

State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) for Georgia for 2017-2019

General Information

Designated Agency Identification

State: Georgia

Agency: Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

Plan for: 2017-2019

Submitted in fiscal year: 2016

View grant [90IS0001-01](#) 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.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

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.

N/A

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.

Statewide Independent Living Council of Georgia, Inc.

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 Greg Schmieg, Executive Director.

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, 2016.

Section 9: Signature for SILC Chairperson

Name Steve Oldaker

Title GA SILC Chair

Signed? Yes

Date signed 06/28/2016

Section 9: Signature for DSU Director

Name Greg Schmieg

Title Executive Director

Signed? Yes

Date signed 06/28/2016

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

Is there a Separate State Agency for Individuals Who Are Blind? No

Name

Title

Signed? No

Date signed

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: Improve and expand consumer access to transportation

Goal Description:

Work with Department of Transportation, local municipalities and CIL's to generate status and advocacy report(s) and increase mobility options for people with disabilities.

Goal Name: Improve the consumer access to affordable, accessible and inclusive housing

Goal Description:

Work with Department of Housing, housing authorities and other housing agencies/organizations to encourage the development of appropriate housing options for persons with disabilities.

Goal Name: Develop opportunities for consumer employment

Goal Description:

Collaborate with GVRA, Department of Labor and other entities to develop meaningful policy to encourage employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

Goal Name: Elevate access for individuals with disabilities to healthcare services/supports

Goal Description:

Promote ongoing participation in initiatives such as Medicaid Buy-In, home and community services, and managed care services.

Goal Name: Increasing outreach efforts for education & public awareness to consumers/others

Goal Description:

Consumer, potential stakeholders and policy makers are more knowledgeable about the CILs and the progress made to increase diversity within the community and highlight the needs of specific populations.

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

Goal Description:

Goal Name:

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
Improve and expand consumer access to transportation	a. The appointment of an Ex-Officio member to the SILC by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GA DOT) b. The mutual exchange of information/education between the IL network and GA DOT twice annually in order to improve the lack of paratransit and public	10/01/2016	09/30/2018

	<p>transportation services for persons with disabilities living in urban, rural and remote areas.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC, and DSE.</p> <p>c. Fifty percent participation by CILs in their local, county, and regional GA DOT meetings for their service areas.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC, and DSE.</p>		
<p>Improve the consumer access to affordable, accessible and inclusive housing</p>	<p>a. The appointment of an Ex-Officio member to the SILC by the Georgia Department of Housing and/or Department of Community Affairs.</p> <p>b. The establishment of quarterly dialogue between the IL community and DCA and various housing authorities. Educate developers and realtors on the need for affordable, accessible and inclusive housing.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE</p> <p>c. Promote the Shut Out, Priced Out and Segregated (SOPOS) and Renovation/Reno Fit Tool.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: SILC and SOPOS. The SOPOS actually perform the grassroots activities and services. The SILC provides leadership, collaboration and communication.</p>	10/01/2016	09/30/2019
<p>Develop opportunities for consumer employment</p> <p>Elevate access for individuals with disabilities to healthcare services/supports</p>	<p>a. Promote ongoing participation of initiatives such as Employment First.</p> <p>b. Promote participation in Project Horizons, Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) and the ABLE Act.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE.</p> <p>c. Develop Task Force to help identify barriers to employment and create solutions to increase access to meaningful employment.</p>	10/01/2016	09/30/2019

	<p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE.</p> <p>d. Introduce new legislation: Enable Work (Phil Payne Sliding Fee Scale PSA Program) and Peach Work legislation that encourages employment.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE.</p>		
	<p>a. Continue to support and encourage legislation for equitable healthcare for all disabled Georgians such as Medicaid Buy-In and accessibility.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE</p> <p>b. Improve Home and Community-Based Services</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE. The CILs actually perform the activities and services. The SILC provides leadership, collaboration and communication.</p> <p>c. Promote Community First Care Options.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE. The CILS actually perform the grassroots activities and services. The SILC provides leadership, collaboration and communication. The DSE provides coordination and technical assistance.</p>	10/01/2016	09/30/2019
	<p>a. Develop and maintain a marketing/outreach strategy that will promote the value and visibility of the SILC and Georgia network of CILs.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: SILC, CILs and DSE</p> <p>b. Provide presentations and/or educational materials to .100 of state legislators and state agencies at least twice annually.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: SILC, CIL and DSE</p> <p>c. Youth with disabilities in transition toward community integration, employment or higher</p>	10/01/2016	09/30/2019

	<p>education have access to available IL resources, peer support and mentoring programs.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE</p> <p>d. Five CILs participate in youth outreach and mentoring programs.</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE</p> <p>e. Identify young adults as emerging leaders in the IL community. These young adults identified will receive stipends to attend the annual statewide IL conference and/or the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) conference(s).</p> <p>Responsible Parties: CILs, SILC and DSE</p>		
--	--	--	--

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

Feedback from several town hall meetings conducted by SILC GA along with comments from the public, individual CILs, and area/local partners reflected the need to reach out to the populations listed below regarding IL services. Defining the underserved has always been a confusing and difficult task. Not all Georgians have the benefit of these valuable organizations. Fourteen percent (.14) of Georgians with disabilities are unserved - meaning they live in a county with no Center for Independent Living. Establishing six outreach offices will be critical so that all of our state's citizens with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve independence. Expanding outreach and itinerant services are essential for Georgia's current Centers for Independent Living to reach people with disabilities who live lives of isolation in our state's poorest and most rural counties. For this planning cycle, we established a committee of the Centers and the SILC to thoroughly examine census data and annual report data. The committee concluded that all disability groups within the CIL service areas are underserved because no CIL comes close to serving even .01 of the population of people with disabilities within their service area. In other words, the universe of the sample is so small that to describe any one group as more underserved than another, did not make sense to the SPIL planning team. Therefore, the team operationally defined underserved as people with disabilities residing within a CIL service area.

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

The unserved are Georgians without access to CIL services in South Central and West Central counties. These two regions are the most rural in nature. The population centers in these regions include Albany, Americus, Cordele, Dublin, Griffin, LaGrange, Statesboro, Tifton, Valdosta and Waycross. When emails or calls are received from these unserved areas, the CILs and the SILC provide information and referral services. The following state agencies have a statewide presence: Division of Aging Services, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA)/Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, Department of Family and Children's Services, and the Department of Education. Therefore, the Centers and the SILC make referrals to the relevant agencies whenever a service request is received from an unserved area of the state. In addition, callers are informed about appeal processes, ombudsman offices and the state's Protection and Advocacy services.

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

The CILs will continue to establish and collaborate with local groups representing minorities, such as Native Americans, Hispanic, Asian, and others representing minority groups so that IL services are provided in an accessible manner to those they represent. CILs will actively develop culturally appropriate outreach and service-delivery strategies to meet the needs of these groups and are organizing efforts to reach out to the growing population of Latinos and other ethnic groups with disabilities.

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 - 2017 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		515498		
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C			2333382	
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)	194389			
Other Federal funds - other		688458		
Non-Federal funds - State funds	52611	347873		
Non-Federal funds - Other		82583		
Total	247000	1634412	2333382	0

Year 2 - 2018 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		515498		
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C			2333382	
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)	194389			
Other Federal funds - other		688458		
Non-Federal funds - State funds	52611	347873		
Non-Federal funds - Other		82583		
Total	247000	1634412	2333382	0

Year 3 - 2019 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		515498		
Title VII Funds Chapter 1, Part C			2333382	
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)	194389			
Other Federal funds - other		688458		
Non-Federal funds - State funds	52611	347873		
Non-Federal funds - Other		82583		
Total	247000	1634412	2333382	0

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.

The financial plan provides a combination of funds, including state matching funds, to CILs and the SILC to enable them to achieve the goals and objectives of the SPIL. The funds are not limited to specific goals or objectives, but instead are used to maximize overall IL services for individuals with disabilities.

While Chapter 2 (Older Blind) funds are not provided under this SPIL, the local CILs coordinate these services very well with other Title VII programs. The coordinators of those programs regularly attend IL Network meetings, readily share information and refer to one another and work to avoid duplication of services. The Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) Programs, CILs and VR have to collaborate to expand specialists who provide services such as Orientation and Mobility or Rehabilitation Teachers, especially in rural areas. However, those programs' funding streams are not combined.

For the objectives in section 1.2A, SILC leadership, collaboration and communication will be funded through I&E funds, provided to the SILC for the exercise of its statutory duties. CIL grassroots activities will be funded through a combination of IL Part B and matching state funds, IL Part C and Social Security Reimbursement (program income) funds.

For the CIL consumers to have access to the affordable, accessible housing objective, the SILC will utilize unrestricted funds for a part-time coordinator for the SOPOS Coalition. The SILC has established fiscal and fund accounting controls to ensure the proper separation between the federal and non-federal funds and to ensure the related activities will not impair or interfere with the SILC's ability to perform its statutory duties.

The DSE funds its coordination and technical assistance role in the SPIL objectives through the federally approved method for administrative cost pool funding of its state office staff.

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 sources and amounts of all federal, state and non-federal funds to provide IL services and support CIL operations are included in the Financial Plan Tables in section 1.3A.

While the CILs will collaborate with other programs such as VR and OIB to improve availability of services for individuals who are blind, especially in rural areas, those funds will not be combined or coordinated. No program will duplicate services to consumers. These programs coordinate well with each other to avoid duplication.

The SILC, CILs and DSE work together to maximize the effective use of all funds. The Part B and state funds are used to expand IL services. Please refer to Section 2.2 for specific details about these funds.

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 DSE provides an IL Liaison to provide technical support and assistance to the SILC and CILs. The VR Regional Contract Specialists process CIL invoices and provide technical assistance as needed. Additionally, the investment of Title I I&E funds for SILC operations help strengthen the capacity of the CILs to provide more and better services since the DSE now invests Part B funds totally with the CILs to provide IL services rather than funding SILC operations.

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

The SILC manages the SOPOS Coalition which is dedicated to expanding housing options for people with disabilities.

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 SPIL objectives are consistent with the Title VII of the Act in that they promote the IL philosophy of equal access, individual and systems advocacy, leadership development and integration/full inclusion and productivity of people with disabilities.

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.

The SPIL goals and objectives mirror the priority outcomes found in the annual report: Access to transportation, Housing, Employment, Health Care and Youth Transition. Therefore, the SPIL planning team opted to be consistent with these priorities since the Centers are required to track and report.

The CIL directors participated in the development of the SPIL goals and objectives through a variety of means. The SPIL planning team reviewed the operational plans contained in CIL 704 reports for consideration in SPIL development. CIL and DSE staff participated in public hearings. The SILC and the DSE met during SPIL development to review and refine goals and objectives.

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 Georgia IL program maximizes cooperation, coordination and working relationships through many activities that include but are not limited to:

1. Holding quarterly IL Network meetings that include all CILs and representatives from GVRA, the AT Program, the OIB Program, the VR programs for Deaf Services and Blind Services, the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and other partners;
2. Sharing information at regular meetings through joint members on the SILC and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC);
3. Working in coalitions such as the Unlock the Waiting List Campaign, Georgians for a Healthy Future and the SOPOS Coalition dedicated to accessible, affordable, integrated housing;
4. Partnering with the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia Advocacy Office, the Department of Community Affairs and others to create new opportunities in housing, employment, transportation and other needed support services;
5. Sharing information through the SILC website and/or through email announcements, alerts and updates; and

6. Networking, sharing information, and keeping up with trends through membership in national groups such as the Association of Programs in Rural IL (APRIL), National Council on IL (NICL), American Association of People with Disabilities, etc.

Examples of collaborative partnership activities include:

7. A representative from Tools for Life is an ex officio, non-voting member of the SILC board. The representative attends regular meetings to share information and receive input from the IL Network regarding assistive technology;

8. A new representative from the Department of Aging Services is an ex officio, non-voting member of the SILC Board. The former Director accomplished a solid working relationship with the local CILs particularly with the Money Follows the Person initiative;

9. The SILC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) serves on an advisory committee for Medicaid waiver services to people with physical disabilities and brain injury;

10. The CILs have working relationships with veterans' agencies and with local agencies serving people with developmental disabilities, mental illness and aging services in their communities. Walton Options in Augusta is the CIL in the state that receives a contract from their Area Agency on Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Center to carry out that region's Money Follows the Person (nursing home transition) program.

11. IL staff and volunteers monitor state and local transportation agencies to identify and resolve accessibility issues. Additionally, some IL staff and volunteers have successfully been included in the transportation planning efforts of agencies; and

12. The Georgia Department of Transportation will work with the SILC/DSE to meet the transportation objectives in the SPIL.

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.

Overall, the philosophy of the IL System is to know what services exist in the community and how to access them. The intent is to include people with disabilities rather than set up separate or duplicative services. Centers provide educational sessions about the independent living philosophy to hundreds of community groups each year. Some CILs are assisting youth to participate actively in their individual education plans. The CILs regularly refer individuals to vocational/technical colleges, literacy programs, developmental disability services, public health, mental health, housing authorities or non-profit housing agencies and veterans' services.

CILs assist consumers with Medicaid and Medicare issues. All of the CILs worked with the Division of Aging on the Senior Medicare Patrol. Centers assist people with Medicaid applications and access to health services including lack of accessibility of equipment and lack of information access to people who need alternate formats or sign language interpreters. Programs funded through the Social Services Block Grant program include the services delivered through the Department of Family and Children's Services, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Food Stamps, Head Start, Emergency Assistance, children at risk of neglect or abuse and other related services for low income families and individuals.

The GVRA Executive Director and the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services Board has reached out to the IL Community in an unprecedented way. The agency's mission statement includes independence. Additionally, there is interest in growing the network of centers to expand to the unserved areas of the state. The state's budget concerns continue to prevent CIL growth. However, the role and value of Centers for Independent Living is acknowledged.

At the same time the state's population has grown considerably, budgets have been slashed resulting in decreased capacity to serve people. Given the limited amount of disability-related services in the state, there is very little risk of duplication of effort. Long waiting lists for services are quite common in the state. CIL staff know about the few resources and services available and how to access them. Additionally, each quarterly IL Network meeting includes featured speakers/trainings so that there is a constant flow of communication about who does what, with whom, how and where.

Moreover, the IL Network is constantly looking for ways to collaborate and leverage its resources. Examples of this perspective including working relationships with the ADRCs, local school systems, park and recreation departments, transit systems, civic groups, veterans' groups and so forth.

The manager of the OIB Program communicates with the IL Network on a regular basis. As a result, OIB services are delivered (sometimes through a contract with a CIL) to the appropriate consumers. The working relationship between the CILs and the OIB Program is excellent.

It is also important that when a consumer comes through a CIL for services, CILs not duplicate services that consumers receive through other entities. Be it one of the five core services or another service that the CIL provides through alternative funding, an intake process is conducted with the consumer. During the intake interview, the consumer is asked what other services, if any, they are receiving and from whom. If the consumer is receiving services from another service organization, the consumer and CIL staff person will work together to coordinate services that the CIL can provide and is not duplicated.

The GA Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities oversees DD and MH Services. The CILs do not provide the same types of services as DBHDD. The CILs refer people to the DBHDD system and may advocate with a consumer if there are quality concerns. CILs also sometimes provide meeting space to self advocates such as People First or the MH Consumer Network, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, etc. However, self advocacy is not a DBHDD funded service. Therefore, duplication of services does not occur.

Additionally, Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) will collaborate with the CILs in a "fee for Service" agreement. The CILs will become providers to GVRA and the Project Horizons program providing outreach, referral and life skills training to VR and potential VR clients. The CILs will also partner in the Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) program targeting youth ages 14-24.

Each CIL will have an independent contract and will receive compensation based on deliverables.

The SILC and Georgia Council on Developmental Disability (GCDD) plan to continue its partnership and discussions are taking place regarding various advocacy projects.

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 DSE administers the OIB grant program which is called Project Independence: Georgia's Vision Program for Seniors. Project Independence contracts with six service agencies, which further subcontract with various vision specialists throughout Georgia, to provide vision-related independent living services for older blind individuals across the state. One of the six contractors is Walton Options, located in Augusta, Georgia.

The GVRA/VR Director of Blind Services oversees the OIB grant. A part-time manager is responsible for activities that focus on outreach, information and referral, low-vision screenings, and training statewide, particularly in rural and unserved areas.

The three main initiatives for Project Independence to reach underserved and/or unserved populations in Georgia are 1) increasing outreach efforts through involvement with different resource entities, 2) increasing support of our peer support groups throughout different areas around the state by including peer leaders in our face to face contractors' meeting and continuing to provide them with program and resource information, e.g. webinars so they have a wide variety of topics to offer to their groups, and 3) continuing to increase awareness to seniors with dual-sensory loss by scheduling a Georgia Confident Living Program appointment for our deaf-blind seniors.

Project Independence will continue collaborating with the IL Network to sponsor participants and set up of peer support leader training. Project Independence is expanding the peer support groups and wants all peer leaders/facilitators to receive formal training so there is a standardization of competence and training for the group leaders.

The Project Independence Manager generously provides on-going training and technical assistance to all of the CILs. Past examples include the opportunity to learn about new technologies by demonstrating them at IL Network meetings as well as regular dissemination of

information about leading-edge technology. The OIB will continue these efforts thereby supporting the goal to expand access to assistive technology services and devices.

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).

Table 2.1A: Independent living services	Provided by the DSU (directly)	Provided by the DSU (through contract and/or grant)	Provided by the CILs (Not through DSU contracts/grants)
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	No
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)	No	Yes	Yes
Rehabilitation technology	No	Yes	Yes
Mobility training	No	Yes	Yes
Services and training for individuals with cognitive and sensory disabilities, including life skills training, and interpreter and reader services	No	Yes	Yes

Personal assistance services, including attendant care and the training of personnel providing such services	No	No	No
Surveys, directories and other activities to identify appropriate housing, recreation, accessible transportation and other support services	No	No	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	No	No	Yes
Education and training necessary for living in the community and participating in community activities	No	No	Yes
Supported living	No	No	No
Transportation, including referral and assistance for such transportation	No	No	Yes
Physical rehabilitation	No	No	Yes
Therapeutic treatment	No	No	No
Provision of needed prostheses and other appliances and devices	No	No	No
Individual and group social and recreational services	No	No	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	No	No	Yes
Services for children with significant disabilities	No	No	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	No	Yes	Yes

Appropriate preventive services to decrease the need of individuals with significant disabilities for similar services in the future	No	No	Yes
Community awareness programs to enhance the understanding and integration into society of individuals with disabilities	No	No	Yes
Other necessary services not inconsistent with the Act	No	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.

All populations are underserved. However, as described in the section on underserved, the CILs will work together to improve services for those with hearing impairments.

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.

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.

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.

As shown in Financial Tables in 1.3A, the DSE provides funds for IL services, not general CIL operations. The DSE provides the IL services identified in section 2.1A through contractual arrangements with eight Georgia CILS funded by Title VII, Chapter 1, Part B, matching state funds and other federal funds that are program income from Social Security reimbursements.

The contract deliverables of IL Services include but are not limited to: (a) information and referral, (b) IL skills training, (c) peer counseling and support (d) individual and systems advocacy, (e) nursing home and youth transition, (f) custom home accessibility modifications,

(g) specialized adaptive equipment purchases or repair, (h) Braille instruction and/or Orientation and (I) Mobility services.

Also contract funds may provide IL Community Services including but not limited to: (a) Community and Systems advocacy, (b) Outreach efforts, (c) Publications (d) Community Education/Integration Services, (e) Maintaining Registries/Libraries/Databases, and (f) Collaboration/Networking activities.

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.

N/A

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.

Georgia has nine Title VII-Part C funded CILs. Eight CILs also receive Part B funds that include matching state funds via contracts with the DSE to provide IL services. Each CIL engages in resource development activities to enhance the services available.

Please note that the first county listed for each center is the location of the CIL office.

1. Access2Independence (A2I) is located in Columbus and serves 9 counties: Muscogee, Harris, Talbot, Taylor, Chattahoochee, Marion, Webster, Stewart and Quitman.

2. Bainbridge Advocacy Individual Network (BAIN) is located in Bainbridge and serves 11 counties in southwest Georgia: Decatur, Calhoun, Clay, Baker, Early, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, Thomas, Randolph and Seminole. The service area is home to 167,980 people in 4,385 square miles. In addition to the core services, BAIN has secured resources to provide nursing home transition services, home modification, and assistive devices. BAIN also has a grant with the Cancer Coalition of South Georgia to provide assistance with transportation, medications to manage cancer related symptoms, rent/utilities/grocery cost assistance, child care for patients to receive care, medical equipment/supplies, home accessibility or mobility support and treatment location lodging.

3. disABILITY LINK (d-LINK) is located in metro Atlanta and serves 12 counties: Fulton, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Gwinnett, Henry, Newtown, and Rockdale. The service area is home to 4.3 million people (nearly .45 of the Georgia population) in 3,687 square miles. In addition to the core services, disABILITY LINK has secured resources to provide nursing facility transition, service coordination for the Medicaid Waiver program serving people with physical disability or brain injury, Voucher Transportation Services Assistance, employment services, and Empowering Our Youth program for young adults.

4. Disability Resource Center (DRC) is located in Demorest, Georgia and serves 13 counties in northeast Georgia: Hall, Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White. The service area is home to 617,646 people in 3,392 square miles. In addition to the core services, DRC has secured resources to provide an Equipment Loan Closet, home modifications, recreational activities and nursing facility transition.

5. Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE), Inc. is located in beautiful historic Savannah and serves the following counties in Southeast Georgia: Chatham, Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Evans, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, Tattnall and Toombs. The service area is home to 689,496

people in 5,196 square miles. In addition to the core services, LILFE has secured resources to provide nursing facility transition, home modifications, assistive technology, and a Braille transcription service. LIFE also partners with the University of Georgia Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens to provide an accessible gardening area complete with eight raised garden beds.

6. Middle Georgia CIL, also known as Disability Connections (DC), is located in Macon and serves 12 counties in middle Georgia: Bibb, Baldwin, Crawford, Houston, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Peach, Pulaski (note - Pulaski is served with Part B and other funds that the CIL raised through community fundraising efforts), Putnam, Twiggs and Wilkinson. The service area is home to 502,299 people in 3,915 square miles. In addition to the core services, DC has secured resources to provide Home Modifications and Assistive Technology services under the direction of two Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA) certified Assistive Technology Practitioners. DC is one of two Assistive Technology Resource Centers housed at a CIL. In addition, DC coordinates Section 8 referrals in Bibb County to the Macon Bibb County Housing Authority for individuals with disabilities with preference given to individuals who are transitioning out of nursing or institutional facilities.

7. Multiple Choices (MC) is located in Athens, Georgia and serves 10 counties in middle and northeastern Georgia: Clarke, Barrow, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Madison, Morgan (served through funding from Part B and community fundraisers), Oconee, Oglethorpe and Walton. The service area is home to 460,189 people in 2,936 square miles. In addition to the core services, MC has secured resources to provide a microenterprise program for people with disabilities to start their own businesses. The Center also offers Braille classes, transcription services and computer basics.

8. Northwest Georgia CIL (NWGACIL) is located in Rome and serves 15 counties in northwest Georgia: Floyd, Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Walker, Dade, Fannin, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk (note that Polk is served through Part B funds and other community fundraising activities) and Whitfield. The service area is home to 863,217 people in 5,0006 square miles. In addition to the core services, the NW GA CIL has secured resources to provide nursing facility transition, home modifications and assistive technology.

9. Walton Options for Independent Living (WOIL) is located in Augusta and serves 16 counties in east Georgia: Richmond, Burke, Columbia, Emanuel, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Johnson, Lincoln, McDuffie, Screven, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes. The service area is home to 502,072 people in 6,654 square miles. In addition to the core services, WOIL has secured resources that enhance the four core services to include specific training and access to technology, home modifications, blind rehabilitation services, vocational services and nursing facility transition.

In the aggregate, the CILs served an average of 2,426 people per year over the last 3 years. Of this population, .58 were people with physical disabilities, .12 were people with vision impairment; .10 with mental or emotional disabilities; .10 with multiple disabilities, .08 with cognitive disabilities; .01 with hearing disabilities and .01 other or unspecified disabilities. In terms of age, the vast majority served were adults with .53 between the ages of 25 - 59 and .40

age 60 and older. Three percent (.03) of those served were between the ages of 5 - 19 and .03 were between the ages of 20 - 24. Race/ethnicity of CIL Consumers served in FY 15 included .35 White, .61 Black, .01 Hispanic/Latino, .01 Asian and .02 Unknown.

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).

While the ultimate goal is to expand the IL Network to all unserved areas of the state, it is equally important to recognize that the population growth in Georgia combined with small but steady funding reductions have had an adverse impact on the possibility of expanding the Network. In light of this situation, the goal for the next three-year plan is to maintain the existing Network and to increase funding up to the recommended \$200,000 minimum for each of the existing CILs serving multi-county areas. Until federal and state economies are healthier, the likelihood of expanding into unserved areas is remote.

The unserved are Georgians without access to CIL services in the South Central and the West Central counties. These two regions are the most rural in nature. The population centers for these areas include Albany, Americus, Cordele, Dublin, Griffin, LaGrange, Tifton, Valdosta, and Waycross. A minimum of \$250,000 in Part C funding is required in order to start a new CIL.

Not All Georgians have the benefit of these valuable organizations. Fourteen (.14) of Georgians with disabilities are unserved - meaning they live in a county with no Center for Independent Living. The General Assembly's investment of \$750,000 would establish six (6) outreach offices so that all of our state's citizens with disabilities have the opportunity to achieve independence. Expanding outreach and itinerant services are essential for Georgia's current Centers for Independent Living to reach people with disabilities who live lives of isolation in our state's poorest and most rural counties.

1. Access2Independence in Columbus - \$75,000 to expand independent living services in the following five (5) counties: Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Schley and Sumter. These counties are home to about 90,000 Georgians.

2. BAIN in Bainbridge - \$175,000 to expand independent living services in the following 14 counties in South Georgia: Atkinson, Berrien, Brooks, Clinch, Colquitt, Cook, Dougherty, Echols, Lanier, Lee, Lowndes, Terrell, Tift and Worth. These counties are home to over 400,000 Georgians.

3. Disability Connections in Macon - \$150,000 to expand independent living services to 13 counties in South Central Georgia: Ben Hill, Bleckley, Coffee, Dodge, Irwin, Jeff Davis, Laurens, Montgomery, Telfair, Treulten, Turner, Wheeler and Wilcox. Over 250,000 Georgians live in these counties.

4. disABILITY LINK in Atlanta - \$125,000 to expand independent living services to six (6) counties to the south of Metro Atlanta: Butts, Lamar, Meriwether, Pike, Spalding, and Upson. Nearly 200,000 Georgians live in these counties.

5. LIFE in Savannah - \$100,000 to expand independent living services in the following nine (9) counties in Southeast Georgia: Appling, Bacon, Brantley, Candler, Charlton, Long, Pierce, Ware and Wayne. A little over 170,000 Georgians live in these counties.

6. NW GA CIL in Rome - \$125,000 to expand independent living services to three (3) counties to the Southwest of metro Atlanta: Carroll, Heard and Troup. Nearly 200,000 Georgians live in these three counties.

Independent Living Programs are administered by the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) which is administratively attached to the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS).

Should Part C dollars above COLA are less than the minimum base funding level of \$200,000 to establish a new CIL, the following funding priorities will be observed:

(A) Proportionately distribute to the eight CILs serving multiple counties until they have reached the \$200,000 minimum Part C recommended base funding level.

(B) In the FY 2015 congressional appropriation, (October 1, 2015 - September 30, 2016) the Access2Independence (A2I) American Recovery and Reinvestment Funds Act of 2009 (ARRA) funds will expire and A2I will start sharing in the regular Part C continuations of the other existing CILs, resulting in a proportional reduction for all nine CILs. Therefore the priority for additional Part C dollars for that year is to proportionally distribute additional available Part C funds to bring all the CILs to the \$200,000 minimum Part C recommended base funding level.

(C) After restoring the funds according to (A) and (B), above, proportionately distribute additional Part C dollars to all nine CILs in an effort to redirect Part B funds to unserved counties.

2. If a minimum of \$200,000 in Part C funding is available after COLA and completing Priority 1, a new CIL will be established in an unserved area with the Valdosta area being priority. After Valdosta, the following are priority areas: Dublin, Waycross, Americus and LaGrange in that order.

Please note that if a Part C grant is relinquished or terminated, these funds will be re-competed to establish a new CIL in the relinquished/closed grant's service area. Because there are current consumers being served and community activities underway, it is most important that a CIL stay in place in the community even if a new corporate structure must be developed. Therefore, re-competing the funds in that community takes precedence over expanding to an unserved part of the state.

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.

The DSE IL Liaison participates in IL meetings and activities, provides technical assistance, creates and renews contracts, processes invoices for payment, reviews and recommends requests for budget revisions and facilitates the approval of such requests by the DSE. Financial and technical assistance in budget development is available through the GVRA budget office.

The DSE IL Liaison contact/SILC contract manager and the GVRA budget officer perform contract services and provide administrative support services to the SILC. The DSE manages contract reviews. The Vocational Rehabilitation Program Contracts Specialists along with the DSE IL Liaison or the DSE SILC representative and a CIL director (peer reviewer) will answer the following questions: Did the contractor meet the deliverables? Were contract dollars expended for the purpose of meeting these contract deliverables? This team will use the monitoring tool designed based on the federal monitoring tool for consistency of reviews and quarterly assurance.

The DSE IL Liaison is responsible for monitoring SILC program and budget activities including reviewing monthly programmatic and expenditure reports, and participating in the quarterly evaluation of SILC/SPIL activities.

The DSE Chief of External Affairs supervises the IL Liaison who provides technical assistance to the SILC and CILs and participates in the SPIL development and submission.

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.

SILC staff currently consists of a Chief Executive Officer, an Operations Officer at .5 FTE, Public Affairs Coordinator at .5 FTE, and an Office Assistant at .5 FTE.

The resource plan for the SILC consists of \$247,000 in Title I I&E funds. With this allocation, the SILC will fund personnel needed to support relevant activities of the SPIL throughout the three-year period. Additionally, the allocation will fund general SILC administrative functions that are specifically the responsibilities of the SILC and its committees: Jointly develop the SPIL; monitor, review and evaluate the SPIL; coordinate activities with the SRC; ensure open and accessible public meetings; and submit annual reports. These funds also support the costs of the independent office space.

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's responsibility for the proper expenditure of funds and use of resources that it receives under the resource plan. In the early years of operation, the SILC Board developed and approved financial management policies that are consistent with state and federal requirements. Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, the SILC Chief Executive Officer (CEO) develops a budget that the SILC Board reviews and approves. This budget is submitted along with proposed contract deliverables to the DSE; these deliverables are based on SILC responsibilities in the current SPIL and functions in 34 CFR 364.21(g). After the contract is executed, the SILC submits a monthly programmatic report and a monthly expense report to the DSE IL Liaison who reviews (a) the monthly narrative, which reports progress on SPIL goals and (b) the SILC invoice. Upon approval of the invoice, the SILC is reimbursed for the prior month expenditures toward contract deliverables. Programmatic reports are also sent to the Board on a monthly basis and an annual financial report(s) are provided at Board meetings.

In addition to these practices, the SILC contracts with a CPA firm to conduct its annual review of financial reports in accordance with state and federal requirements. Financial reports are forwarded to GVRA, the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts and to the SILC Board.

The SILC contract with the DSE requires that funds are managed in accordance with state and federal regulations. The contract also requires an annual financial review be conducted by a CPA firm which forwards this review to the DSE and the Office of Audits. In addition, the SILC has written financial policies and procedures that specify separation of duties and internal controls designed to assure appropriate use of funds.

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

The GVRA recognizes the SILC as an independent entity in all aspects of interaction. The contract between the SILC and the DSE focuses on SPIL activities rather than on day-to-day SILC operations which are clearly the responsibility of the SILC CEO and SILC Board Officers.

- Reliance, to the maximum extent possible, on the use of resources in existence during the period of implementation of the State plan.

Based on years of experience, the annual resource plan is a realistic but conservative budget. The SILC and the DSC have worked together to create goals and objectives that build on past successes as well as achievable and mutually beneficial goals and objectives.

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 of Georgia, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit agency, incorporated in 1995 and housed in an independent corporate office separated from the DSE. It was established by state administrative procedure under the state corporate law to incorporate 501(c)(3) private non-profit entities. The SILC of Georgia, Inc. Board members are the same SILC members appointed by the Governor as required by 34 CFR 364.21 and described in Section 5.3 of this SPIL.

The SILC functions in accordance with its own bylaws independently of any state agency, including the DSE. The SILC works in partnership with the DSE. The current operational functions of the SILC are carried out by paid SILC CEO and staff. The SILC Board members hire and supervise the CEO who in turn hires and supervises staff.

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.

The Governor makes the appointment to the SILC through Executive Orders. It is the responsibility of the SILC membership committee and the SILC CEO to secure qualified volunteers as nominees and submit them to the GVRA Executive Director to present to the Governor for consideration and appointment.

The SILC CEO collaborates with the DSE IL Liaison to develop a list of nominees from a variety of sources, including but not limited to current SILC members, CIL employees, DSE recommendations, disability specific advocacy groups, visitors to the SILC website, etc. This process results in nominees who represent a broad range of individuals with disabilities and organizations interested in individuals with disabilities.

To assure diverse membership, the SILC and DSE maintain a grid format developed by the Independent Living Research Utilization program to track type of disability, geographic area, race, gender, term limits, etc. of current SILC members. SILC bylaws require terms of office in accordance with federal rules and regulations, i.e. no member may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms.

To elect the President and the Executive Committee, the SILC membership committee produces a slate of SILC nominees for each officer position: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. The entire Council votes on that slate to determine officers.

To enhance coordination and collaboration, the SILC of Georgia, Inc. encourages attendance by representatives of state agencies who are non-voting ex-officio members of the SILC.

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.

Because the Georgia SILC is an independent non-profit organization, the SILC Executive Committee hires and supervises the CEO, a full-time position. The CEO then hires and supervises other SILC staff. The Board has personnel and financial policies that all SILC staff is required to observe. The SILC conducts an annual survey of stakeholders as part of the evaluation of the CEO's job performance.

All SILC staff have job descriptions. Annually, the Executive Committee of the SILC Board conducts a performance review of the CEO by sending the evaluation form by U.S. mail to all SILC Board members, CIL directors as well as others with whom the CEO has worked on projects, committees and task forces. An anonymous return envelop is included to facilitate responses. The Executive Committee then compiles numerical scores and comments, which are anonymous, e.g. not attributed to a particular person. The CEO and the Executive Committee discuss the comments, set performance goals and place the annual evaluation in the personnel file. The CEO performs the same process for SILC staff under supervision.

The DSE's role is to generate the annual contract to fund SILC operations and to review and approve the monthly invoices and programmatic reports. The DSC assigns these functions to the IL Liaison staff member who carries them out in conjunction with the DSE Contract Specialists and other DSE budget and finance staff. The DSE does not have any supervisory role, functions or activities regarding the SILC staff.

- 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.

All DSE managers and staff associated with the SILC and the IL Program will become familiar with and perform functions in compliance with federal and state laws, the Code of Ethics for Government Service, Rules of the State Personnel Board and GVRA policies and procedures. Additionally, the DSE management monitors staff activities to ensure no assignment of potential conflicts of interest while assisting the SILC in carrying out its duties.

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.

Each CIL in the Network develops position descriptions for staff providing IL services. These documents specify the skills and expectations required and are used in the hiring process as well as in performance reviews. Since the CILs recruit people with life experience in disability, specialists are on staff. (34 CFR 364.23)Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance if needed, from either or both.

- 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.

As per Standards and Assurances, all CILs promulgate and implement policies of equal access to information for those who require alternative formats and for consumers with limited English proficiency to the maximum extent possible and upon request. See 34 CFR 364.23.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed from either or both.

- 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.

Each CIL is responsible for staff development and training for all positions. Training needs are documented as part of the annual performance review. CILs provide staff training both in-house and through resources made available through IL Network meetings, IL Net, NCIL, APRIL, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and other relevant local, state and national organizations. See 34 CFR 364.24.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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 have affirmative action policies and actively recruit qualified people with disabilities. See 364.31

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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.

Each CIL in the Network is required to maintain compliance with EDGAR record-keeping requirements and with CFS 364.35. The DSE contracts require annual financial reports in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Those contracts receiving in excess of \$500,000 from all federal fund sources are required to follow the OMB Circular A-133 requirements. Copies of these documents are forwarded to the DSE and to the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts.

Method: Site reviews by the DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

6.3 Recordkeeping, Access and Reporting

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

As required in their Part C grant agreements, all CILs in the IL Network are fully aware of the necessity to employ or contract with professional accounting services in order to assure that they fully comply with these requirements. All CILs with multiple funding sources have submitted cost allocation plans to ACL.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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

As required in their Part C grant agreements, all CILs submit their annual 704 reports to ACL, the SILC, and the DSE. Additionally, all CILs prepare annual financial reports. The type of report prepared depends on the size of the CIL budget. Those with \$500,000 or more in all

federal fund sources are required to conduct the annual audit in accordance with the requirements set forth in OMB Circular 133. Those who do not meet that funding level, must at a minimum, submit a financial compilation report, and some are required by other fund sources to conduct an annual audit. Copies of the annual audits or financial compilation reports are sent to the DSE and to the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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.

Each CIL in the network is required to make all records available to the Commissioner or the Comptroller General or any of their duly authorized representatives upon such request.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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.

All CILs in the Network are recipients of Title VII Part C grants and as such, they take steps to meet these requirements by determining and documenting eligibility in the Consumer Service Record (CSR). Each CIL clearly articulates that they are in the business of providing services to persons with significant disabilities as evidenced by mission statements, brochures, web sites and promotional materials. All IL services in Georgia are delivered through the Network of Centers; there is no state-run IL service system nor does the state contract with other types of service providers with Title VII funds.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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.

Each CIL in the network responds to requests for information from anyone contacting them. Referrals made to other services or programs are readily made. All CILs provide information and referral as evidenced by their annual 704 reports.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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 in the Network are recipients of Title VII Part C grants and meet requirements by determining and documenting eligibility in the CSR. As part of the intake phase, all consumers are informed about the Client Assistance Program (CAP).

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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.

Each CIL in the Network promulgates and implements a policy of nondiscrimination based on age, color, national origin, race, religion, or type of significant disability of the individual applying for IL services.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

- 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.

None of the Georgia CILs stipulate a requirement of residency in order for an individual to receive IL services. For example, as evidenced in 704 reports, hurricane-evacuees with disabilities served by CILs in Georgia in the past.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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.

All CILs in the Network collaborate with consumers to develop their individual IL Plans. Each plan is signed by the consumer and the collaborating CIL staff. IL Plans are periodically jointly reviewed and amended when necessary. In a few instances, consumers are not interested in a written IL Plan, so they may request that the IL Plan process be waived. The consumer and the appropriate staff person jointly sign the waiver.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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.

Each CIL in the Network is required to inform consumers of their rights under CAP. As part of the IL Planning (or waiver) process, consumers verify that CAP information has been provided in the format requested.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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.

Each CIL in the Network promulgates policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of personal information to consumers. Consumers are informed of these practices as part of intake and IL Plan development.

Method: Site reviews by DSE, peer reviews by CILs and technical assistance, if needed, from either or both.

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
<p>Improve the consumer access to affordable, accessible and inclusive housing</p>	<p>An evaluation committee consisting of the SILC's President, Chief Executive Officer, DSE IL Liaison and the DSE's Director of Strategic Planning will meet quarterly prior to SILC Board meetings. Each objective that fits into the appropriate time frame will be reviewed. Each of the questions below will be asked and the results recorded and reported to all relevant entities.</p> <p>a. Has a representative from DOT or other transportation agency been selected to the SILC board? Y N</p> <p>b. (1) Were policy makers in local transportation planning offices/agencies identified? Y N Please describe</p> <p>b. (2) Were transportation barriers shared with local transportation planning offices/agencies? Y N Please describe</p> <p>c. (1) Was advocacy/education conducted to increase the need for public transit, taxi services or voucher programs or all three in order to expand transportation options in CIL areas? Y N</p> <p>c. (2) Describe what activities were performed to look for opportunities to secure CIL area resources for transportation.</p>
	<p>a. Has a representative from the Housing Authority or other housing agency been selected to the SILC board? Y N</p> <p>b. (1) Was advocacy conducted to increase awareness on housing options? Y N Please describe</p> <p>b. (2) What activities has been conducted regarding Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) and affordable housing options? Please describe</p> <p>c. (1) Has SOPOS been able to gain access to city planners for community development? Y N Please describe</p>

	<p>c. (2) Was the SOPOS Coalition tool kit disseminated to interested providers/developers and pertinent agencies? Y N</p> <p>Please describe</p>
<p>Develop opportunities for consumer employment</p>	<p>a. Has advocacy/education has been conducted by key stakeholders about Employment First? Y N Please describe</p> <p>b. Were outreach plans developed and implemented for Project Horizons, Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) and the ABLE Act? Y N Please describe</p> <p>c. (1) Has an employment task force been created to address the needs of the consumer? Y N Please describe</p> <p>c. (2) Have barriers to gainful employment been identified?</p> <p>Y N Please describe</p> <p>d. Was the Enable Work Program for workers with disabilities adopted? Y N Describe activities intended to meet this objective. If there is evidence of progress, please describe.</p>
<p>Elevate access for individuals with disabilities to healthcare services/supports</p>	<p>a. (1) Were barriers to access (insurance coverage and structural) to care identified? Y N Please describe</p> <p>a. (2) Was technical assistance provided to health care providers when barriers were identified? Y N Please describe</p> <p>a. (3) Were consumers assisted with ongoing advocacy when technical assistance proved unsuccessful? Y N</p> <p>b. Has Home and Community-Based Services been increased? Y N Please describe</p> <p>c. What activities have been conducted to promote Community First Care Options? Please describe</p>
<p>Increasing outreach efforts for education & public awareness to consumers/others</p>	<p>a. (1) Were outreach plans developed and implemented to educate the public and increase SILC and CIL visibility?</p> <p>Y N Please describe</p> <p>a. (2) What outreach activities have been conducted to increase public awareness/SILC and CIL visibility? Please describe</p>

	<p>b. Has the number of newsletter and social media contacts increased to policy makers, relevant professionals and stakeholders? Y N Please describe</p> <p>c. What outreach activities have been conducted to increase youth with disabilities awareness about IL resources? Please describe</p> <p>d. Which CILs are participating in youth mentoring activities?</p> <p>e. Have potential youth leaders been identified for mentoring and community resource education and public awareness?</p> <p>Y N</p>
	<p>Each of the CILS conduct consumer satisfaction surveys and then report the aggregate results in their 704 reports which are provided to the SILC. The compilation of this data is not gathered by the SILC to act as a monitoring agent of CIL performance, but rather to assist in areas where CILs may need additional training or informational support. For example, if satisfaction surveys reflect services delivered are helpful but the wait time was extensive, the SILC may utilize this information to connect CILs at regular Council meetings with other agencies or providers who may be able to collaborate with the CILs to increase services. Reported data is utilized to assist the SILC and CILs in not only evaluating the courtesy and quality of services but also the impact and needs. Data provided by the CILs help define new activities that support goals and objectives in the SPIL or if necessary modifying the goals and objectives. For example, some CIL satisfaction surveys ask whether the CIL services assisted the individual in remaining in the current living environment, or postponed a move to a more restrictive environment. These responses assist in supporting the ongoing need for home accessibility that may occur through assistive technology or home modifications. Other surveys that are collected from CILS are waiting lists for services. These surveys help identify the continued needs in the state and provide feedback as to whether current SPIL goals are relevant, reflect need for additional activity, or may be utilized to support requests at the state level for funding. Therefore, satisfaction surveys from individuals CILs can help define the SPIL objectives for the current timeframe and into the future as they are reviewed minimally annually by the SILC Director, DSE Liaison and CIL rep for input into the plan.</p>

Part II: Narrative: Section 8 - State-Imposed Requirements

8 State-Imposed Requirements

Identify any State-imposed requirements contained in the provisions of this SPIL.

The Governor's Office requires that any appointee to the SILC be a resident of the State of Georgia.