



COLORADO
Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

1570 Grant Street
Denver, CO 80203

Independent Living Core Services for IHSS Agencies

October 2020

Overview

IHSS Agencies are responsible to provide Independent Living Core Services per [10 C.C.R. 2505-10 Section 8.552.6.A.1](#) and C.R.S 25.5-6-1202(5). An IHSS Agency must provide a list of the full scope of Independent Living Core Services provided by the agency to each client on an annual basis. The IHSS Agency must keep a record of each client's choice to utilize or refuse these services, and document any services provided.

What are Independent Living Core Services?

Independent Living Core Services means services that advance and support the independence of individuals with disabilities and to assist those individuals to live outside of institutions. Independent Living Core Services include but are not limited to independent living skills training, peer and cross-disability peer counseling, information and referral services, individual and systems advocacy, and transition services.

How IHSS Agencies Can Meet the Requirement to Provide Independent Living Services

Independent Living Skills Training

Independent Living Skills Training includes almost anything an individual may need to maintain or increase their level of personal independence. Together with the client, the agency sets goals and develops action steps for the individual to achieve their goals. This process provides the opportunity for individuals to learn the skills and develop the necessary resources to maximize personal independence.



Examples of Independent Living Skills Training

- Locate community resources
- Budgeting
- Utilizing public transportation services
- Cooking skills
- Self-advocacy
- Household management
- Nutrition
- Organizational skills
- Communication skills
- Stress management
- Adaptive recreation
- Finding an attendant and scheduling

Peer and Cross-Disability Peer Counseling

Peer and cross-disability peer counseling is the ability for clients with differing levels of ability to connect with one another to find support. Peer Counseling emphasizes the direct involvement of persons with disabilities as role models because, by virtue of their disability-related experience, people with disabilities are uniquely qualified to assist their own peers. The agency should assist their clients to make these connections so that they may share their stories of success and find solutions for their challenges.

Examples of Peer and Cross-Disability Peer Counseling

- Facilitating a Peer Support Group
- Connecting clients who wish to help support their peers and those needing the support of peers through email, telephone and video chat
- Facilitating social events where clients and others in the community can come together to connect, network or find support

Information and Referral Services

Access to information and referral services is essential for people with disabilities. In addition to varied types of direct services, individuals need information on options, resources, and the issues that influence their abilities to achieve independent lifestyles.

Examples of Information and Referral Services

- Connecting a client to their case manager when questions regarding eligibility or Medicaid reassessment come up
- Connecting a client to a Center for Independent Living that service their area
- Providing information on the local senior center
- Connecting a client to community resources



Individual and Systems Advocacy

Advocacy involves a process that empowers clients to act on their own behalf and focuses on client control and self-reliance. The agency encourages client self-advocacy through a problem-solving process to help the client identify alternative strategies and when and how to use them to overcome inhibiting or destructive situations.

Examples of Advocacy

- Promoting Disability Awareness
- Informing a client of their rights to appeal decisions made by agencies and providers
- Educating clients on their rights
- Assisting a client to problem solve an issue related to their disability
- Connecting a client to the local Center for Independent Living to address an issue

Transition Services

Transition services are important to ensuring clients maintain a level of independence within the community. Transitions occur in a variety of ways. Assistance with transitions can include supporting youth with disabilities to reach identified goals for successfully transitioning from school to adult life in the community; providing assistance to individuals who are at risk of entering into institutions so the individual may remain in the community; and identifying and addressing unmet needs when a client has recently returned to the community from a nursing facility.

Examples of Transitions Services

- Identifying a client's change in functional ability and assessing need for change in the service plan to help avoid hospitalization or facility placement
- Assisting a client in finding adaptive equipment to sustain independence in the home
- Supporting a client in calling their case manager to address or request additional resources and services

Additional Resources

Centers for Independent Living in Colorado

The Centers for Independent Living in Colorado help to maximize the leadership, empowerment, independence, and productivity of individuals with disabilities, and to promote and maximize the integration and full inclusion of individuals with disabilities. Below is a list of the nine Centers for Independent Living the state contracts with and the counties they serve:

- [Center for People with Disabilities - Boulder](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Gilpin, and Jefferson
- [The Independence Center - Colorado Springs](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Cheyenne, El Paso, Kit Carson, Lincoln, Park and Teller



- [Atlantis Community, Inc. - Denver](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Adams, Arapahoe, Clear Creek, Denver, Douglas, Elbert, and Jefferson
- [Southwest Center for Independence - Durango](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Archuleta, Dolores, La Plata, Montezuma, and San Juan
- [Disabled Resource Services - Fort Collins](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Jackson and Larimer
- [Center for Independence - Grand Junction](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Chaffee, Delta, Eagle, Garfield, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Lake, Mesa, Montrose, Ouray, Pitkin, and San Miguel
- [Connections for Independent Living - Greeley](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Logan, Morgan, Phillips, Sedgwick, Washington, Weld, and Yuma
- [Center for Disabilities - Pueblo](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Alamosa, Baca, Bent, Conejos, Costilla, Crowley, Custer, Fremont, Huerfano, Kiowa, Las Animas, Otero, Prowers, Pueblo, Rio Grande, and Saguache
- [North West Colorado Center for Independence - Steamboat Springs](#)
 - ✓ Counties served: Grand, Moffat, Rio Blanco, Routt, and Summit

To learn more about Centers for Independent Living visit the [Colorado Department of Labor and Employment - Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Independent Living](#)

For more information contact

Kristine Dos Santos

Kristine.DosSantos@state.co.us

