build capacity of existing Centers, establish new Centers, and/or increase statewideness of Network.

The plan for further expansion of the network of Montana Centers for Independent Living (CILs) is to build on the existing branch office strategy rather than developing a new CIL. Because all of the state's 56 counties are included within the service area of the four existing centers, each of Montana's four CILs will determine the best course of action to address unmet needs within its service area. Options they will consider could include establishing a new branch office or offices or enhancing/expanding the capacity of existing offices. This SPIL does not designate specific geographic regions of the state as underserved but rather, focuses on underserved populations youth with disabilities, veterans with disabilities, American Indians with disabilities, and

individuals living in rural and frontier areas of the state.

Minimum funding level for a Center and formula/plan for distribution of funds to bring each Center to the minimum. Exceptions must be explained with sufficient detail.

Equalization of funding for Montana CILs is the practice of ensuring that the combined budgets of each center are the same. Equalization of funding for CILs considers the combined monies from Part B, Part C, and General Fund sources. Funding from grants such as the Montana Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF), the Montana Youth Transitions Project (MYTransitions), Self-Directed Community First Choice/ Personal Assistance Services or any other fee for service dollars are not included in the equalization calculations.

When additional Part C, Part B, or Montana General Funds become available through cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), provider rate increases or other appropriations, all four centers will receive adjustments in the amounts necessary to ensure that their combined overall budgets, consisting of funds from Part B, , Part C, and the Montana General Fund, remain equal.

For example, if one center receives a relatively larger Part C cost of living adjustment (COLA), that center's General Fund or Part B funding will be adjusted so that the total funding for each center remains equal. When a decrease in funding occurs, the decrease will be applied so that the total funding for each center remains equal. In some cases, a decrease in one funding source may result in an adjustment to a different funding source. However, the total combined funding from Part B, Part C, and the Montana General Fund for each center shall always remain equal.

Action/process for distribution of funds relinquished or removed from a Center and/or if a Center closes.

If a Center relinquishes funds or otherwise has them removed those funds would be redistributed to the remaining Centers in a manner that maintains equal funding for all the remaining Centers.

Plan/formula for adjusting distribution of funds when cut/reduced.

Since funding is based on an equalization formula the distribution of funds will be adjusted so that funding remains equal between the centers.

Plan for changes to Center service areas and/or funding levels to accommodate expansion and/or adjustment of the Network.

Since the Four Centers provide services equally throughout the state any changes to service areas would not significantly impact coverage in the service area. The network of Centers works closely together to insure coverage across the state. Any expansion or adjustment to the network would only increase the level of service which is already being provided by the Centers.

Plan for one-time funding and/or temporary changes to Center service areas and/or funding levels.

When one-time funding becomes available it will be distributed to the Centers through the equalization formula to maintain equal funding for all the Centers. Whether funding levels increase or decrease, equal funding will be maintained.

Section 4: Designated State Entity

Disability Employment and Transitions Division, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services will serve as the entity in Montana designated to receive, administer, and account for funds made available to the state under Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B of the Act on behalf of the State. (Sec. 704(c))

4.1 DSE Responsibilities

- (1) receive, account for, and disburse funds received by the State under this chapter based on the plan;
- (2) provide administrative support services for a program under Part B, and a program under Part C in a case in which the program is administered by the State under section 723;
- (3) keep such records and afford such access to such records as the Administrator finds to be necessary with respect to the programs;
- (4) submit such additional information or provide such assurances as the Administrator may require with respect to the programs; and
- (5) retain not more than 5 percent of the funds received by the State for any fiscal year under Part B. for the performance of the services outlined in paragraphs (1) through (4).

4.2 Grant Process & Distribution of Funds

Grant processes, policies, and procedures to be followed by the DSE in the awarding of grants of Part B funds.

Describe the processes, policies, and procedures to be followed by the DSE in the awarding of grants of Part B funds including:

- *Process for soliciting proposals*
- *Development of format for proposals*
- *Process for reviewing proposals and who reviewers will be*
- *Process for evaluating performance and compliance of grantees*

(The above must also specify any differences for continuation funding vs. new awards.

4.3 Oversight Process for Part B Funds

The oversight process to be followed by the DSE.

Under the provisions of their contracts, service providers are required to have accounting procedures that conform to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and which follow Uniform Guidance (CFR 200) regulations.

Compliance with the established criteria is monitored by review of contractor (CIL) annual reports, DSE site visits and through periodic audits by state auditors.

These criteria are included in contracts for IL services. Service provider policies and procedures also include these criteria. Compliance is monitored by reviewing service provider annual reports, quarterly reports required by contract, and during site visits where specific questions regarding eligibility requirements are asked of center staff and board of directors.

4.4 Administration and Staffing

Administrative and staffing support provided by the DSE.

Administrative staff support for the SILC is provided by the DSE with Section 110 and state general fund matching funds. This program manager position is responsible for assisting with the coordination and hosting of SILC and other related meetings, document development, and serves as the liaison between the SILC, DSE, and CILs. The program manager also provides support to SILC committees and assists with the development and management of the SPIL. Though the program manager is the primary DSE staff support person, he/she relies on other DSE staff members to provide support based on need and expertise.

The program manager conducts site visits of the CILs and may be accompanied by a SILC representative. The DSE program manager and SILC representative monitor center services and activities as they relate to the SPIL goals and objectives. The program manager also conducts contract compliance reviews to ensure that federal and state regulations and guidelines are adhered to in regard to the Title II, Part B, Section 110, and state general funds and the state match.

The DSE program manager provides logistical support to the SILC in the development of marketing materials and strategies, which promote the SILC and SILC activities. Assistance with the development of SILC orientation materials is also provided. Additionally, the program manager forwards information regarding training opportunities and information that may be pertinent to SILC activities and interests to SILC members.

Logistical support is also provided by the DSE program manager in the search for additional funding for the SILC and CILs. The SILC does not currently receive any funding directly. Rather, the DSE receives grant funds on behalf of the SILC and distributes them through contracts to the CILs. The program manager is responsible for developing these contracts, which after a review and acceptance by the CIL to which it is assigned, is administered by the DSE.

4.5 State Imposed Requirements

State-imposed requirements contained in the provisions of this SPIL including: (45 CFR 1329.17(g))

- State law, regulation, rule, or policy relating to the DSE's administration or operation of IL programs

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- Rule or policy implementing any Federal law, regulation, or guideline that is beyond what would be required to comply with 45 CFR 1329
 - That limits, expands, or alters requirements for the SPIL.

In order to utilize the state accounting systems for fiscal transactions, the SILC agrees to follow state rates for lodging, mileage, and meals. Grant funds coming into the state must be appropriated through the legislature under the following guidelines: "MT Constitution, Article 5, Section 11, Subsections 4 and 5, which state "A general appropriation bill shall contain only appropriations for the ordinary expenses of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, for interest on the public debt, and for public schools. Every other appropriation shall be made by separate bill, containing but one subject" and that "No appropriation shall be made for religious, charitable, industrial, educational, or benevolent purposes to any private individual, private association, or private corporation not under control of the state." Also, monitoring of compliance related to fiscal issues is necessary to ensure compliance of contracts related to the SPIL. The state charges indirect costs to the Part B grant and any other funds awarded to the DSE to support the IL program.

4.6 722 vs. 723 State

Check one:

- 722 (if checked, will move to Section 5)
 723 (if checked, will move to Section 4.7)

4.7 723 States

Order of priorities for allocating funds amounts to Centers, agreed upon by the SILC and Centers, and any differences from 45 CFR 1329.21 & 1329.22.

How state policies, practices, and procedures governing the awarding of grants to Centers and oversight of the Centers are consistent with 45 CFR 1329.5, 1329.6, & 1329.22.

Section 5: Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

5.1 Establishment of SILC

How the SILC is established and SILC autonomy is assured.

The SILC was established by Executive Order of the governor. It was further codified under Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 53-7-103. The SILC is not established as an entity within any State agency, including the DSE and is independent of the DSE and all other state agencies. The 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. Although it has autonomy and is self-governing, it does not have legal status independent of the DSE and receives some administrative support from the DSE.

The SILC is not required to report to any entity in state government and reports to ACL to meet federal requirements.

The SILC elects the SILC chairperson and other officers. The Executive Committee of the SILC is responsible for implementing the intentions of the SILC, which are expressed through actions taken during the regular meetings of the SILC. The Executive Committee shall have the authority of the SILC in the management of the business of the SILC between meetings of the SILC, subject to the policies established by the SILC.

5.2 SILC Resource plan

Resources (including necessary and sufficient funding, staff/administrative support, and in-kind), by funding source and amount, for SILC to fulfill all duties and authorities.

The sources of funding for the below budget are from (Part B+ match) and (Section 110 + match). The Part B amount varies each year of the SPIL, but the Section 110 + match is expected to stay the same throughout 2020-23. In addition to the budget, there are in-kind contributions from the DSE. The SILC has no staff but benefits from the efforts of the DSE program manager and other support provided through state general funds assigned to the DSE for administration expenses of Montana's IL program. While the SILC resource plan seems low, a large portion of the "other SPIL activities" budget is the program manager salary and fringe benefits. A significant amount of the program manager's time is dedicated to activities requested by the SILC such as: meeting arrangements, correspondence preparation, liaison with other agencies, boards, councils, and entities, etc.

The amounts for years 1, 2, and 3 are reflected in the Financial Plan Tables in Sec. 1.3A above.

Sources and Amounts (from the SILC Resource Plan) - Year 1

- Title VII Funds, Chapter 1, Part B
- Non-Federal Funds, State Funds (Title VII Part B State GF match)
- Section 110 (a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)

Sources and Amounts (from the SILC Resource Plan) - Year 2

- Title VII Funds, Chapter 1, Part B
- Non-Federal Funds, State Funds (Title VII Part B State GF match)
- Section 110 (a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)

Sources and Amounts (from the SILC Resource Plan) - Year 3

- Title VII Funds, Chapter 1, Part B
- Non-Federal Funds, State Funds (Title VII Part B State GF match)
- Section 110 (a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)

The following is the budget for each of the three years of the SPIL:

- Meeting Expenses- \$2,700
- Consulting- \$1,500

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- Supplies-\$2000
 - Communications-\$1,727
 - Travel-\$10,000
 - Honorariums -\$3,000
 - Other- \$896
 - Total: \$21,823

During the second and third year of the SPIL, the total budget amounts will be the same as the first year.

The funds supporting the SILC resource plan will be handled through a separate account number within the DSE fiscal operation. While approval within the fiscal systems is provided by DSE personnel, the SILC and specifically the SILC chair or chair's designee are consulted and provide guidance on expenditures. Documentation of the SILC chair's involvement and authorization is maintained by the program manager. Also, the SILC chair or their designee reconciles recorded expenditures with the approval of expenditures by the DSE on at least a quarterly basis. The SILC chair is responsible for the appropriate use of the funds and ensuring that expenditures are not made beyond the budget for SILC resources.

In order to access the support of the DSE fiscal services to support the SILC resource plan, the SILC accepts the state rates for mileage, meals, lodging and council member reimbursement.

All resources for the SILC resource plan come from Part B funds, Section 110 funds, or state general funds. Since the state legislature only meets every two years, it is only possible to project budget allocations for two years. The state matching funds have been approved for the first year of the plan. The other funds are expected federal allocations.

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Process used to develop the Resource Plan.

The resource plan was developed using funds made available through State General Fund and Federal Part B grants. The Resource Plan as it is currently has not changed significantly for a long time. It was developed early in the SILC's establishment through consultation between the SILC Members, CIL Directors and the DSU (now DSE). Minor adjustments to the disbursement of the funds have been made over the years but no significant changes to the Resource Plan have taken place.

Process for disbursement of funds to facilitate effective operations of SILC.

As mentioned above much of the funding coming into the SILC is pass through to the CILs. A portion is set for the Program Manager expenses and a small portion is directed to the SILC operating expenses, which are relatively small. These are primarily used to pay for member travel, lodging, and per-diem expenses to attend meetings and conferences. Expenses are paid through the DSE fiscal operations at the request of the SILC Chair upon Council approval.

Justification if more than 30% of the Part B appropriation is to be used for the SILC Resource Plan.

The SILC will not be using more than 30% of its Part B appropriation in its Resource Plan.

5.3 Maintenance of SILC

How State will maintain SILC over the course of the SPIL.^{vi}

The Nominations Committee makes recommendations to the SILC to fill upcoming or existing vacancies on the SILC based on a review of SILC applications that focuses on federal requirements for SILC membership.

The SILC approves a list of candidates for appointment to the SILC.

The SILC approved list of candidates is forwarded to the Governor's office with a request to fill upcoming or existing vacancies on the SILC.

At all times, the Governor has open applications for all state councils and boards on the Montana website (Governor's Boards and Councils: <http://svc.mt.gov/gov/boards/apply.aspx>). The Governor may receive applications outside of the SILC review process through this source or other activities of his/her choosing. However, Governor office staff members are kept aware of the requirements for serving on the SILC and requirements related to maintaining a majority of members who have a disability who are not employed by a CIL or state agency and other membership requirements.

The Governor selects candidates to fill upcoming or existing vacancies and the Governor's office sends out appointment letters.

The SILC chair is elected by the voting membership of the SILC in even numbered years. The chair must be a voting member of the SILC.

Term limits are maintained by keeping records of when a member is appointed to the SILC and the date of the end of their term and which term they are in (1st or 2nd). This information is distributed to all SILC members and is maintained in their SILC manual.

The SILC does not have staff. The SILC utilizes DSE staff assigned to assist the SILC. The SILC is involved with the evaluation, hiring and supervision of the DSE program manager, who is the primary staff person assigned to assist the SILC. The chairperson of the SILC is consulted in developing the evaluation of the DSE program manager and will note if there are deficiencies in the program manager's performance with regard to responsibilities related to the SPIL and other duties as assigned by the SILC. The current DSE supervisor of the IL program manager is the Administrator of the Disability Employment and Transitions Division, who sometimes sits in on the SILC meetings and other SILC related activities.

According to the SILC bylaws, no duties are assigned to the DSE personnel made available by the DSE or any other State agency or office that would create a conflict of interest while assisting the SILC in carrying out its duties.

Section 6: Legal Basis and Certifications

6.1 Designated State Entity (DSE)

The state entity/agency designated to receive and distribute funding, as directed by the SPIL, under Title VII, Part B of the Act is Disability Employment and Transitions Division, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services.

Authorized representative of the DSE Chanda Hermanson, Title Division Administrator.

6.2 Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

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 is Montana Statewide Independent Living Council.

6.3 Centers for Independent Living (CILs)

The Centers for Independent Living (CILs) eligible to sign the SPIL, a minimum of 51% whom must sign prior to submission, are:

Living Independently For Today and Tomorrow (LIFTT)
Montana Independent Living Project (MILP)
North Central Independent Living Services (NCILS)
Summit Independent Living Center (Summit)

6.4 Authorizations

6.4.a. The SILC is authorized to submit the SPIL to the Independent Living Administration, Administration for Community Living. Yes (Yes/No)

6.4.b. The SILC and CILs may legally carryout each provision of the SPIL. Yes (Yes/No)

6.4.c. State/DSE operation and administration of the program is authorized by the SPIL.
Yes (Yes/No)

Section 7: DSE Assurances

Chanda Hermanson, acting on behalf of the DSE Disability Employment and Transitions Division, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services located at P.O. Box 4210, 111 North Jackson Street, Suite 4C, Helena, MT, 59601-4168, Ph: (406) 444-2590, email: Chanda.Hermanson@mt.gov 45 CFR 1329.11 assures that:

- 7.1. The DSE acknowledges its role on behalf of the State, as the fiscal intermediary to receive, account for, and disburse funds received by the State to support Independent Living Services in the State based on the plan;
- 7.2. The DSE will assure that the agency keeps appropriate records, in accordance with federal and state law, and provides access to records by the federal funding agency upon request;
- 7.3. The DSE will not retain more than 5 percent of the funds received by the State for any fiscal year under Part B for administrative expenses;^{vi}
- 7.4. The DSE assures that the SILC is established as an autonomous entity within the State as required in *45 CFR 1329.14*;
- 7.5. The DSE will not interfere with the business or operations of the SILC that include but are not limited to:
 1. Expenditure of federal funds
 2. Meeting schedules and agendas
 3. SILC board business
 4. Voting actions of the SILC board
 5. Personnel actions
 6. Allowable travel
 7. Trainings
- 7.6. The DSE will abide by SILC determination of whether the SILC wants to utilize DSE staff:
 1. If the SILC informs the DSE that the SILC wants to utilize DSE staff, the DSE assures that management of such staff with regard to activities and functions performed for the SILC is the sole responsibility of the SILC in accordance with Sec. 705(e)(3) of the Act (Sec. 705(e)(3), 29 U.S.C.796d(e)(3)).

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- 7.7. The DSE will fully cooperate with the SILC in the nomination and appointment process for the SILC in the State;
 - 7.8. The DSE shall make timely and prompt payments to Part B funded SILCs and CILs:
 - 1. When the reimbursement method is used, the DSE must make a payment within 30 calendar days after receipt of the billing, unless the agency or pass-through entity reasonably believes the request to be improper;
 - 2. When necessary, the DSE will advance payments to Part B funded SILCs and CILs to cover its estimated disbursement needs for an initial period generally geared to the mutually agreed upon disbursing cycle; and
 - 3. The DSE will accept requests for advance payments and reimbursements at least monthly when electronic fund transfers are not used, and as often as necessary when electronic fund transfers are used, in accordance with the provisions of the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (15 U.S.C. 1693-1693r).

The signature below indicates this entity/agency's agreement to: serve as the DSE and fulfill all the responsibilities in Sec. 704(c) of the Act; affirm the State will comply with the aforementioned assurances during the three-year period of this SPIL; and develop, with the SILC, and ensure that the SILC resource plan is necessary and sufficient (in compliance with section 8, indicator (6) below) for the SILC to fulfill its statutory duties and authorities under Sec. 705(c) of the Act, consistent with the approved SPIL.^{vi}

Chanda Hermanson, Division Administrator

Name and Title of DSE director/authorized representative

Signature

Date

Electronic signature may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.

Section 8: Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Assurances and Indicators of Minimum Compliance

8.1 Assurances

Scott Birkenbuel acting on behalf of the SILC Montana Statewide Independent Living Council located at P.O. Box 4210111 N. Jackson St. Suite 4C, Helena, MT, 59604-4210, Ph: (406) 444-4175, Email: bharant@mt.gov 45 CFR 1329.14 assures that:

- (1) The SILC regularly (not less than annually) provides the appointing authority recommendations for eligible appointments;
- (2) The SILC is composed of the requisite members set forth in the Act;^{vi}
- (3) The SILC terms of appointment adhere to the Act;^{vi}

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- (4) The SILC is not established as an entity within a State agency in accordance with 45 CFR Sec. 1329.14(b);
 - (5) The SILC will make the determination of whether it wants to utilize DSE staff to carry out the functions of the SILC;
 - a. The SILC must inform the DSE if it chooses to utilize DSE staff;
 - b. The SILC assumes management and responsibility of such staff with regard to activities and functions performed for the SILC in accordance with the Act.^{vi}
 - (6) The SILC shall ensure all program activities are accessible to people with disabilities;
 - (7) The State Plan shall provide assurances that the designated State entity, any other agency, office, or entity of the State will not interfere with operations of the SILC, except as provided by law and regulation and;
 - (8) The SILC actively consults with unserved and underserved populations in urban and rural areas that include, indigenous populations as appropriate for State Plan development as described in Sec. 713(b)(7) the Act regarding Authorized Uses of Funds.^{vi}

Section 8.2 Indicators of Minimum Compliance

Indicators of minimum compliance for Statewide Independent Living Councils (SILC) as required by the Rehabilitation Act (Section 706(b), 29 U.S.C. Sec 796d-1(b)), as amended and supported by 45 CFR 1329.14-1329.16; and Assurances for Designated State Entities (DSE) as permitted by Section 704(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. Sec. 796e(c)(4)), as amended.

(a) STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL INDICATORS. –

- (1) SILC written policies and procedures must include:
 - a. A method for recruiting members, reviewing applications, and regularly providing recommendations for eligible appointments to the appointing authority;
 - b. A method for identifying and resolving actual or potential disputes and conflicts of interest that are in compliance with State and federal law;
 - c. A process to hold public meetings and meet regularly as prescribed in 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(3);
 - d. A process and timelines for advance notice to the public of SILC meetings in compliance with State and federal law and 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(3);
 - e. A process and timeline for advance notice to the public for SILC “Executive Session” meetings, that are closed to the public, that follow applicable federal and State laws;
 - i. “Executive Session” meetings should be rare and only take place to discuss confidential SILC issues such as but not limited to staffing.

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- ii. Agendas for “Executive Session” meetings must be made available to the public, although personal identifiable information regarding SILC staff shall not be included;
 - f. A process and timelines for the public to request reasonable accommodations to participate during a public Council meeting;
 - g. A method for developing, seeking and incorporating public input into, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating implementation of the State Plan as required in 45 CFR 1329.17; and
 - h. A process to verify centers for independent living are eligible to sign the State Plan in compliance with 45 CFR 1329.17(d)(2)(iii).
- (2) The SILC maintains regular communication with the appointing authority to ensure efficiency and timeliness of the appointment process.
- (3) The SILC maintains individual training plans for members that adhere to the SILC Training and Technical Assistance Center’s SILC training curriculum.
- (4) The SILC receives public input into the development of the State Plan for Independent Living in accordance with 45 CFR 1329.17(f) ensuring:
- a. Adequate documentation of the State Plan development process, including but not limited to, a written process setting forth how input will be gathered from the state’s centers for independent living and individuals with disabilities throughout the state, and the process for how the information collected is considered.
 - b. All meetings regarding State Plan development and review are open to the public and provides advance notice of such meetings in accordance with existing State and federal laws and 45 CFR 1329.17(f)(2)(i)-(ii);
 - c. Meetings seeking public input regarding the State Plan provides advance notice of such meetings in accordance with existing State and federal laws, and 45 CFR 1329.17(f)(2)(i);
 - d. Public meeting locations, where public input is being taken, are accessible to all people with disabilities, including, but not limited to:
 - i. proximity to public transportation,
 - ii. physical accessibility, and
 - iii. effective communication and accommodations that include auxiliary aids and services, necessary to make the meeting accessible to all people with disabilities.
 - e. Materials available electronically must be 508 compliant and, upon request, available in alternative and accessible format including other commonly spoken languages.
- (5) The SILC monitors, reviews and evaluates the State Plan in accordance with 45 CFR 1329.15(a)(2) ensuring:

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- a. Timely identification of revisions needed due to any material change in State law, state organization, policy or agency operations that affect the administration of the State Plan approved by the Administration for Community Living.
- (6) The SILC State Plan resource plan includes:
- a. Sufficient funds received from:
 - i. Title VII, Part B funds;
 - 1. If the resource plan includes Title VII, Part B funds, the State Plan provides justification of the percentage of Part B funds to be used if the percentage exceeds 30 percent of Title VII, Part B funds received by the State;
 - ii. Funds for innovation and expansion activities under Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act, 29 U.S.C. Sec. 721(a)(18), as applicable;
 - iii. Other public and private sources.
 - b. The funds needed to support:
 - i. Staff/personnel;
 - ii. Operating expenses;
 - iii. Council compensation and expenses;
 - iv. Meeting expenses including meeting space, alternate formats, interpreters, and other accommodations;
 - v. Resources to attend and/or secure training and conferences for staff and council members and;
 - vi. Other costs as appropriate.

The signature below indicates the SILC's agreement to comply with the aforementioned assurances and indicators:

Scott Birkenbuel

Name of SILC chairperson

Signature

Date

Electronic signature may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.

Section 9: Signatures

The signatures below are of the SILC chairperson and at least 51 percent of the directors of the centers for independent living listed in section 6.3. These signatures indicate that the Montana Statewide Independent Living Council and the centers for independent living in the state agree with and intend to fully implement this SPIL's content. These signatures also indicate that this

SPIL is complete and ready for submission to the Independent Living Administration,
Administration for Community Living, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The effective date of this SPIL is October 1, 2020 (year)

SIGNATURE OF SILC CHAIRPERSON

DATE

Scott Birkenbuel

NAME OF SILC CHAIRPERSON

Living Independently for Today and Tomorrow

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Carlos Ramahlo

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

Montana Independent Living Project

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Bob Maffit

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

North Central Independent Living Services

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Tom Osborn

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

Summit Independent Living

NAME OF CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

SIGNATURE OF CIL DIRECTOR

DATE

Mike Mayer

NAME OF CIL DIRECTOR

(INSERT ADDITIONAL CILS AS NEEDED)

Electronic signatures may be used for the purposes of submission, but hard copy of signature must be kept on file by the SILC.