



## Ways Centers for Independent Living (CILs) can Engage with the Workforce System to Support Jobseekers with Disabilities Attain Employment

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*A Technical Resource of Strategies for CILs to Collaborate with American Job Centers (AJCs)*

September 2021 (DETAC-2021-CIL-3)

### Overview

Under the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act (WIOA), CILs are charged with supporting individuals to transition into the community to avoid institutional and nursing home placements, as well as the transition of youth with significant disabilities to adult life after completion of secondary education. CILs have the background, expertise, and experience to assist AJCs and employers in supporting jobseekers with disabilities. The following resource can be used as a tool for educating AJCs on ways CILs can support their work and promote the hiring and retention of workers with disabilities in local communities.

In addition to this resource, CILs are encouraged to check out [\*Promoting Employment and Economic Advancement: A Toolkit for Centers for Independent Living \(CIL\) and American Job Centers \(AJC\)\*](#).<sup>1</sup> This toolkit, published by the [LEAD Center](#) in 2016, includes checklists, guides, and fact sheets that leverage both CILs' knowledge and skills on disability issues and community resources, and AJCs' training and employment services to maximize the talents and skills of both partners to create a win-win-win for CILs, AJCs, and job seekers with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> Preparation of the Toolkit was funded by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, Grant No. OD-23863-12-75-4-11,CFDA # 17.720. To learn more about the potential for collaboration between CILs and AJCs and the impact on employment of people with disabilities, the LEAD Center conducted a pilot project involving CILs and AJCs from across the country. The information gleaned from the project resulted in the Toolkit, designed to help CILs and AJCs deepen their understanding of services and structures of both, and their activities that support job seekers with disabilities in achieving employment.



## AJC-CIL Collaboration Strategies: *Technical Assistance from CILs to AJCs on Accessibility Improvements*



### **CILs can offer Technical Assistance to AJCs to Improve their Accessibility through the Following Activities:**

- Provide information, tools, and resources to ensure persons with disabilities have the necessary technology to be successful in accessing services in a virtual/remote environment
- Provide recommendations on how to improve accessibility to services for individuals with disabilities
  - Engage persons with disabilities in discussion and planning of service design and delivery
  - Build awareness and knowledge of how to serve people with disabilities
  - Improve physical, programmatic and communication access for people with disabilities
  - Train AJC staff on utilization of assistive technologies
  - Provide guidance on how to lessen barriers to access through policy/regulation changes
  - Collaborate with disability serving agencies to provide full inclusion
- Provide guidance on how to make the AJC look and feel welcoming to person with disabilities
  - Accommodations and accessibility features are visible
  - Communication on available technology, interpreters, alternate formats is immediately visible
  - Facilitate access to services so the experience is a seamless process and paperwork completing is efficient
  - Address what services are available to alleviate barriers (technology, childcare, transportation, food access)
  - Promote person-centered processes, communicate how DEI initiatives pertain specifically to person with disabilities
  - Provide support in understanding where the person is in their overall life situation (family unit, health status, barriers, etc.) to really serve their needs
  - Provide training on how to avoid ‘pigeon-holing’ persons served into a program or service rather than learning all the strengths and abilities and considering all the possibilities



AJC-CIL Collaboration  
Strategies:  
*Supporting Youth  
with Disabilities with  
Transitioning to  
Employment*



**CILs can Support the Transition of Youth with Disabilities to Employments by:**

- Learning about how to get a work permit
- Finding a summer job
- Identifying summer learning opportunities
- Preparing for a high school equivalency (HSE) exam
- Assessing and improving one's reading, writing and math skills
- Improving one's English skills (ESL)
- Identifying childcare (if needed)
- Solidifying temporary help with living expenses while in training
- Securing financial assistance for training
- Getting information about schools and training programs
- Learning about the world of business
- Getting information about employers in the local area
- Learning about what employers expect of their workers
- Assessing individual career interests
- Finding out about job openings (including work experience, internships, and community service)
- Learning about jobs and careers aligned with one's interests
- Learning about jobs in demand and rates of pay
- Learning about strategies for finding a job
- Preparing for job interviews
- Preparing a resume, cover letter, writing sample or other application materials
- Posting a resume for employers to see
- Learning new job skills
- Improving current job skills



## AJC-CIL Collaboration Strategies: *Supporting Jobseekers and Workers with Disabilities*

### **CILs can support Jobseekers and Workers with Disabilities to:**

- Prepare for a high school equivalency (HSE) exam
- Assess and improve reading, writing and math skills
- Improve English skills (ESL)
- Find childcare and identify transportation supports
- Get information about education and training schools, such as their tuition and outcomes (i.e., success in placing students in jobs)
- Secure financial assistance for training expenses
- Get support for paying living expenses while completing job training
- Learn about the world of business
- Get information about local employers
- Learn about what employers expect of their workers
- Assess individual career interests and skills
- Find out about job openings (including work experience, internships, and community service)
- Learn about jobs and careers based on one's skills, experience, interests, and preferences
- Learn about jobs in demand and rates of pay
  - Learn about strategies for finding a job
  - Share job-search strategies with other job seekers (job club)
  - Get help in preparing for job interviews
  - Get help preparing a resume, cover letter, writing sample and other application materials
  - Post a resume for employers to see
  - Receive training in new job skills
  - Learn how to start a small business
- Provide support after losing a job by:
  - Assisting with Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claim filing
  - Coping financially and with the stress of job loss



## AJC-CIL Collaboration Strategies: *Focusing on Recruitment, Training, Hiring, and Retention*



### **Business Services focused on the Recruitment, Training, Hiring, and Retention of Jobseekers with Disabilities:**

- CILs can disseminate information on:
  - The Work Opportunity Tax Credit and other hiring incentives
  - Unemployment Insurance (UI) taxes and eligibility rules
  - How to get training costs reimbursed through the AJC
- AJCs and Employers can engage CILs to:
  - Post job openings and reach out to prospective workers with disabilities about new opportunities
  - Design training programs within a business that are fully inclusive/accessible to new hires with disabilities
  - Provide job training or ongoing job coaching
  - Evaluate existing employer-provided training related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion through a disability lens
- Employers can benefit from CILs assisting with:
  - Analyzing and writing job descriptions
  - Developing task analysis and standard operating procedures
  - Implementing strategies for interviewing job applicants with disabilities effectively
  - Recruiting workers with disabilities
- CILs can educate prospective workers with disabilities and employers on:
  - Civil Rights Protections of Employees with Disabilities as outlined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
  - Legal requirements pertaining to the recruitment, hiring, onboarding and termination of workers with disabilities

