



ADVANCING
DISABILITY INCLUSION
& WORKFORCE
INNOVATION

Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation

CSAVR National News Brief

November 3, 2024

CSAVR *National News Brief* is a regular series covering legislative activity, media stories, research initiatives, webinars, reports, conferences, and national advocacy activities of interest to member state VR agencies.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Federal regulators have opened a new investigation of Tesla's Full Self-Driving technology this past week after four crashes. The probe appears to be designed to test Tesla's assertion that cameras are enough to guide its vehicles without radar or sensors.

And in other news:

Heasley, Shaun. "[Major Corporations to Get Neurodiversity Training](#) [[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com](#)]." Disability Scoop.

Newhouse, Sean Michael. "[The Federal Government Is Striving to Be a Model for Employing People with Disabilities, but Retention Is a Problem](#) [[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com](#)]." Government Executive.

Roy, Jessica. "[SSI Recipients Will Get an Extra Check in November. Here's What to Know](#) [[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com](#)]." Disability Scoop.

DIRECTOR NEWS

Scott McCune, current Deputy Division Director for VR Program Operations at Texas Combined has been named as Interim VR Division Director.

2024 CSAVR FALL CONFERENCE

We enjoyed seeing everyone in Seattle. We think it was the second largest conference in CSAVR history with only the Spring 2023 conference, which was focused on fiscal matters, being larger. A big thanks to all our Officers, staff, presenters, GWU, the TACs and Clearinghouses and others who helped us make the conference a success.

There was a lot to celebrate with no relinquished dollars being left on the table after reallocation, and continued improvement across all the common performance measures. Wow, you, we did it! Thank you.

Now we need to move on to the next challenges which is how we keep this positive trend going both fiscally and programmatically. More to come on this!

RSA UPDATE

The following [Rehabilitation Services Administration](#) [[ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com](#)] (RSA) FY 2024 Data Collection reports are due **December 30, 2024**.

- The Annual Report on Appeals Process (RSA-722)
- The Annual Report for the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB), Independent Living Program (RSA-7-OB)
- The Annual Client Assistance Program (RSA-227) (CAP) Report
- The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) annual reports for FY 2024

TAC NEWS

TAC QE has announced their November webinar on 11/21/24, *Self-Employment: Toolkit for Enhancing Quality Outcomes*. The presenters are Michael Frain, Ghari Shirley, and Jennifer Sanchez. Discover effective strategies in this webinar designed to enhance rapid client engagement and support quality self-employment outcomes.

[Here is the registration link. \[tacqe.com\]](#)

SOCIAL SECURITY UPDATE

2025 Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Social Security Announces 2.5 Percent Benefit Increase for 2025

[Read More \[abletoday.us14.list-manage.com\]](#)

SSI Enhancements Rolling Out

SSI policies change to simplify rules, reduce burdens, and better support people with disabilities

[Read More \[abletoday.us14.list-manage.com\]](#)

New Options for Submitting Data

Social Security Administration Digitizes or Removes Signature Requirements for Many Forms

[Read More \[abletoday.us14.list-manage.com\]](#)

REPORTS, TRAINING, NEWSLETTERS AND CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

The National Council on Disability will hold a quarterly **Council meeting** [\[fl5lu5ebb.cc.rs6.net\]](#) on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time (EST) on Zoomgov. **Registration** [\[fl5lu5ebb.cc.rs6.net\]](#) is required. The meeting will include Council reports and policy updates; a presentation on NCD's accessible ground transportation and people with mobility disabilities project; a disability data presentation; public comment on voting accessibility experiences in the 2024 General Election; and more. CART and ASL will be provided.

The [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Aging Among Adults with Serious Mental Illnesses \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#) will host a webinar, [Making Sense of SILVER Research: Can the Science of Wellbeing Enhance Aging for Older Adults with Serious Mental Health Conditions? \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#), November 12th, 11 am - 12 pm, ET. Presenters will describe the development and delivery of a wellbeing course, designed with certified older adult peer specialists, and delivered to older adults in a psychosocial clubhouse setting. Presenters will discuss findings around acceptability and feasibility, challenges for ongoing research, and the wellbeing-enhancing context of a clubhouse. Registration is free and required.

The [Administration for Community Living \(ACL\) \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click-654309) will host a webinar, [Aging with and into Disability - California Grassroots Collaboration \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click-654309), November 14th, 3 - 4 pm ET. Presenters will highlight successful aging and disability collaborative initiatives and discuss how grassroots efforts have impacted state policies, programs, and initiatives. Registration is free and required

Registration is now open for NDI's 3rd annual small business convening. They will once again be offering CRCs this year which will hopefully be of value to the agencies. 3rd Annual Disability Owned Convening <<https://www.disabilityownedconvening.com/>
[\[disabilityownedconvening.com\]](https://www.disabilityownedconvening.com/) will be November 20th and 21st. They have an accessible Media Toolkit, containing information about the event, social media posts, graphics with image descriptions pre-written and an email template to make it easy for you to share information about the event. To register for the event <https://www.disabilityownedconvening.com/en/registration-form>
[\[disabilityownedconvening.com\]](https://www.disabilityownedconvening.com/) folks can join us live or watch the recordings for 60 days afterwards if registered.

[The Older Individuals who are Blind Technical Assistance Center \[ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com\]](https://www.ncrtm.us13.list-manage.com) (OIB-TAC) announced the launch of a new free, self-paced course, "SMART Instruction". Led by course instructor, Jennifer Ottowitz, Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist and Older Blind Specialist.

This course provides strategies for working "smarter" to enhance support for clients, helping them achieve success, build confidence, and develop problem-solving skills. The course covers techniques for setting measurable goals, improving documentation, and increasing efficiency, all aimed at making work more manageable and productive while boosting successful client outcomes.

The NIDILRR-funded [Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Employment of People Who are Blind or Have Low Vision \[click.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click) released a video, [Navigating Vocational Rehabilitation \(VR\) Services \[click.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click). The video provides information and resources, dispels myths, and explains how the VR system operates and how it can help people adjusting to vision loss. The video also explains how VR can help in finding and keeping employment, and advancing in one's career.

A new brief from the NIDILRR-funded project [Barriers to Inclusion: Quantifying Disability-Related Out-of-Pocket Costs and Unmet Needs for People with Disabilities with a Focus on Underserved Communities \[click.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click) highlights the financial pressures of living with blindness and low vision. [The Disability Squeeze: The Extra Costs of Living with Blindness or Low Vision in the US \[click.icptrack.com\]](https://www.icptrack.com/click) uses data from a nationally representative survey of adults with disabilities to examine the out-of-pocket expenditures and unmet needs for disability-related goods and services

incurred by people with low vision and blindness, and how this impacts their full participation in society.

The [Midwest Regional Spinal Cord Injury Model System \(MRSCIS\) Center \[click.icptrack.com\]](#) announced a new podcast series, [I Was a Wheelchair Kid \[click.icptrack.com\]](#), spotlighting the true stories of people who grew up using a wheelchair after SCI. Episodes feature adults who were paralyzed as children or teens, sharing memories of finding their own solutions, returning to school, dating, finding ways to feel "normal" again, and creating a new vision of the future for themselves. The series is produced in collaboration with [FacingDisability.com \[click.icptrack.com\]](#)

The [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#) are seeking input on an agency-wide [Strategic Plan for Disability Research \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#) to identify scientific themes and develop operational goals and objectives to advance research activities that promote the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities. NIH invites members of the disability community, including people with lived experience of disability, researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders, to participate in the planning process. NIH will hold a series of community engagement events in November to learn about the health concerns, research questions, and unique needs and preferences of the disability community. Interested individuals may observe any of the [community roundtables \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#), join the [virtual Town Hall \[click-654309.icptrack.com\]](#), and/or submit input via a forthcoming Request for Information. Questions may be sent to disabilityresearch@nih.gov.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

[“Social Security Series Part 3: Options for Reform \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#).” U.S. Government Accountability Office, July 2024.

Brucker, Debra L., Megan Henly, and Andrew J. Houtenville. **[“Receipt of Workplace Accommodations Does Not Vary By Race/Ethnicity but Does Vary by Organization Size for Older Workers in the U.S \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)**.” *Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation*, 2024.

Levere, Michael, Jeffrey Hemmeter, and David Wittenburg. **[“The Local Declines in Child SSI Applications and Awards During COVID \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)**.” *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, 2024.

Mascayano, Franco, and Robert E. Drake. **[“Supported Employment as a Global Mental Health Intervention \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)**.” *Cambridge Prisms: Global Mental Health*, vol. 11, 2024.

Nuccio, Emanuela, Francesco Petrosino, Silvio Simeone, Rosaria Alvaro, Ercole Vellone, and Gianluca Pucciarelli. **[“The Needs and Difficulties During the Return to Work After](#)**

[a Stroke: A Systematic Review and Meta-Synthesis of Qualitative Studies \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)." *Disability and Rehabilitation*, vol. 46, no. 21, 2024, pp. 4901-4914.

Rizzo, John-Ross, Penny Rosenblum, Christina Samuel, Walter Wittich, Natalina Martiniello, Mahya Beheshti, Aaron Johnson, et al. "[Accessible Scientific Conferences for Blind and Low Vision Professionals and Researchers: A Necessary Step for Achieving STEMM Equity \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)." *Disability & Society*, 2024.

Schur, Lisa, and Douglas Kruse. "[Projecting the Number of Eligible Voters with Disabilities in the November 2024 Elections \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)." Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations, October 2024.

Sousa, Carla, Paulina Tsvetkova, Patricia Pérez-Fuster, May Agius, Snezhana Kostova, Karolina Bolesta, Flávia Megda Garcia, et al. "[Social Inclusion for People with Intellectual Disability and on the Autism Spectrum Through Assistive Technologies: Current Needs and Future Priorities \[links.news.mathematica-mpr.com\]](#)." *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*, 2024.