

OVERVIEW

STATE

INDEPEND.

LIVING

COUNCIL

**Other Independent Living
Resources for Alaskans**

State Resources

**Alaska Center for the Blind and Visually
Impaired (Anchorage)**

1-800-770-7517 / 248-7770 (V/TTY)

Email: info@alaskablind.com

http://www.alaskablind.com/

**The Arc of Anchorage Deaf & Hard of
Hearing Center**

1-800-770-3456 258-2232(TTY) 276-3456(V)

Email: acartwright@arc-anchorage.org

Deaf Community Services (Fairbanks)

1-800-847-0939 451-4889 (TTY) 456-5913 (V)

http://www.deafcommunityservices@gci.net

Vocational Rehabilitation 1-800-478-4378

269-3570(V/TTY)

http://www.labor.state.ak.us/dvr/home.htm

Mental Health & Developmental Disabilities

1-800-465-4028/465-3370(V) 465-2225 (TTY)

Alaska Mental Health Trust

1-800-478-0880 563-0881 (V/TTY)

Email: mhaa@alaska.net

Disability Law Center

1-800-478-1234 344-1002(V/TTY)

Email: akpa@dlcak.org http://www.dlcak.org

Client Assistance Program

1-800-478-0047 333-2211(V/TTY)

Email: akcap@alaska.com

National Resources

Americans with Disabilities Act Hotline

1-800-514-0301 (V) 1-800-514-0383 (TTY)

www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.h

National Council on Independent Living

703-525-3406(V) 703-525-4153(TTY)

Contacting the SILC

To contact SILC staff or members, please
call our office in Anchorage:

1-888-330-6488 (toll-free)

907-269-3571 (V/TTY)

907-269-3576 (Voice)

907-269-3633 (Fax)

www.labor.state.ak.us/SILC/index.htm

Or, write us at:

Alaska SILC

1016 W. 6th Ave., Suite 105

Anchorage, AK 99501

Staff: Patrick Reinhart, Executive Director

(patrick_reinhart@labor.state.ak.us)

Mary Heller, Administrative Clerk

(mary_heller@labor.state.ak.us)

SILC members:

Ruth L'Hommedieu, Chair (lhmmddieu@ptialaska.net)

Margaret Evans, Vice Chair (nohea@gci.net)

Elaine Manning, Treasurer

(jandemann@cvinternet.net)

Jerie Best, (golfshop@worldnet.att.net)

David Jacobson (djacobs@touralaska.org)

Duane Mayes, (duane_mayes@labor.state.ak.us)

Dan Ducey, (dducey@mtaonline.net)

Don Roberts, (RightsChampion@gci.net)

August Martin, (amartin@aktanf.com)

Joan Herbage O'Keefe, (jokeefe@gci.net)

David Maltman (david_rnaltman@healih.state.ak.us)

us)

**Alaska
Statewide Independent
Living Council**

(SILC)

**Department of
Labor & Workforce Development**



***Leadership, advocacy and
empowerment for
Alaskans with disabilities,
demonstrating their right to
live independently in the
community of their choice.***

Mission, Duties and Responsibilities of the SILC

The SILC is committed to promoting a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and system advocacy, in order to maximize leadership, empowerment, independence, productivity and to support full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American Society. The SILC serves as a forum in which to discuss issues and concerns regarding independent living services and programs. The SILC advocates for the needs of Alaskans with disabilities with the Executive and Legislative branches of state and federal government. The SILC monitors and evaluates the Alaska State Plan for Independent Living, which includes a combination of state and federal funds that pay for independent living services.

Who Serves on the SILC?

Members of the SILC are appointed by the Governor for three year terms. No member can serve more than two consecutive terms. A majority of members must be persons with disabilities who do not work for state government or for a Center for Independent Living (CIL). Meeting, travel and/or any disability accommodation expenses are paid for by the Council. Members are not paid, but they receive the standard state per diem rates while traveling on SILC business. Persons interested in serving on the SILC should obtain an application from the SILC and submit it to the Governor's office. Per state law, only persons registered to vote and who were active in the last general election can serve on a state board. To obtain an application, call the SILC at 269-3571 (V/TTY) in Anchorage, or toll free at 1-888-330-6488.

How to contact an Independent Living Center in your community

Anchorage, Mat-Su, Western Alaska

Access Alaska (Tollfree) 1-800-770-4488
248-4777 (Voice) 248-8799 (TTY)
248-0639 (Fax) Wasilla 1-800-770-0228
Info@accessalaska.org

Fairbanks, Interior, Northern Regions

Access Alaska (Tollfree) 1-800-770-7940
479-7940(V) 474-8619(TTY/TTD)
474-4052 (Fax)
accessalaska@ak.net pbuchanan@ak.net

Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak, Valdez

KPILC (Tollfree) 1-800-770-7911
Homer: 235-7911(V/TTY) 235-6236(Fax)
Seward: 224-8711 (V/Fax)
Soldotna: 262-6333 (V/TTY) 260-4495(F)
<http://www.peninsulailc.org>

Southeast Alaska

S.A.I.L. (Tollfree) 1-800-478-7245
Juneau: 586-4920(V/TTY) 586-4980(Fax)
Sitka: 747-6859(V/TTY) 747-6783(Fax)
Ketchikan: 225-4735 (V/TTY) 225-4753(Fax)

Northwest - Kotzebue, Nome

Arctic Access (Tollfree) 1-877-442-2393
442-2393(V/TTY/Fax)
Email: arcticac@otz.net

**State Independent Living Council
2001 State Advocacy Position Statement**

People with Disabilities and Medicaid

Many people with disabilities depend on publicly funded health care; in fact, Medicaid is the number one form of insurance for low income Alaskans with disabilities. Although other people with disabilities have some private health insurance, few have coverage that is adequate to meet their medical needs, given preexisting condition exclusions, minimal benefit packages and benefit caps. People with disabilities use health care differently than people without disabilities, who use health care services primarily for acute care needs. People with disabilities need health care services in order to survive and live in the community. It is true that the Medicaid Waiver programs for individuals with developmental disabilities, children with complex medical conditions, adult with physical disabilities and seniors have grown in recent years. However, without them, the state would have seen far higher institutional costs. Waivers are, therefore, good for the State's bottom line. *The State of Alaska must continue positive trends that allow people with disabilities to live in their own community and seniors to age in place.* In relation to this issue, the SILC has taken the following positions on proposed legislation:

The SILC opposes SB & HB 182, which proposes a mechanism to reduce state cash benefit programs on a pro-rata basis should budget shortfalls exist. While this may be a simplified and attractive approach to balancing budgets, it may in fact hurt Alaskans with disabilities more than most. Much more research needs to be done on this proposed legislation and its impact on persons with disabilities.

The SILC opposes HB 367. This bill aims to reduce the number of children and pregnant women now eligible for Denali Kid Care and/or other Medicaid funded programs. The SILC feels that this program, heavily supported with federal dollars, is only beginning to show its potential benefits to the state's bottom line in terms of long term prevention. We need to give this program time to grow before considering cutting back.

Other Legislation

The SILC supports HB 173, "Screening Newborns for Hearing Ability". The SILC supports this bill. The research shows that early screening for hearing loss in infants will greatly enhance early help to families and reduce future costs of services to both families and the state.

The SILC strongly supports HB/SB 320 "Electronic Balloting". This bill is the first step that will allow persons with disabilities, especially those with vision loss or experiencing blindness, to cast their ballots privately through the use of appropriate technology at the polling booth.

State Independent Living Council
1016 W. 6th Ave, suite 105
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-269-3571

State Independent Living Council (SILC)

Department of Labor and Workforce Development



Tony Knowles, Governor

Independent Living for Alaskans with Disabilities

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2001

- "...Americans with disabilities should have every freedom to pursue careers, integrate into the workforce, and participate as full members in the economic marketplace. The New Freedom Initiative will help tear down barriers to the workplace, and help promote full access and integration....." **George W. Bush, President**
- "...President Bush's Executive Order calls for the swift implementation of the Supreme Court's Olmstead decision that holds that unjustified isolation or segregation of qualified individuals through institutionalization is a form of disability-based discrimination prohibited by Title II of the ADA..." **Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services**
- "...*We strongly urge States to increase access to community-based services for individuals with disabilities by developing comprehensive, effectively working plans for ensuring compliance with the ADA. In developing their plans, States must include the involvement of people with disabilities throughout the planning and implementation process...*" **Federal Office of Civil Rights**

State Independent Living Council (SILC)

The Alaska SILC was established by Executive Order in 1993, then by statute in 1995 (AS 47.80.300). For budgetary purposes, the SILC is located in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Council members are appointed by the Governor and a majority of members must be people with disabilities. The Council's powers and duties are set forth in statute and the federal 1992 Rehabilitation Act:

"The Council shall perform the duties set out in 29 USC 796c and in a manner that will maximize the state's receipt of federal financial assistance for independent living services and centers of independent living for residents with severe disabilities..."

Mission : The Alaska Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) is committed to promoting a philosophy of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and systems advocacy, in order to maximize leadership, empowerment, independence, productivity and to support full inclusion and integration of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream of American society.

Membership: There were 12 SILC members throughout the year. Two consumer members resigned from the SILC due to health reasons before their terms expired. The Governor appointed four new consumer members and a tribal Vocational Rehabilitation program representative.

"Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to live independently, enjoy self-determination, make choices, contribute to society, pursue meaningful careers and enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of American Society."

The goals of the nation properly include the goal of providing individuals with disabilities with the tools necessary to: (1) make informed choices and decisions; and (2) achieve equality of opportunity, full inclusion to integration in society, employment, independent living, and economic and social self-sufficiency." Preamble to the federal 1992 Rehabilitation Act.

Budget: The SILC's FY 2001 budget of \$166,000 was funded through an agreement with the Alaska Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, using federal Title I "Innovation and Expansion" funds. A similar agreement for the FY 2002 budget was reached as part of the State Plan for Independent Living. The Council is minimally staffed at its offices in Anchorage having one full-time Executive Director and a half-time Administrative Clerk who also works for the Alaska Human Resources Investment Council (AHRIC). The SILC also shares office space with the AHRIC in Anchorage.

Major Activities of the SILC in FY 2001:

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL): The SILC worked diligently to develop a new three-year State Plan for Independent Living for the fiscal years 2002-2004. The Chair of the SILC and the Director of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation signed off on the new SPIL on June 11, 2001. The plan was reviewed and approved by the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) on September 30, 2001 without any required or recommended changes.

New CIL Funding: The SILC requested a budget increase of \$90,000 for Centers for Independent Living (CILS), which was approved by the Governor and the Legislature for the state fiscal year beginning July 1, 2001. This was the first increase in State funding for the operation of CILS in 12 years. Most of the new funding was put into the allocation formula established in the 2002-2004 SPIL for the existing five CILS to expand services to rural and remote areas of the State. \$25,000 was set aside for conducting a needs assessment for the establishment of IL services or a new CIL for the traditionally underserved region of western Alaska.

Personal Assistance Services: Three years of advocacy and planning by the SILC has led to the finalization and implementation of the state's Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Services (CDPAS) program. The SILC, in cooperation with Centers, held informational fairs and teleconferences describing the new program to consumers, personal assistants and agencies. Under this new model, consumers have more control and flexibility in their ability to hire attendants, and train them for their specific needs. The consumer defines the amount of training and experience required by his/her attendant. Thirteen organizations, including three Centers for Independent Living, have become fiscal agents for the program through the Division of Senior Services, which oversees this Medicaid funded program. Medicaid reimbursement rates were raised to allow for competitive wages and benefits for personal assistants.

In addition, the SILC led statewide PAS Design Team finished recommendations for improvements to the State's "agency-based" personal assistance program, which will lead to additional changes to the statewide program in FY 2003. Finally, the SILC led a successful effort to get a three-year federal grant of \$900,000 to the Division of Senior Services which will help implement the new CDPAS program, educate consumers, and introduce more consumer direction and control to the larger agency based program. The grant will begin in FY 2002.

Nursing Home Issues: For the first time, the amount of money spent on long term care through Medicaid Home and Community Based Services waivers, has surpassed the cost of nursing home care in the state. In addition, Alaska now has the lowest occupancy rate for nursing homes anywhere in the country (less than 650 people as of October 1, 2001). In addition, no new nursing home beds have been built or approved for building since 1998. The SILC has been in the forefront of these successes related to nursing homes. The SILC also received \$10,000 in funding to launch a public awareness campaign in FY 2002 aimed at informing people who are living in, or know someone in a nursing home or other long-term care facility, on how to contact a Center for Independent Living for help in transitioning back into the community. The SILC also assisted with a successful effort to get a three-year federal grant of \$800,000 to help people transition from nursing homes back into the community, and to speed up the Medicaid HCBS

waiver process. The grant will begin in FY 2002 and CILs will utilize some of the transition funding.

Housing Issues: The SILC successfully advocated for new HUD funding for Section 8 housing vouchers for persons with disabilities and persons on Medicaid HCBS Waivers. The SILC also advocated for a new program to be implemented in FY2002, which allows for home ownership for people with disabilities utilizing HUD Section 8 vouchers for paying a mortgage. In addition, the SILC participated in successful advocacy efforts to increase the daily reimbursement rate for assisted living homes and has participated in planning efforts to increase the number of assisted living facilities in rural areas. The SILC also participated in successful advocacy efforts to get new funding for home modifications for seniors and persons with disabilities.

Transportation Issues: The SILC worked with the State Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education, the Alaska Mental Health Trust, and other interested groups to establish a common strategy for increasing public dollars for transportation for persons with disabilities and seniors. The effort led to a statewide "Transportation Funding Summit", which was held in October 2001. The SILC successfully advocated for statewide funding for coordinated transportation. This interagency effort combines Alaska Mental Health Lands Trust funding with federal dollars to create one grant program for disability and senior transportation services. A consumer member of the SILC serves on the proposal review committee for this grant program.

Centers for Independent Living

What is a Center for Independent Living (CIL)? A CIL is a non-profit corporation, which assists people with significant disabilities who want to live more independently. CILS, by law and by design, are managed and staffed by people with disabilities.

How do CILS assist people? The foundation of CIL services is the peer relationship – people with disabilities assisting other people with disabilities as role models, mentors, and counselors. Each Center is unique because it offers services based upon the particular needs of its community. At the same time, centers are similar in that they all offer the same core services, which are *information and referral, peer counseling, individual and systems advocacy, and independent living skills training*. In addition, Centers provide an array of other independent living services in Alaska. Below is a list of these services with the number of persons who received these services in FY 01.

Individuals Served by CILS in FY 01 by Type and Number Served

Information and Referral	1779	Vocational	47
Advocacy/Legal Services	879	Individual Counseling	44
Transportation	603	Family Support	24
Independent Living Skills Training	258	Preventative Services	20
Personal Assistance Services	149	Mobility Training	54
Rehabilitation Technology	256	Prostheses & Other	4
Communication (ASL Interpreters, etc)	258	Children's Services	118
Recreational	1705	Youth Services	33
Housing Accessibility/Home modifications	335	Other	438
Peer Counseling	219		

How many centers are there in Alaska?

Currently, there are five centers for independent living in Alaska, and an additional five satellite offices. The centers are Access Alaska in Anchorage and the Mat-Su Valley; Access Alaska in Fairbanks; Arctic Access in Kotzebue; Southeast Alaska Independent Living in Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka; and the Kenai Peninsula Independent Living Center in Homer, Soldotna and Seward. A list of these centers and their contact information is attached to this report.

CIL Consumer Demographics:

Gender – Of the 1,645 individuals served by Alaskan CILS in FY 2001, 56% were female and 44% were male.

Age – 45% of consumers were between the ages of 23-54, 22% were 55 or older, 11 % were unknown.

Ethnicity – 60% of consumers were White, 13% American Indian or Alaska Native, 2% were Black or African American, 1% Hispanic or Latino, 1% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 23% were unknown.

Disability – 27% of consumers had multiple disabilities, 27% had a physical disabilities, 12% had cognitive disabilities, 11% had vision disabilities, 10% had mental illnesses, 6% had hearing disabilities, and 7% were unknown.

CIL Highlights in FY 2001

Southeast Alaska Independent Living (SAIL)

- “SAIL is continuing to advocate for accessible taxis”.
- “At present, Southeast Alaska has no access to a dialysis center. A movement has begun to get a Center here in the near future.”
- “SAIL has an agreement with Tlingit and Haida’s Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program to collaborate to reach unserved populations.”

Access Alaska

- “Access’s staff and its Partner Project responded to over 200 technical assistance and consultation requests on disability rights regulations and provide 14 training’s in the state on the ADA.
- “A full-time certified Orientation and Mobility specialist (for the blind) provided IL services to consumers in Interior Alaska communities including Salcha, Delta, Tok, Nenana, and Tanacross.

Case Example: Going Home

Access Alaska helped a 39-year-old male transition from Providence Extended Care back to his home in Fairbanks. The consumer was involved in a near fatal motor vehicle accident in January resulting in a closed head injury and partial paralysis. This young man also suffered a major stroke as a result of his injury, which lead to his inability to effectively communicate with those around him. Since the accident the consumer has not been able to return to work. This put a substantial financial burden on the family since this young man was the sole provider for his children. After several months in the hospital, the consumer transferred into Providence Extended Care where he continued to receive physical therapy and other treatment. At this point, Access was contracted to provide an assessment and assist in the process to make this consumer eligible for the CHOICE Medicaid Waiver Program. After completing the assessment, the consumer was found eligible for the waiver program and could look forward to returning home to Fairbanks to live with family rather than being a permanent resident of a long-term rehabilitation facility. Shortly after being approved for the waiver, this consumer transferred to a short-term rehabilitation facility to receive additional physical therapy and rehabilitation treatment. Approximately ninety days after being admitted to this facility, the young man moved into a new apartment with his father and two young sons who look forward to helping their father become as independent as possible in the community. With the continued support of his Access Alaska Care Coordinator, the consumer will be able to have the services and support he needs to stay independent in the community.

Kenai Peninsula Independent Living Center (KPILC)

- “We have successfully developed and implemented an innovative transportation program that used cab companies and a voucher/coupon system in two of our major communities.”
- ADA training’s have been given to two groups of local building contractors to educate them in terms of universal design for homes and requirements under Title II of the ADA.”

FY 2001 CIL Funding and Consumers Served

\$ 1,252,345	Total amount the State of Alaska invested in Alaskan CILS in FY 2001
\$ 1,645,720	Total amount the federal government invested in Alaskan CILS in FY 2001.
\$ 331,185	Total amount of private and local funding invested in Alaskan CILS in FY 2001.
1,645	Total number of persons with disabilities (consumers) served by Alaskan CILS in FY 2001.
\$ 1,963	Average cost of CIL services per consumer per year for all funding sources.
\$ 96,809	Average cost per consumer per year to live in a nursing home or other institutional setting.
34	Number of consumers that CILS successfully relocated from nursing homes or other institutions to community-based living arrangements in FY 2001.
171	Number of consumers for whom IL services provided by CILS prevented the necessity if entering into nursing homes or other institutions and therefore continued living in community based living arrangements in FY 2001.

Attachment: SILC Brochure