

# **State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for Connecticut for 2014-2016**

## **General Information**

Designated Agency Identification

State:Connecticut

Agency:Connecticut Dept of Social Services - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

Plan for:2014-2016

Submitted in fiscal year:2013

View grant [H169A130007](#) 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.

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS).

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.

Department of Rehabilitation Services, Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB).

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.

Connecticut State Independent Living Council.

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 Amy L. Porter, Acting Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and Brian S. Sigman, Director, Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB).

## 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, 2013.

### Section 9: Signature for SILC Chairperson

Name Eileen Healy

Title SILC Chair

Signed? Yes

Date signed 07/01/2013

### Section 9: Signature for DSU Director

Name Amy L. Porter

Title Acting Director, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS)

Signed? Yes

Date signed 07/01/2013

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

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

Name Brian S. Sigman

Title Director, Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)

Signed? Yes

Date signed 07/01/2013

## **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:Goal #1

Goal Description:

To develop Independent Living opportunities and resources through statewide education and advocacy.

SILC is charged with considering the needs of persons with disabilities from both the individual and systemic perspective. To this end, the SILC works in partnership with the DSU, CILs and non-profit partners to identify major barriers people with disabilities may face as they seek to achieve the full measure of their independence. The SILC develops and implements activities and policy initiatives to reduce barriers by promoting education and advocacy at the local, state and federal levels.

Part B funds to support Goal 1 are as follows: \$2,000 in Year 1; \$3,000 in Year 2 and \$1,000 in Year 3 for a grand total of \$6,000.

Goal Name:Goal #2

Goal Description:

To expand the capacity and build sustainability for the five (5) Centers for Independent Living.

During the current challenging economic times, the CILs need to be the most effective and efficient community-based disability organizations. In order for CILs to compete in the ever changing non-profit world, the following needs to be available: 1.) up-to-date and relevant non-profit training for staff and board members; 2.) opportunities to explore and/or develop new funding sources and fee-for-service to meet new and developing needs; 3.) improved technology for accessible communication with staff and consumers; and 4.) development of standards of performance and standardized reporting which reflects and effective and efficient system of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data,

determining and tracking outcomes, and defining return on investment and accountability.

In addition, CILs will continue to provide pre-vocational services to better meet the needs of consumers seeking work. Over the past three years, the CILs, SILC and DSUs have worked on improving our referrals and partnership in order to increase referrals and services and to meet consumers IL goals at whatever consumer vocational level. It is our goal to develop and/or expand 1-2 CRPs as a result of the 2014-2016 SPIL with an emphasis on outreach to deaf consumers. Adding job assessment, coaching, placement and follow-up services will improve the ability of CILs to meet the needs of consumers, solidify the CIL/DSU partnership and assist the CILs with an income-generating project that will contribute to a portion of the CIL operating needs. Generally and through the CRPs, CILs will also prioritize expanding outreach, information and referral and services to deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

Part B funds to support Goal 2 technical assistance, training, data collection, reporting and pre-vocational and employment service program expansion are as follows: \$181,000 in Year 1; \$140,000 in Year 2 and \$121,000 in Year 3 for a grand total of \$442,000.

Goal Name:Goal #3

Goal Description:

To fund purchase of goods and services for consumers who have approved Independent Living Plans or waivers.

The availability of funds to offset expenditures for goods and services is essential to the completion of Independent Living Plans and remains a critical resource for strategic interventions, which are often vital to the success of a consumer's plan. \$15,000 per CIL is available for Year 1 and \$12,000 per CIL for Years 2-3. The Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) is the designated state agency that is funded to provide vocational rehabilitation services to consumers who are legally blind. BESB receives an annual allocation of Part B funding from RSA and passes through the majority of the funding, plus the state match, to support the SPIL. BESB will retain a portion of funding purchase of equipment and services to meet the independent living needs of consumers as per approved ILP or IL Waiver, when these services cannot be funded through VR or other federal or state sources.

Part B funds to support CILs will be \$15,000 per CIL for Year 1 and \$12,000 in Years 2-3. BESB will retain \$12,000 in Year 1 and \$10,000 in Years 2-3 for case services and purchase of goods.

Goal Name:Goal #4

Goal Description:

To support the SILC operations and resource plan and DORS contract administration.

Since 2007, the SILC has received funds from Section 101 (a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act (Innovation and Expansion) through DORS to support the SILC operations. The funding supports the operation of the statewide nonprofit to include, but not limited to: two full-time staff, health stipends, office space, interpreters for board members and meetings, PCAs, transportation for board members, resources materials, office supplies and meeting costs.

The SPIL will allocate \$0 Title VII-Part B funds to support SILC operations in Year 1, \$77,000 funds in Year 2 and \$98,500 funds in Year 3. In addition, the SPIL allocates \$50,000 annually to provide administrative and program support from the DSU.

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
Goal #1	<p>Objective 1: To continue participation on the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Workforce Development workgroup, in order to support and develop a direct care workforce that is sustainable, respected and skilled.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC Executive Director will continue to serve as an active member of the Money Follows the Person Workforce Development workgroup; 2.) SILC will assist with the coordination and presentations to the Workforce Investment Boards on the direct care workforce, especially the work of the PCAs; and 3.) SILC will assist with development of any trainings, technical assistance and educational forums developed for PCAs as part of the MFP Workforce Development workgroup.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase knowledge of the importance and need for additional direct</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

	<p>care workers, especially PCAs, among elected officials, policy makers, educators and workforce investment board members; 2.) Improve educational and work opportunities for current and future direct care workforce; and 3.) Increase collaboration and sharing of information among direct care workforce.</p>		
Goal #1	<p>Objective 2: To collaborate with local and statewide organizations working on transportation, in order to educate and advocate for increased transportation services.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC to continue to work with the CT Greater Transit Authorities, New Haven Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities, Metro Taxi, Yellow Cab Company and other relevant organizations to assist with educating and marketing the 140 accessible cabs to consumers; 2.) SILC and CILs to attend relevant CT Department of Transportation and Council of Government meetings to advocate for increased ADA ParaTransit and other accessible modes of transportation, especially in areas of the state that have limited or no transportation service for people with disabilities; 3.) SILC to work with non-profit partners and city and state agencies to educate legislators on needs for increased transportation and to pursue legislative opportunities in the 2014-2016 session; 4.) Work with BESB on education and outreach on audible signals; and 5.)SILC to collaborate with the Independent Transportation Network (ITN) on their transportation services for people who are legally blind. 6.) SILC to collaborate with non-profit partners on grant opportunities to develop recommendations for expanded service delivery and/or to increase transportation options.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase usage of accessible cabs by 30%, based upon the current data and usage identified by the two taxi companies and Transit Authorities; 2.) Increase awareness among legislators and policy makers for improved accessible transportation statewide, especially in underserved and unserved areas of the state, to include but not</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

	limited to Greater Danbury, Northwest and Eastern Connecticut.		
Goal #1	<p>Objective 3: To collaborate with local and statewide organizations to advocate for new and maintained accessible and affordable housing for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC and CILs to partner with Independence Unlimited on Visitable housing activities; 2.) SILC to partner with Partnership for Strong Communities and the CT Housing Coalition to advocate for increased accessible and affordable housing and to advocate for current housing to be maintained and to provide trainings and workshops to municipalities, developers and local home builders.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase awareness among architects, home builders and municipal officials on the importance of Visitable housing, based upon the current data and tracking collected by Independence Unlimited during the 2011-2013 SPIL; and 2.) Increase awareness among municipalities, developers and local home builders for the need to increase accessible and affordable housing options for people with disabilities.</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016
Goal #1	<p>Objective 4: To provide emergency preparedness and disaster recovery education and training and to develop specific activities that increase access and knowledge for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC to continue partnership with FEMA, Region I, in compliance with the national Memorandum of Agreement between FEMA and NCIL and to work directly with the FEMA's Disability Integration Advisor; 2.) SILC to serve as an Executive Committee member of CT Rises, Connecticut's long-term recovery organization; 3.) SILC to co-chair the Ad-Hoc Emergency Preparedness Committee, comprised of disability and aging organizations; 4.) SILC to continue to partner with the CT Community</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

	<p>Cares Inc. to provide emergency preparedness and disaster recovery training series and technical assistance to CILs and the SILC board, in order to formalize emergency preparedness at both the consumer and community level; and 5.) SILC to participate in relevant state and regional meetings with CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS), CT Department of Public Health and other state agencies, as needed.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase the knowledge of CIL and SILC staff/board and consumers by 50% on importance of integrating emergency preparedness into Independent Living Plans (ILP) by conducting pre and post workshop surveys; 2.) Develop a packet of information on emergency preparedness and disaster recovery that CILs share with consumers; 3.) Increase participation by 25% of CILs in CT Rises and community/regional emergency preparedness and disaster recovery efforts by SILC and CIL staff and board attendance at meetings and workgroups; and 4.) Increase overall participation by 50% of disability and aging agencies in the CT Rises long-term recovery work.</p>		
Goal #1	<p>Objective 5: To participate and support the newly formed CT Cross Disability Alliance.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC to participate on the Cross Disability Alliance Steering Committee to include collaborating and supporting the development, administration and management of the Alliance; 2.) SILC to promote the discussion, expansion and sustainability of Independent Living among Alliance membership; 3.) SILC to assist in the development of the mission, vision and legislative policy positions; 4.) SILC to develop a newsletter that supports information sharing and activities of CILs, SILC and the Alliance.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Improve the education and advocacy for disability policies, funding and legislation, among elected officials, policy</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

	makers, state agencies and non-profits.		
Goal #2	<p>Objective 1: To provide a comprehensive non-profit and quality improvement program for CILs and SILC.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) As a follow-up to the five-part 2013 non-profit training series, the SILC will survey CILs and SILC members to determine on-going training workshops and technical assistance needed; 2.) SILC to provide capacity-building mini grants (\$1,000 maximum per CIL) to CILs to work on an organizational project (to include, but not limited to board recruitment and development, marketing, fund development, volunteer development, strategic planning, and succession planning) directly related to the five-part non-profit training series; and 3.) Contract with a non-profit consultant to provide ongoing training and technical assistance on non-profit organizational improvements.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase by 25% the number and variety of non-profit and quality improvement trainings and technical assistance opportunities available to CILs and SILC through membership with the CT Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), CT Association of Nonprofits (CAN), CT Community Providers Association (CCPA), National Council on Independent Living (NCIL), and Independent Living Research Utilization (ILRU); 2.) Increase the awareness and competencies of CIL staff and members and SILC members in the areas of non-profit management, fund development, Independent Living trends and disability policy by 50% by conducting pre and post workshop surveys; 3.) Increase CILs organizational capacity by supporting the development and implementation of CIL-specific organizational projects. 4.) Develop workplan with recommendations in Year 1 of CILs organizational non-profit needs with CIL staff, CIL board and non-profit consultants;and 5.) Implement 1-2 CIL workplan recommendations in Year 2-3.</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

<p>Goal #2</p>	<p>Objective 2: To continue the Data/Tech Committee, in order to improve CIL and SILC accountability, accessible communication, data collection and outcomes.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC to convene Data/Tech Committee in order to continue trainings on 704 reports; 2.) Committee to develop Standards of Performance and Standardized reporting system for SILC and CILs that provides outcome and results-based accountability data; 3.) Committee to work with Q90 (CIL Suite vendor) to develop a web-based standardized reporting tool; and 4.) Committee to assess CILs and SILC's online meeting needs and provide equipment and training/technical assistance to develop accessible videoconferencing and webinar system.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Development of shared system-wide Standards of Performance and Standardized reporting; and 2.) Improve outcomes-based data collection, data and CIL and SILC results-based accountability.</p>	<p>10/01/2013</p>	<p>09/30/2016</p>
<p>Goal #2</p>	<p>Objective 3: To continue CIL pre-vocational/youth transition projects from October 2013-March 2014 and then issue Request for Proposal (RFP) for pre-vocational services to include, but not limited to the development of 1-2 Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP)</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC, DSUs and CILs to convene collaborative meetings to access, explore and develop pre-vocational and employment services for consumers; 2.) SILC to provide data and information sharing sessions on needed pre-vocational service geographic and population areas; and 3.) SILC and DSU to provide technical assistance and training for CILs that seek to develop and/or expand a CRP.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase the number of CIL consumers who have pre-vocational goals by 50%; 2.) Increase the number of CIL</p>	<p>10/01/2013</p>	<p>09/30/2016</p>

	<p>consumers who have vocational goals by 25%; 3.) Increase the number of CIL consumers who have school-to-work transition goals by 25%;and 4.) In Year 3, RFP-funded CILs to develop a pre-vocational/employment operational plan for 2017-2019 SPIL -related goals and outcomes.</p>		
Goal #2	<p>Objective 4: To develop a planning committee with CILs, CACIL, SILC, ADRCs, DSUs and other relevant partners to develop fee-for-service opportunities.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) CILs, SILC, DSUs, CACIL and other partners to research potential fee-based services to include, but not limited to Veteran Certified Service Officers, ADA training, PCA services, and Emergency Preparedness training.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Develop report with recommendations that outlines potential CIL fee-for-service options; and 2.) Increase by 25% the fee-for-service projects CILs implement in order to increase funding for core-services.</p>	01/01/2014	09/30/2016
Goal #3	<p>Objective 1: To provide \$15,000 in Year 1 to each CIL and \$12,000 in Years 2-3 to each CIL for the purchase of consumer goods and direct services.</p> <p>Activities to include: 1.) SILC, DSUs and CILs to coordinate quarterly reporting on consumer goods and direct services; and 2.) SILC, DSUs and CILs to examine purchases of consumer goods and services in order to track needs and trends.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Increase by 10% in Year 1 the number of new consumers who access the consumer goods and direct service funds; 2.) Maintain in Years 2-3 the number of consumers who access the consumer goods and direct service funds; and 3.) Submit annually qualitative data that document the direct benefit to a consumers Independent Living goals.</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

Goal #3	<p>Objective 2: To retain \$12,000 in Part B funds in Year 1 and \$10,000 in Years 2-3 for BESB to purchase goods and services for blind consumers.</p> <p>Activities: 1.) DSUs to coordinate the retention of funds; 2.) SILC and DSUs to coordinate quarterly reporting on consumer goods and direct services; and 3.) SILC and DSUs to examine purchases of blind consumer goods and services in order to track needs and trends.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Submit annually qualitative data that document the direct benefit to a consumers Independent Living goals.</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016
Goal #4	<p>Objective 1: To support the SILC operations and the DORS administration and contract management of the Title VII funds.</p> <p>Activities: 1.) SILC to develop a strategic workplan for 2014-2016 that outlines the SILC organizational operations and provides a detailed quarterly update for the development, implementation and evaluation of the SPIL goals; 2.) SILC to increase staff capacity through professional development and training opportunities; 3.) SILC to recruit new SILC board members and to provide quarterly learning opportunities for all SILC members; and 4.) SILC and DORS to develop and implement a scope of services, per the contract, that outlines the roles, responsibilities, deliverables and meeting schedule.</p> <p>Proposed Outcomes: 1.) Expand knowledge areas of SILC staff; 2.) Increase SILC membership by 25% during 2013-2015; 3.) Provide a minimum of 4 trainings annually for SILC members; 4.) Increase regular communication, meetings and resource sharing on IL and other disability-related areas between the CILs, SILC and DORS; and 5.) Improve system of tracking and monitoring SPIL goals, outcomes and finances.</p>	10/01/2013	09/30/2016

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

In Connecticut, there are five Centers for Independent Living. The overall population of Connecticut is approximately 3.5 million with the following ethnic breakdown: 84.3% White; 10.3% Black; .4% American Indian; 3.5% Asian; .1% Native Hawaiian; and 1.5 Biracial. However, it is important to note that significant numbers of racial/ethnic minority populations reside in the urban areas of the state primarily the cities of Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven and these populations include but are not limited to West Indians, Latinos African-Americans and Brazilians. Three of the five CILs are located in and/or adjacent to the three cities mentioned above: Bridgeport (Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County located in Stratford) Hartford (Independence Unlimited located in Hartford) and New Haven (Center for Disability Rights located in West Haven).

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

All the centers receive equal Part B and Part C funding and serve consumers who reside in one of the five geographic areas of the state: Independence Unlimited Inc. (North Central); Disability Network of Eastern Connecticut (Eastern) Independence Northwest Inc. (Western); Center for Disability Rights (South Central); and Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County (South Western). Within these geographical regions, some areas continue to be underserved including but not limited to the Northeast and Northwest corners Western area that border New York and lower Fairfield County.

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

The CILs will partner with appropriate ethnic and cultural organizations, faith-based organizations and resident groups in order to outreach to minority populations. Brochures, educational materials, intake forms, etc. will be translated into appropriate languages. The SILC reviews regularly all demographic reports including the US Census and American Community Survey data, along with any state or local data reports. This past year, the SILC's graduate school intern culled all the existing data and developed a report highlighting disability data updates and changes in Connecticut. The SILC will update this document on an as needed basis and share with CILs and other partners in order to develop strategies for outreach and service delivery.

The CILs, SILC and DSUs work hard to constantly assess the changing needs and demographics and seek activities, programs and ways to meet those changing needs. As mentioned above, DORS has assessed a growing need for deaf and hard of hearing services in various areas of the state. To this end, we will prioritize the deaf population in the creation of the request for proposal and will provide

meetings and trainings with the appropriate DSU staff to improve and/or develop pathways to serve more deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

In addition, the SILC is responsible for assuring diversity of its council members, thereby obtaining the input of a broad range of stakeholders in design, development and implementation of the SPIL. The SILC is in the process of recruiting for new council members and seeks to have an ethnically and culturally diverse council as possible. Specifically, Goals 2 and 3, will provide opportunities to expand upon the delivery of independent living services to underserved and unserved populations and communities. In addition, the SILC will utilize primary and secondary data gathered from a variety of sources to include the US Census; American Community Survey; The Center on Aging University of Connecticut Health Center Demographic Analysis of Individuals with Disabilities report published by CT-SILC; ILRU; SILC-Net; and NCIL to obtain current demographic changes and trends.

### 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 - 2014 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
Title VII Funds				
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B				256000
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C		428717	428717	
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)				

Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	206000			
Other Federal funds - other				
Non-Federal funds - State funds		35521		
Non-Federal funds - Other				
Line item in DORS budget		264000	264000	
Total	206000	728238	692717	256000

Year 2 - 2015 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
Title VII Funds				
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B	77000			200000
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C		413481	413481	
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)				
Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	103000			
Other Federal funds - other				
Non-Federal funds - State funds		35521		
Non-Federal funds - Other				
Line item in DORS budget		264000	264000	
Total	180000	713002	677481	200000

Year 3 - 2016 Approximate funding amounts and uses

Sources	SILC resource plan	IL services	General CIL operations	Other SPIL activities
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Title VII Funds				
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part B	98500			200000
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C		413481	413481	
Title VII Funds Chapter 2, OIB (only those provided by the OIB grantee to further a SPIL objective)				
Other Federal funds - Sec. 101(a)(18) of the Act (Innovation and Expansion)	51500			
Other Federal funds - other				
Non-Federal funds - State funds		35521		
Non-Federal funds - Other				
Line item in DORS budget		264000	264000	
Total	150000	713002	677481	200000

### 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.

Goal 1: To develop Independent Living opportunities and resources through statewide advocacy and education.

Year 1: \$2,000

-Interpreter, transportation services and non-personnel costs to support collaborative meetings related to education and advocacy efforts

Year 2: \$3,000

-Interpreter, transportation services and non-personnel costs to support collaborative meetings related to education and advocacy efforts

Year 3: \$1,000

-Interpreter, transportation services and non-personnel costs to support collaborative meetings related to education and advocacy efforts

TOTAL: \$6,000

Goal 2: To expand the capacity and build sustainability for the five (5) Centers for Independent Living.

Year 1: \$181,000

-\$30,500 total per CIL for two quarters (October 2013-March 2014) to continue the youth transition and pre-vocational projects;

-\$15,000 for Q90 to develop an online web-based standardized reporting system for the CILs and SILC;

-\$3,000 for technical assistance for CILs and SILC to develop videoconferencing and webinar capability to improve access for staff, board and consumers

-\$5,500 for CIL staff, board and SILC staff and board training and professional development opportunities.

-\$5,000 for specific CIL-focused organizational capacity-building projects directly related to five-part non-profit training series.

Year 2: \$140,000

-\$140,000 for first of 30 month contract for pre-vocational CIL projects.

Year 3: \$121,000

-\$120,000 for second year and one-half of 30 month contract for pre-vocational CIL projects.

TOTAL Goal 2: \$442,000

Goal 3: To fund the purchase of independent living services for consumers who have approved Independent Living Plans or waivers.

Year 1: \$87,000

-\$12,000 for BESB for the purchase of services and goods for legally blind consumers.

-\$75,000 for case services for the CILs. Each CIL will receive \$15,000 per year.

Year 2: \$70,000

-\$10,000 for BESB to retain for the purchase of services and goods for blind consumers.

-\$60,000 for case services for CILs. Each CIL will receive \$12,000 per year.

Year 3: \$70,000

-\$10,000 for BESB for the purchase of services and goods for blind consumers.

-\$60,000 for case services for CILs. Each CIL will receive \$12,000 per year.

TOTAL Goal 3: \$227,000

Goal 4: To support the SILC operations and DORS contract administration

Year 1: \$50,000

-\$50,000 will support DORS contract administration.

Year 2: \$127,000

-\$77,000 will support the SILC cost increases to include, but not limited to personnel, office rent, conferences, interpreters, PCAs, transportation, supplies and equipment and \$50,000 will support DORS contract administration.

Year 3: \$148,000

-\$98,500 will support the SILC cost increases to include, but not limited to personnel, office rent, interpreters, PCAs, transportation, conferences, supplies and equipment and \$50,000 will support DORS contract administration.

TOTAL Goal 4: \$325,000

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 Connecticut Bureau of Rehabilitation Services will direct federal Innovation & Expansion (I&E) funds to partially support the operation of the SILC. All funding streams including Part C, Part B, I&E are considered and coordinated as the State Plan for Independent Living is developed. For example, Part B funds are directed to support technology needs, staff training, and organizational capacity building to existing CILs. While Part C funds are directed for general operations of the CILs and while it can be defined that technology, training and capacity-building are general operations, the SILC and DSU are aware that Part C alone is inadequate to fund general operations. Part B is utilized to support CILs when needs arise. State funds (\$524,000) are also used to support general CIL operations and independent living services. State contracts are based on standards and indicators, as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act, section 725 mandated provision of core services.

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 State of Connecticut, Department of Rehabilitation Services, provides substantial in-kind resources. The resources include: one (1) Counselor acts as a liaison between the VR and IL programs, providing insight from the VR programs into the CILs and SILC operations and overall statewide IL services; and one (1) Contract Administrator is responsible for SPIL contract development and monitoring and fiscal oversight. In addition, the BESB Independent Living Services Grant Coordinator serves as an Ex-Officio SILC member and serves on and/or chairs various SILC committees to include Board Development, By-Laws and SPIL Development.

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

N/A

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.

The overarching goal of the 2014-2016 SPIL is to link work plan objectives with the SPIL goals. To this end, the SPIL seeks to provide capacity-building and organizational support to the CILs in order to improve the provision of IL services, pre-employment/employment opportunities for consumers, and services to unserved and underserved consumers and geographic areas. In addition, the SPIL seeks to support CILs by providing non-profit organizational development training and technical assistance.

Two of the four SPIL goals focus on CIL capacity-building, sustainability and increased services for consumers.

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.

In October 2012, the Executive Director and SILC Executive Committee members began to conduct meetings with each CIL Board of Directors in order to obtain input from staff and consumers for the 2014-2016 SPIL. The meetings were held to not only obtain suggestions for the SPIL, but to better understand the goals, objectives and needs of the CILs in order to improve and coordinate the CILs, SILC and DSU partnership. In addition, the SILC conducted four public hearings, numerous meetings with SILC members and partners and solicited input into the SPIL through social media.

## 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.

The DSUs, the CIL directors and the SILC director will meet regularly to discuss progress on SPIL goals. Representatives from the two DSUs, BRS and BESB, attend all the SILC meetings and are mandated members of the SPIL development committee. In addition, the SILC has representation on the two DSUs State Rehabilitation Councils (SRC). Through the SPIL goals, partnerships will continue with various state disability agencies, along with various disability non-profit organizations across the state.

## 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.

Teams are critical to coordination of services and avoiding duplication of services. Various consultants and counselors at BRS and BESB work in a team environment with IL staff as needs arise to share expertise specific to individual consumers. During a team process, the CIL staff is the lead relative to IL plans (including transition from nursing homes) and the BRS and/or BESB counselor is the lead on IL needs relative to a work plan. Through teamwork, unnecessary duplication is avoided.

The BRS, BESB and CILs also exchange referrals, recognizing that each provider offers unique services necessary for consumers to reach their independent living goals. Services are coordinated at the local level between partners to avoid duplication and to maximize self-direction on the part of the individual consumer. Under Connecticut's Money Follows the Person, all partners are actively engaged in ensuring that IL services provided by all parties are coordinated.

The services provided by BESB independent living programs are unique, specialized, and targeted to meet the needs of consumers where other resources do not exist or are minimally available. Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind retains a percentage of Part B funding (including state matching funds) to purchase adaptive equipment for consumers, primarily under the age of 55, where other resources are not available from other sources of federal, state, or private

funding that the agency administers. In addition policies and procedures within the agency stipulate that the agency pursue comparable benefits whenever practical (such as access to Medicaid, Medicare or private insurance. When other resources do exist, this information is made available to clients, consistent with the practice of informed choice and consumer control.

The Title VII, Chapter 2 Older Blind Grant Program and the Part B Independent Living Services Program, are not duplicative of IL services rendered by the CILs. The CILs refer consumers to BESB that are in need of specialized training and adaptive equipment such as Closed Circuit Television Viewers (CCTVs) that the Bureau can provide to qualified individuals with approved IL or IPE plans.

BRS, BESB and the CILs collaborate with the Department of Developmental Services, various divisions of the Department of Social Services (Medicaid, Housing), the Area Agencies on Aging, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Department of Transportation, the Office of Protection and Advocacy and the State Department of Education as well as other nonprofit agencies to provide coordinated delivery of independent living services. Additionally, the SILC and the CT Association of Centers for Independent Living have worked with various Veterans groups to promote awareness of the services that the CILs can provide to veterans. BESB typically refers blind veterans who need independent living to the VA-VIST program as a comparable resource.

Connecticut has three comprehensive initiatives that seek to coordinate agencies administering special education, vocational education, developmental disabilities, public health, mental health, housing and transportation for people with disabilities. In particular, the initiatives have had major impact on enhancing the collaborative opportunities of the state and local agencies involved in the provision of services to people with disabilities. The initiatives are: 1) Connect-Ability , 2) the Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration (MFP), and 3) the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs).

Connect-Ability is an initiative connecting Connecticut employers with the state's talent pool of people with disabilities. Connect-Ability broadens awareness by helping employers see the ability, not the disability. The initiative brings together resources to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Addressing fundamental barriers to employment, it is one of the first initiatives of its kind in the national and a model for other states. Connect-Ability partners with BRS, BESB, CT Business Leadership Network, CT Tech Act Project, Connecticut Department of Labor, Job Accommodation Network and the Employer Assistance and Recruiting Network.

Money Follows the Person has enabled more Medicaid recipients living in long term care facilities, such as nursing homes to move back to their communities. The Connecticut Department of Social Services applied to participate in the National Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration. The application

was successful and in January 2007, Connecticut was awarded with the opportunity to participate in the demonstration. The demonstration is the largest Medicaid systems change initiative ever funded by the federal government. Connecticut's Demonstration has 2 goals: 1) Reduce reliance on institutional care; 2) Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of long term care systems.

Success of the demonstration is based on attainment of 5 annual benchmarks. Each benchmark was established as a measure indicating Connecticut's advancement towards increased choice and reduced reliance on institutional care. In the review of the first year evaluation of MFP, it was noted that the increased networking and collaboration between the different state agencies and waiver providers, as well as the multiple community providers, increased the overall success of this project to date. The Steering Committee includes multiple stakeholders, with representation from Departments of Social Services, Developmental Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Economic and Community Development, and Office of Policy and Management, Connecticut Legal Services, ARC of Connecticut, Commission on Aging, AARP, Brain Injury Association, MS Society, ADAPT of CT, University of Hartford, Council on Developmental Disabilities, and self advocates and care givers. Another identified strength of the MFP program is the number of workgroups developed to work on different aspects of MFP. A common strength of most of the workgroups was a core number of diverse, engaged stakeholders representing providers, individuals with disabilities, and state agencies.

The Administration for Community Living (formerly the Administration on Aging) developed a national initiative for the development of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to promote the integration of long-term care information and referral services, benefits and options counseling services, and access to publicly and privately financed services and benefits for those in need of long-term supports and their families. The initiative ideally restructures existing resources and programs while complementing other long term care system change activities designed to enhance access to community living for both older and disabled adults by empowering them to make informed decisions through a streamlined long-term support system. The national vision of ADRCs is to have Aging and Disability Resource Centers in every community serving as highly visible and trusted places where people of all incomes and ages can turn for information on the full range of long-term support options and a single point of entry for access to public long-term support programs and benefits.

In Connecticut, the ADRC initiative is titled "Community Choices". Community Choices offers a range of information about long-term care community supports, from a simple name and phone number to detailed help concerning community services, benefits counseling, policies and procedures, and assistance with completing applications to services. Connecticut currently has five ADRCs, which partner with the five CILs and the local Area Agencies on Aging.

## 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 program manager of the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program serves as an ex-officio member of the SILC and reports on OIB activities as well as other BESB activities at SILC meetings. The SILC has identified individuals who are deafblind, in addition to individuals who are deaf, as underserved populations in the 2014-2016 SPIL. The SILC and DSUs will continue to co-sponsor the outreach campaign created in conjunction with the Helen Keller National Center entitled "Losing Sight and Sound without Losing Your Identity." This campaign is targeted to older adults who have vision and hearing loss to include a series of community and consumer outreach activities including an exhibit at the CT Legislative Office Building, as well as 8 presentations at senior centers focusing on services that are available through various state and community agencies. Special emphasis will be put on promotion of the new grant available through FCC funding for deafblind individuals to improve telecommunications access.

## 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	No	Yes	Yes
Core Independent Living Services - IL skills training	No	Yes	Yes
Core Independent Living Services - Peer counseling	No	Yes	Yes
Core Independent Living Services - Individual and systems advocacy	No	Yes	Yes
Counseling services, including psychological, psychotherapeutic, and related services	No	No	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	Yes	Yes
Rehabilitation technology	Yes	No	No
Mobility training	Yes	No	No
Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services	No	No	Yes

Surveys, directories and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation, accessible transportation and other support services	No	Yes	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	Yes	Yes
Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities	No	Yes	Yes
Supported living	No	No	No
Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation	No	Yes	Yes
Physical rehabilitation	Yes	No	No
Therapeutic treatment	No	No	No
Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices	Yes	No	No
Individual and group social and recreational services	No	Yes	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	Yes	Yes	Yes
Services for children with significant disabilities	Yes	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	Yes	Yes
Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with significant disabilities for similar services in the future	No	Yes	Yes
Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities	No	Yes	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.

- 1.) Goal 2 seeks to improve the capacity and sustainability of the five Centers for Independent Living to include the continuation of pre-vocational projects.
- 2.) Goal 2 seeks to improve the capacity and sustainability of the five CILs. One of the key objectives for Goal 2 is to provide comprehensive non-profit training to assist the CILs with improving their marketability and sustainability, in an ever changing and competitive non-profit sector.
- 3.) Goal 3 addresses the need for consumer goods and services to assist Independent Living goals.

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.

In an effort to be in compliance with non-IL funding requirements, Connecticut will implement a fee schedule for ADRC related services, including but not limited to ADRC assessments, Options Counseling and Information and Assistance. The CT ADRCs have conducted time studies and have developed a sliding scale fee schedule and policies that will be instituted uniformly across the state at the CILs and Area Agencies on Aging. CILs will maintain consumer documentation of these services in each consumers CSR, in addition to maintaining financial records.

## 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 DSU contracts directly with each of the 5 Centers for Independent Living for the provision of core independent living services, along with general CIL operations and SPIL-funded projects. In addition, DSU contracts will be developed for any third party consultant providing education, program support, training and technical assistance to the CILs and/or SILC.

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 DSU delegates responsibility for the determination of an individual's eligibility for services to the five Centers for Independent Living through a legal contract that mandates the CILs service delivery authority and responsibilities.

## **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.

The five Connecticut Centers for Independent Living represent the eight Connecticut counties. It is important to note that Connecticut never had strong county governments and since 1960, the names and boundaries of its eight counties have existed only as geographical names used to define parts of the state and weather conditions. Connecticut's CILs are strategically located throughout the state to provide statewide coverage for the delivery of IL core services. All the CILs receive equal amounts of state and federal funding and service all populations within their service area. The CILs overlap counties, but do not overlap cities and towns. The CIL service areas are as follows:

- 1.) Region 1 (Southwest Region) is service by the Disability Resource Center of Fairfield County located in Stratford, CT, which is adjacent to the city of Bridgeport that holds the largest number of residents with disabilities (approximately 32,000) in the region. DRCFC services the cities and towns in Fairfield County.
- 2.) Region 2 (South Central Region) is served by Center for Disability Rights in West Haven, CT, which is next door to the city of New Haven that holds the largest number of residents with disabilities (approximately 25,000) in the region. CDR serves the cities and towns in New Haven County and Middlesex County.
- 3.) Region 3 (Eastern Region) is served by Disabilities Network of Eastern Connecticut located in Norwich, CT, which is home to the largest community of individuals with disabilities (approximately 8,000) in the region, DNEC serves cities and towns in New London County, Windham County and Tolland County.
- 4.) Region 4 (North Central Region) is served by Independence Unlimited located in Hartford, CT, which is home to the largest community of individuals with disabilities (approximately 30,000) in the region. IU serves cities and towns in Hartford County and Tolland County.
- 5.) Region 5 (Northwest Region) is served by Independence Northwest located in Naugatuck, CT, which is adjacent to the city of Waterbury that holds the largest number of residents with disabilities (approximately 23,000) in the Northwest region. IN serves cities and towns in Litchfield County, New Haven County, and Fairfield County.

In 1988, CT's Independent Living Advisory Council developed a five-year plan to establish 8 CILs in the state. The plan divided the state into 8 geographic regions, with a center proposed for each region. It was estimated that, in 1988, \$200,000 was necessary annually to start and operate a new CIL with \$50,000 per year for each satellite office. Today, those costs are significantly higher.

By 1989, CT had established 5 out of the 8 planned CILs with a combination of state and federal funding. However, in 1993, when the five-year plan was reviewed, no new CILs or satellites were established. Building the capacity of the existing CILs was identified as the immediate funding priority while the expansion of the network remained a long-range goal.

In 2008, CT's Bureau of Rehabilitation Services submitted a letter to the US DOE, RSA stating that as a result of stakeholder input, the SILC and two DSUs mutually agreed to seek approval to amend Connecticut's existing SPIL to delay the expansion of independent living services to continue to focus efforts on strengthening the capacity and sustainability of five centers within the Connecticut network. A 2004 needs assessment for the SILC by the Center on Aging at the University of Connecticut Health Center determined that given the size of the state of Connecticut, the entire state is served by a Center for Independent Living. However, the degree to which a given town and/or area is underserved tends to rise from the distance of its CIL.

### 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).

In 2004, after discussion with the existing CILs, it was agreed to increase the base level funding to \$550,000. While Part C funding has moderately increased over the past ten years, state allocations to CILs have varied significantly. The \$550,000 figure was based on operational budgets submitted by the CILs to the SILC and remained a constant unit of the development of the current SPIL in 2005. In 2008, the SILC voted to decrease the base level of funding from \$550,000 to \$300,000.

The lower level of funding was intended to be provisional based on the development of a strategic plan that would address diversification of funding and expansion to underserved communities and populations. Unfortunately, before the strategic planning began, the severe decline in state revenue significantly reduced the ability of the state to fund all programs at their existing level, including but not limited to rehabilitation services.

Subsequently, Governor Malloy's 2014-2015 biennium budget proposed the elimination of all state funding administered by the Bureau of Rehabilitation

Services (DSU) to Connecticut's five CILs, except for the 11.12% state match required to retain the Part B funding. This month, the Connecticut General Assembly successfully restored state funding to the CILs at the \$524,000 annual level.

However, the instability of state funding results in difficult planning and underscores the need for the SILC and CILs to advocate more aggressively for full funding of the network, as well as to seek alternative resources to advance independent living in the state. The SILC determined that using 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funds to establish new CILs was not feasible given current revenue shortfalls. However, a SPIL amendment was submitted in March 2010 (and approved on August 10, 2010) to raise the base level back to \$550,000, which remains the benchmark in this three year state plan.

As stated above, the SILC and the DSUs determined that using ARRA stimulus funds to establish new CILs was not feasible given current revenue shortfalls. However, the base level of \$550,000 remains the benchmark and therefore reestablishes the priority of building organizational capacity of the existing five CILs. The current Part C funds are distributed equally among the five Connecticut CILs.

The 2014-2016 SPIL Committee reviewed current CIL 704 reports, 2010 US Census data, 2009-2012 American Community Survey data, and the Center on Aging, University of Connecticut Health Center SILC report to determine the underserved areas. In addition, underserved areas were outlined by CIL staff and board members and discussed at the four 2014-2016 SPIL public hearings. CILs will outreach to the following underserved areas:

1. Middlesex County and Estuary area;
2. Lower Central and Coastal Fairfield County;
3. Northeastern CT;
4. North Central CT; and
5. Northwest, CT.

Additionally, the SPIL has identified deafblind and deaf consumers as underserved populations. CILs seek to provide pre-vocational services to better meet the needs of consumers seeking work. Over the past three years, the CILs, SILC and DSUs have worked on improving our referrals and partnership in order to increase referrals and services and to meet consumers IL goals at whatever consumer vocational level. It is our goal to develop 1-2 CRPs as a result of the 2014-2016 SPIL with emphasis on outreach to deaf consumers. We believe that

adding job assessment, coaching, placement and follow-up services will improve the ability of CILs to meet the needs of consumers, solidify the CIL/DSUs partnership and assist the CILs with an income-generating project that will contribute to a portion of the CIL operating needs. Generally and through the CRPs, CILs will also prioritize expanding outreach, information and referral and services to deaf and hard of hearing consumers.

### 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.

Connecticut retains two DSUs: Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) and Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB). In 2012, the BRS and the BESB merged into one state agency, Department of Rehabilitation Services. The two Bureaus retain separate State Rehabilitation Councils, and therefore maintain two SILC representatives. DORS provides administrative support to include financial and technical assistance in planning Part B program, budget planning, contract management and competitive procurement for the SPIL.

BESB also provides technical assistance in planning, developing and evaluating Part B programs. BESB receives an annual allocation of Part B funding from RSA and the majority of the funds available to DORS to support the Connecticut State Plan for Independent Living. In Year 1, BESB will provide \$12,000 of funding (Part B funds, plus state match) for the purchase of adaptive equipment and services to meet the independent living needs of consumers as per approved ILP or IL waiver, when these services cannot be funded through Vocational Rehabilitation or other sources of state and federal funding. In Years 2-3, BESB will provide \$10,000 of funding (Part B funds, plus state match).

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

N/A

## **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.

The SILC is an independent Connecticut 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization. However, as part of the collaborative partnership between the DSU and the SILC, DORS will provide the SILC with \$206,000 from federal Innovations and Expansion funds for the SILC resource plan in Year 1. In Year 2, DORS will provide \$103,000 towards operating and \$51,500 in Year 3. In Years 2-3, the SPIL will supplement the SILC operating costs as follows: \$77,000 in Year 2 will supplement the \$103,000 Innovations and Expansion funds for a total SILC operating budget of \$180,000; \$98,500 in Year 3 will supplement the \$51,500 Innovations and Expansion funds for a total SILC operating budget of \$150,000. A 2014-2016 contract will be developed between DORS and the SILC outlining the SILC roles, responsibilities and monitoring, as mandated by the Rehabilitation Act for SILC operations and SPIL implementation of the 2014-2016 SPIL.

This budget supports non-personnel costs to include office rental, office supplies, professional development, office supplies, educational materials, interpreters, transportation for SILC members, meeting costs, and insurance, medical stipends. The personnel costs support two (2) full-time staff, an Executive Director and an Administrative Assistant.

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 received funds through a contract administered by the DSU, BRS. Proper expenditure of funds is detailed in the contract and monitored through quarterly programmatic and fiscal reports, in addition to an annual audit. The SILC and DSU meet quarterly to assess and monitor the SPIL income and expenditures by goal.

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

The SILC is an independent 501(c)(3) Connecticut nonprofit organization. All appropriate policies, procedures and processes are in place to ensure the autonomy 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.

The SILC budget is comprised of noncompetitive resources. All resources are anticipated during the period of implementation of the SPIL.

## 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 operates as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of Connecticut. Its Board of Directors is representative of volunteers from the disability community and two ex-officio members that represent the DSUs. The DSUs work in partnership with the SILC, but do not staff the SILC. There is no apparent conflict of interest with the DSUs and/or other state agencies.

The SILC is governed by and adheres to its non-profit Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, which includes a conflict of interest policy that all members sign annually. Also, as an incorporated nonprofit, the SILC must abide by the non-profit duty of care, loyalty and fiduciary regulations set forth by the State of Connecticut. The SILC holds an office at 151 New Park Avenue in Hartford, CT. The office is located in an independent accessible office building and conference center outside the structure of the state government.

## 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.

Article 3 of the SILC By-Laws states in detail the process for appointing members. The Executive Director, Executive Committee and Board Development Committee take all measures to ensure that requirements for general SILC composition and those individual membership qualifications are met. The Chairperson and Executive Director work in concert with the Board Development and Executive Committees to outreach, solicit and review names of potential members.

A nomination application is completed for each potential candidate and reviewed by the Committee to ensure statewide representation, skill set, interests, and representation of individuals with a broad range of disabilities. A board job packet is shared with potential members to explain SILC, independent living services and to define board member roles and responsibilities.

The SILC, its agents and any participants in the selection process will ensure the utmost confidentiality of all potential applicants and will practice nondiscrimination in the selection of members. The Board Development Committee will present recommendations and then a slate of candidates will be submitted to the Executive Committee for review. Candidates will be required to sign a Code of Ethics statement and complete a Conflict of Interest declaration prior to the names being submitted to the Executive Committee. In addition, all candidates will receive a board binder that includes Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, current SPIL, Personnel and Financial Policies, ILRU history of IL, Rehabilitation Act, Board Membership directory, committee assignment and roles and responsibilities, and SILC and SPIL budgets.

The Executive Committee shall act upon the slate of candidates and appoint directors at the annual September meeting. After appointment, the Executive Committee shall submit the names of the directors for appointment to the Governor through the office of the Boards and Appointments by October of each year. The Governor shall act upon the slate of candidates and his or her sole discretion.

#### 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.

As stated above, the SILC is an independent nonprofit organization with a full-time Executive Director and Administrative Assistant. The organization maintains personnel policies and financial policies developed, approved and implemented by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee of the Board of Director meets monthly and evaluates the Executive Director annually no later than September 30th. In turn, the Executive Director evaluates the Administrative Assistant annually by the same date. In 2009, the Executive Committee approved a staff performance tool that is used to evaluate both the Executive Director and Administrative Assistant.

The Executive Director responsibilities include executing all organizational business on behalf of the Board, including hiring and supervising all staff, maintaining all administrative and fiscal controls and policies, and working with the DSUs and partners to develop and implement the SPIL objectives.

- 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.

N/A

## 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.

All CILs have qualified staff trained in the IL five core services and the majority of staff are individuals with disabilities. The five CIL executive directors have worked in the IL field since the 1980s and are highly knowledgeable and proficient in the development IL services and operating CILs. In addition, goal 2 was developed to improve the capacity and sustainability of the CILs by developing a professional development training program, in order for staff to keep pace with changes in the IL field and continue to be highly trained specialists.

- 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.

All CILs are equipped with staff and technology that allows for communicating with individuals who rely on alternative modes of communication and nonverbal devices. In the 2008-2010 and 2011-2013 SPILs, technology was prioritized and all CIL staff and consumer computers and software were upgraded to allow CILs to better serve and outreach to consumers. Most of the CILs have staff able to communicate with consumers in their native languages. If this is not available, the CILs partner with local agencies and interpreters to assist consumers.

- 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.

The 2011-2013 SPIL emphasized professional development and training as a priority to building CIL capacity and sustainability. The 2014-2016 SPIL will continue to provide for training, workshops and staff development opportunities for CIL staff and board members and SILC staff and board members.

- 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.

All CILs will adhere to affirmative action policies to employ and advance 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 and 34 CFR 364.31.

## 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.

The SILC and four of the five CILs use a Certified Public Accountant who adheres to all fiscal controls and fund accounting procedures as necessary for the disbursement and accounting for the parts B and Part C of the chapter 1. The executive director of the fifth CIL performs all fiscal tasks for her CIL, as she is highly proficient and knowledgeable of fiscal controls, accounting procedures, EDGAR, federal and state reporting requirements, etc.

In addition, the DSU complies with all state and federal fiscal controls and accounting procedures to ensure proper disbursement of SPIL funds. The DSU and SILC meet regularly to review the income and expenditures for the SPIL funds and we are working to improve our tracking of SPIL expenditures by goals and objectives for 2014-2016.

## 6.3 Recordkeeping, Access and Reporting

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

The SILC and the five CILs maintain all records in locked and secure locations that fully disclose and document information for recipients of financial assistance, in compliance with 34 CFR 364.35.

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

The CILs and the SILC, in coordination with the DSU, will submit in a timely fashion all annual performance reports, financial reports, and other reports as determined, to the Secretary.

- 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.

The CILs and the SILC, in coordination with the DSU, will submit in a timely fashion any and all audits, examinations and compliance reviews for all recipients of financial assistance related to 34 CFR 364.37.

#### 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.

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

- 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 CILs provide the ability for an individual who may seek information about IL services under these programs and request referral to other services and programs for 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.

All CILs will adhere to the requirements set forth in 34 CFR 364.51 for the determination of an individual's eligibility for IL services.

- 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 CILs apply eligibility requirements, in compliance with 34 CFR 364.41(b), without regard to age, color, creed, gender, national origin, race, religion or type of significant disability of the individual applying for 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.

CILs will 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.

## 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.

Independent living services shall be provided by the CILs to all consumers with significant disabilities, in accordance with an independent living plan mutually agreed upon by an appropriate CIL staff member and the consumer, unless the consumer 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.

The CILs provide assistance in informing and advising all consumers and consumer applicants of all available benefits under the Act, and, upon request of such consumers or consumers applicants.

## 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 CILs have policies and procedures in place that protect the confidentiality of consumers, to include but not limited to name(s), personal information, photographs, etc.

## 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
Goal #1	<p>Process evaluation will be used with all the objectives, which will analyze the development and implementation of the strategies. In addition, individual surveys and evaluations will be used for specific workshops, trainings and activities to measure the areas of success and areas for improvement. For Objective 2, the SILC will work with the Transit Authorities and taxi companies to develop and implement a system to measure increased ridership.</p>
Goal #2	<p>Process evaluation will be used with Objectives 1, 2 and 4. Individual pre and post surveys and evaluations will be used for specific workshops, trainings and activities to measure the areas of success and areas for improvement. It is important to note that Objective 2 is directly related to Objective 3. The activities of Objective 2 will be to develop outcome and results based tools to assess the outcomes of CILs and related-projects. A consumer survey will be implemented by the CILs to evaluate consumer satisfaction with the pre-vocational project. Outcome-based evaluation will be used for Objective 3. A logic model will be used as a planning tool to connect the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators with the emphasis on how the pre-vocational projects specifically benefit the Independent Living of consumers. Successful consumer stories will be submitted to provide qualitative evaluation information.</p>
Goal #3	<p>A consumer survey will be implemented by the CILs to evaluate consumer satisfaction with the case service project. Outcome-based evaluation will be used for both objectives. The logic model planning tool will connect the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and indicators with the emphasis on how the pre-vocational projects specifically benefit the Independent Living of consumers. Successful consumer stories will be submitted to provide qualitative evaluation information.</p>

Goal #4	The SILC and DSU will monitor their progress quarterly as it relates to the services outlined in the contracts scope of services.
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## **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