

## Independent Living Plans: An Introduction

Independent Living Services help individuals with significant disabilities to identify and set goals for living independently, and work toward them. Goals may involve:

- ◆ Learning new Skills
- ◆ Better access to needed benefits or services
- ◆ Becoming a better self-advocate
- ◆ Learning from the experiences of other people with disabilities how to overcome obstacles to independence
- ◆ Identifying and accessing needed technology
- ◆ Making the transition from a Nursing Home or other institution to living independently in the community
- ◆ Making the transition from living at home with Mom and Dad to living independently
- ◆ And many other activities related to becoming more independent

The role of the Independent Living Specialist is to work with people with disabilities (consumers) to help them decide their goals, figure out the steps needed to achieve them, and provide support with each step in the process. A list of the consumer's goals and steps is called a formal Independent Living Plan (ILP). An ILP helps to clearly identify what it is the consumer is working on. The Independent Living Specialist can help the consumer to develop an individual ILP to reach their goals, or the consumer can choose not to have a formal written plan. Either way, the work they do together will be focused on the goals the consumer decides they want to work toward. Goals can be changed or added to the plan at any time in the process.

## Goal Categories Living Plan

(These are examples of some of the different types of goals you might have for living independently.)

- ◆ Consumer/Legal Right
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Education/Training
- ◆ Employment/Vocational
- ◆ Equipment/Assistive Devices
- ◆ Finances/Benefits
- ◆ Health Care/Nutrition
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Mobility
- ◆ Personal Assistance Services
- ◆ Self Help/Independent Living Skills
- ◆ Social/Recreation
- ◆ Transportation

## Sample Independent

(This is an example of how you and the IL Specialist you are working with might identify a goal you have and the steps needed to achieve it.)

Goal #1 Category: Housing: Become more independent in current living situation.

Steps:

1. \*Assess current barriers to independence at home
2. \*Make a list of changes to increase independence
3. \*Prioritize list based on:
  - a. Free or low-cost changes
  - b. Changes that will increase independence the most
4. \*Locate resources to assist with any higher-cost changes (Could be a separate goal)
5. Implement changes on list in Order of priority
6. \*Assess impact of changes Implemented

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**\*These steps performed with help from staff.**