STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC)
Tuesday, September 29, 2026
Meeting Held Via Zoom
&
DHS/DRS DHS Hillsview Plaza/Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brett Glirbas, Joe Vetch, Kendra Gottsleben, Brian Poelstra, Matt Cain, Ryan Groeneweg, Brad Konechne, Tricia Eggers, Lance Sigdestad, Val Beeck, and Jennifer Lewis. **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Julie Johnson, Victoria Steffes, Theresa Marzahn, and Richard Moeller. **OTHERS PRESENT**: Eric Weiss, Codi Erickson, Kathy Luke, Vicki Stewart, Ann Luke, Gene Luke, Holden Luke, Mike Simpson, Gloria Simpson, Sam Luke, Steph Badwound, Ben Higgins, Peyton Anderson, Jonas Freedman and Madison Catrett and Colette Wagoner. Interpreters were LeAnn Grate, Beth Driesen, and Alecia Barnes.

OPENING ACTIONS: Welcome & Introductory Comments: Ryan Groeneweg, SILC Chairperson, called the meeting to order and invited everyone to introduce themselves. Review and Approval of Agenda: Ryan asked if there were any changes/additions to the agenda, **MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, MADE (M), SECONDED (S), AND CARRIED (C).** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Val, Kendra, Brian, Matt, Brad, and Lance. Nays: None. Review and approval of minutes: Ryan asked if there were any changes or additions to the two sets of meeting minutes, **MOTION TO APPROVE THE SILC JUNE 23 MINUTES AND THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 19, AS DISSEMINATED, MSC.** Yeas: Brett, Joe, Val, Kendra, Brian, Matt, Brad and Lance. Nays: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: There was none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Reserved for sensitive/private or confidential matters; hearing no need, Ryan moved on.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were none.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE STATE'S OPEN MEETINGS LAWS: SILC staff presented the annual Open Meetings Laws review, covering meeting requirements, public notice and agenda standards, executive session procedures, public participation, and compliance responsibilities. The review emphasized transparency and public participation. The SILC acknowledged completion of the annual Open Meetings Law review as required by state law and directed that this acknowledgment be reflected in the meeting minutes. The "Conducting the Public's Business in Public, An explanation of South Dakota's Open Meetings Laws", brochure was disseminated to members prior to the meeting.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS) INDEPENDENT LIVING (IL) SPECIALIST'S REPORT: Consumer Satisfaction Survey Report: The Centers for Independent Living (CILs) distribute a consumer satisfaction survey to all participants whose cases have been closed, including both successful and unsuccessful closures. The survey consists of four rating questions and two narrative questions designed to measure overall consumer satisfaction.

During this reporting period (October 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026), total closed cases for both CILs (Independent Living Choices/ILC and Western Resources for Independent Living/WRIL) successfully was 843 cases and 328 unsuccessful closed cases. A total of 184 survey responses were received during the period, representing an overall response rate of 15.71% (ILC: 20.13% and WRIL: 1.77%).

Third-quarter responses reflected a high level of consumer satisfaction with Independent Living services. Most respondents indicated that services helped them live more independently, that they were satisfied with the services received, that they had choices in meeting their Independent Living goals, and that they would refer others for services.

Consumer comments highlighted the value of knowledgeable and caring staff, assistance accessing resources and benefits, home modifications and assistive devices, timely services, and support that helped individuals remain safe and independent in their homes. Areas identified as less helpful, included difficulties reaching staff or receiving return calls, scheduling or service delays, limitations in available resources, and concerns with specific equipment or services

Status of CIL Contracts: The Division contracts with both CILs; the contracts contain funding sources of Part B funds and state match. These contracts start on June 1 and run through May 31st. The Committee reviewed the one-month SFY 2027 CIL contract status. Overall service delivery was on target for the first month, with 8.37% of the annual service unit goal achieved compared to the expected 8.33%

The two-month SFY 2027 CIL contract status was also reviewed. Overall, 9,301 service units were reported, representing 12.72% of the annual goal compared to the expected 16.67% at this point in the year. ILC was above its expected pace at 17.68%, no service units were reflected for WRIL in the report. Codi responded to the question of why there was no information for WRIL. She explained that she cannot access the reports from their case management system, and she has staff working on the issue.

CIL Quarterly Reports: Independent Living Choices (ILC): The 3rd Quarter report (April 1 – June 30, 2026) from ILC was reviewed. ILC reported 284 new applicants, including 80 individuals age 25 or younger, with 1,722 individuals being served since October 1,

2025. Services included 268 individuals receiving HMAD services, 115 receiving TAD services, and 59 receiving housing-related services this quarter.

ILC reported referrals from a variety of community sources and participated in numerous outreach and collaborative activities, including peer support groups, transition activities, health and career fairs, and meetings with community partners addressing transportation, housing, transition supports, and awareness of Independent Living services. The organizational chart reflected one vacant position in the Aberdeen office.

Western Resources for Independent Living (WRIL): The 3rd Quarter report (April 1 – June 30, 2026) from WRIL was reviewed. WRIL reported 75 new applicants, including 33 individuals age 25 or younger, with 264 individuals being served during the quarter. Service delivery included 8 individuals receiving Home Modifications and Assistive Devices (HMAD), 21 receiving Telecommunication Assistive Devices (TAD), and 89 receiving housing-related services.

WRIL reported referrals from a variety of sources, with community organizations and family members/friends among the leading referral sources. Outreach activities were conducted across several counties and included contacts with apartment buildings, nursing homes, medical offices, schools, and rehabilitation facilities to share information about WRIL services and explore opportunities for collaboration. WRIL also reported redesigning its agency brochure during the quarter.

CIL Data 3rd Quarter FFY 26: Eric presented new data, including pie charts and line graphs, to illustrate trends and compare service hours reported by WRIL and ILC for the 3rd Quarter of FFY 2026 with the same quarter in FFY 2025, as well as year-to-year comparisons for FFYs 2025 and 2026.

WRIL

- Advocacy was WRIL's largest core service activity during the 3rd Quarter, with 501.25 hours, compared to 435.75 hours during the same quarter in FFY 2025.
- Housing services increased from 180.75 hours in the 3rd Quarter of FFY 2025 to 244.5 hours in FFY 2026.
- Independent Living skills training increased from 31 hours to 63.5 hours year over year.
- Information and Referral, HMAD, TAD, and nursing home diversion/deter services were lower than during the same quarter in FFY 2025.

ILC

- Information and Referral continued to account for the largest amount of service activity, with 1,240.5 hours, compared to 1,215 hours during the 3rd Quarter of FFY 2025.

- Peer counseling increased from 132.5 hours to 160.25 hours, and nursing home transition services increased from zero to 10.75 hours.
- Advocacy, Independent Living skills training, HMAD, TAD, housing, nursing home diversion/deter, and transition services were lower than during the same quarter in FFY 2025.
- A notable change was seen in TAD services, which decreased from 216 hours in the 3rd Quarter of FFY 2025 to 92.25 hours in the 3rd Quarter of FFY 2026.

Overall, ILC service hours showed relatively little change year over year, while WRIL showed more notable changes, particularly in Information and Referral, Advocacy, and Housing. Members commented favorably on the use of different data visualizations, noting that they provided another way to view and compare CIL service activity and the provision of core services.

Eric encouraged members to ask questions and identify other information that may be helpful for SILC review. He noted that the Division can develop additional tools and generate quantitative data to assist with monitoring. Eric reminded members that the SILC is responsible for monitoring implementation of the State Plan and explained that the quarterly CIL reports are one tool available for that purpose. Additional data can be generated as needed to examine specific areas of service provision.

IL Funding Sources: Jennifer referred to the IL Fund Sources handout for State Fiscal Year 2027. Funding sources to support IL services in the state were outlined, Part C, Part B, Part B match, Social Security Reimbursement Funds (SSA), and other state funds. The contracts do not include Home Modifications funding because additional funds were not available. The chart outlines the total dollar amount awarded to each CIL, and funds that support the SILC outlined in the staff support agreement.

CENTERS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CILS) UPDATES: Independent Living Choices: Matt reported that ILC is nearing the end of its fiscal year and expects to receive its Notice of Award (NOA) from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) soon. ILC received one-time funding that will be used to provide salary increases/bonuses for staff, including attendant care providers. The starting wage for an ILC Independent Living Specialist is $18.50 per hour. ILC's annual audit is scheduled to begin in November.

The drawing for ILC's Harley-Davidson Motorcycle Raffle was held September 10, with Jody Wendte of Crofton, Nebraska, selected as the winner. ILC's next raffle will feature a side-by-side. Funds raised through the raffles support ILC's Home Modifications and Assistive Devices Program.

The Division of Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) completed its annual review of ILC's home modification activities. ILC completed a little over $500,000 in home

modification projects, and no corrective action items were identified during the review. ILC also received grants from Hy-Vee Operation Helpful Smile to support home modification projects in the Sioux Falls area and from Salmons Financial to support home modifications throughout other areas of ILC's service coverage.

Matt also provided a staffing update. An Independent Living Specialist position was added to the Sioux Falls office, and ILC recently hired staff for its Aberdeen and Yankton offices. ILC also added a part-time Human Resources Manager position. In addition, ILC will provide longevity bonuses to staff based on years of service.

Western Resources for Independent Living (WRIL): Codi reported that WRIL has recently hired additional staff. Staff are seeing an increase in participants needing assistance with housing and Social Security-related issues. WRIL is working with Goodwill and the Salvation Army to assist individuals who are struggling to pay rent and to identify other available community resources.

WRIL staff attended a Social Security-related event in April and are working to schedule additional training. Staff continue outreach efforts by distributing information about WRIL services in communities throughout the organization's coverage area. Codi will also be traveling to the Lemmon area to expand outreach efforts. Division staff are scheduled to provide training to WRIL staff on October 8.

Codi reported that Dan McGuire is WRIL's new Board President. Resource development activities have been limited following the passing of longtime board member and supporter Sandy Magnavito; however, WRIL plans to resume its braided bread fundraiser.

WRIL is also addressing information technology issues related to accessing reports from its case management system. Codi also shared that an individual has been hired for the Pierre position. Codi encouraged members to contact her with any questions.

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (BVR) UPDATE: Eric reported that the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR) met on September 15th. The BVR serves in an advisory capacity to the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency, providing guidance on program performance, assisting with the development of goals and priorities, and evaluating consumer satisfaction. The meeting agenda included the annual review of the SD Open Meetings Laws, updates on Division initiatives/projects and budget, as well as an overview of the Aberdeen district office (territory, staff, successes and challenges). The BVR will meet again on December 2nd. Eric displayed the States' Boards and Commissions portal and showed members how to access information for both the BVR and SILC, along with other state boards and commissions. (https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/)

DIVISION OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUAL IMPAIRED (DSBVI) UPDATE: Tricia reported that the Division recently hired two Rehabilitation Teachers, located in Aberdeen and Rapid City, and the Independent Living Older Blind (ILB) program is now fully staffed.

Since October 1, the ILB program has received 635 referrals and is currently serving 376 active consumers. Consumer satisfaction continues to be a program strength, with the most recent survey receiving an average rating of 3.59 out of 4. The survey had a 53% response rate, an increase from the previous year. Outreach activities also remained strong throughout the summer months.

Tricia also provided an update on the CCTV lease/loan program. A total of 166 participants utilized the program. In July, the Division received approval to use state general funds to purchase 18 new CCTVs. There is currently no waiting list for the program. The Division also has a memorial fund that provides additional support for the CCTV program.

BOARD OF SERVICE TO THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED (B/SBVI) UPDATE: Ryan reported that the B/SBVI met on September 17. The Board approved $1,500 in financial support for the Governor's Awards and $6,500 to support National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) activities. Other agenda items included the annual review of South Dakota's Open Meetings Laws and review of a policy related to the provision of services to individuals outside of South Dakota.

Program updates were provided on the Business Enterprise Program and the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind. Discussion also included AI-enabled vending machines and their potential to improve accessibility and increase operational efficiency.

The Division held its all-staff training in August. Training focused on best practices, promoting collaboration, improving service delivery and consumer outcomes, and strengthening staff skills. The B/SBVI will meet again on December 8.

Break

CHAMPION OF INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES AWARD PRESENTATION: Recipient, Kathy Luke was honored as the 2026 Champion of Independent Living Services. Introductions were called for, members, Kathy, and other guests, including Kathy's husband, their children, grandchildren, and Kathy's parents.

Ryan provided background for the SILC's Champion of Independent Living Services Award, which was established by the SILC in 2015. This award recognizes individuals

and organizations that exemplify the SILC's vision that all South Dakotans are treated with dignity and respect and have the choice to live in communities of their choice. Since its inception, the award has recognized 12 individuals and one organization.

Ryan provided an overview of the nomination and selection process. Nominations were solicited in May and reviewed by a committee, with a recommendation forwarded to the SILC Executive Committee for review and approval.

Vicki Stewart, who nominated Kathy Luke shared highlights of Kathy's commitment to creating opportunities for individuals with disabilities through employment, independent living, youth transition, and community advocacy.

- Kathy's Contributions:
    - As owner of Yakkity Yak Coffee Shack in Sioux Falls, Kathy provides meaningful employment opportunities, individualized supports, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities.
    - She promotes independence by helping employees develop workplace and independent living skills and encouraging them to work as autonomously as possible.
    - She hosted Independent Living Choices' Summer Transition Program, providing youth opportunities to develop independent living, self-advocacy, workplace, and employment skills in a real-world setting.
    - Kathy has supported individuals with disabilities in participating in community activities and advocacy, including mentoring an individual to participate in a housing panel presentation.
    - She has advocated for expanded housing opportunities and greater inclusion of individuals with disabilities within their communities.
    - Yakkity Yak Coffee Shack previously received the 2023 Governor's Award for Outstanding Small Private Employer.

Matt presented the award to Kathy on behalf of the SILC. Members, guests, and others in attendance were invited to share comments. Kathy thanked those who have provided resources and support, in addition to her family, noting it takes a village. In closing, Ryan congratulated Kathy and thanked those in attendance for their continued support of individuals with disabilities and the independent living philosophy. Attendees were encouraged to consider submitting future nominations for the Champion of Independent Living Services Award.

Break

Matt Cain had a few pictures available highlighting a few projects completed by ILC, ramps, bathroom remodel (tub cut out, shower remodel). In response to questions, Matt explained that projects that cost under $1,000 are completed for the participant right away. If the participant is trying to leave a nursing home/institution/hospital, ILC

tries to complete the project as soon as possible. If the participant goes on the project list, they could be on the list for up to 3 months. The IL specialist works with the participant, determines eligibility for services and then financial eligibility is determined. This applies to individuals living in their own homes or rents; if the participant is renting, the landlord or manager, must approve the project. agree to

SD YOUTH ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL (YEC): Kendra and Steph Badwound introduced themselves and described their roles with the Youth Engagement Council (YEC), followed by introductions from YEC members Ben, Peyton, Jonas, and Madison.

The purpose of YEC is to provide a platform for youth to share their experiences of living with a disability. YEC's mission is to empower youth to grow as leaders, advocate for themselves and others, and build confidence to participate in their communities, schools, and other endeavors. The Council provides mentorship and peer-to-peer support while creating a safe and inclusive environment for youth to share experiences, information, and resources. YEC's core values include advocacy, betterment, and community.

YEC members discussed their outreach and advocacy activities, including sharing their experiences at school board meetings, middle and high schools, and conferences. Discussion also focused on how members connect with other students and youth with disabilities, share information and resources, and encourage leadership and community involvement. The youth provided contact information for follow-up and future connections.

Lance commented on the importance of the Youth Engagement Council and the opportunities it provides for young people with disabilities to develop advocacy skills, exercise individual choice, connect with their peers, and serve as an inspiration to others. Lance expressed interest in exploring opportunities to increase the participation and engagement of youth who are deaf/hard of hearing.

STATE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (SPIL): The current State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) covers Federal Fiscal Years 2025–2027 and became effective October 1, 2024.

<u>Current SPIL Goals:</u>

- Increasing awareness of Independent Living (IL) services throughout SD;
- Ensuring that individuals with disabilities residing in South Dakota have access to IL services; and
- Engaging in collaborative, promotional, and advocacy efforts to support needed changes that enable individuals with disabilities to live as independently as possible.

SILC members are encouraged to share activities, events, or efforts related to these goals with staff. This information is tracked and included in the annual performance report (PPR).

2028-2030 State Plan Draft Goals and Objectives: The new SPIL must be submitted to the Administration of Community Living (ACL) by June 30, 2027.

Staff reviewed the SPIL Committee's draft goals and objectives developed to date for the 2028-2030 State Plan for Independent Living. The proposed framework organizes the Plan into three primary areas: improving access through outreach and engagement; strengthening Independent Living services and outcomes; and strengthening the capacity, consistency, coordination, and sustainability of the statewide Independent Living Network.

Discussion highlighted how the three goals are intended to work together: improving awareness of and access to IL services; supporting individuals once connected to a Center for Independent Living through services that promote independence and community participation; and ensuring the IL Network has the capacity and coordination necessary to support those efforts. Council members were asked to consider whether the proposed goals reflect South Dakota's statewide IL priorities, whether any significant areas are missing, and whether the objectives appropriately align with each goal.

The SPIL Committee is continuing its work on related indicators and measurements. Considerations include using existing data sources where possible, establishing baseline information when needed, focusing on meaningful outcomes in addition to activity counts, and avoiding duplication of existing CIL reporting or compliance requirements. Ryan acknowledged the Committee's work and noted the challenge of identifying meaningful and appropriate measures without creating unnecessary reporting burdens for partners. Indicators and measurements will be shared with the full SILC as they are further developed.

Jennifer discussed the CIL Consumer Satisfaction Survey and the importance of obtaining meaningful participant feedback to support improvements in service delivery. She recommended reconvening the Consumer Services Committee to review the survey instrument and discuss strategies to improve response rates, survey dissemination, and collection of feedback.

Matt asked whether an appropriate response-rate threshold had been identified for the survey. Ryan noted that a response rate of approximately 20 percent or higher would be considered a good response. Discussion continued regarding opportunities to

strengthen the survey process, revise the instrument as appropriate, increase participation, and consider how participant feedback may inform service delivery and related SPIL measures.

Next Steps: The SPIL Committee will continue meeting regularly to advance the SPIL development process. The draft goals and objectives will be forwarded to the full SILC for review, with the proposed indicators and measurements to follow.

SILC STAFF UPDATE: National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): NDEAM is a national observance held each October to recognize the contributions of individuals with disabilities and promote their inclusion in the workforce. The 2026 NDEAM theme is "Celebrating Value and Talent."

NDEAM activities are supported by the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR), the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), the Board of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired (B/SBVI), and the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS). Financial support for the initiative is shared among these entities.

Communities in various locations will host NDEAM-related activities and events, including training, radio interviews, advertising campaigns utilizing digital billboards, and presentations on disability-related topics. Participating communities include Aberdeen, Mobridge, Mitchell, Yankton, Rapid City, Deadwood, Sioux Falls, Sisseton, and Watertown.

An event listing will be forwarded to SILC members, who are encouraged to attend events in their local communities.

Governor's Awards Update: The Governor's Awards ceremony will be held October 1 in Pierre. The event will begin in the Capitol Rotunda, with a reception immediately following.

The 2026 award recipients include:

- Individual with a Disability: Mark Koterwski, Sioux Falls
- Employee with a Disability: Anthony Monroe, Isabel
- Small Private Employer: Who's Toy House, Rapid City
- Large Private Employer: L & M Radiator, Inc., Yankton
- Public Employer: Fleet Management Division, City of Sioux Falls
- Transition Services Award: Denise Stiles, Rapid City
- Distinguished Service Award: Dan Rounds, Pierre

South Dakota Public Broadcasting (SDPB) will stream the ceremony live; this link was forwarded to members.

Fall Conference: Registration is open for the Fall Conference and closes very soon. Members interested in attending were encouraged to contact staff. Current conference information, registration materials, and speaker information are available through the South Dakota RehabACTion's website.

Budget Update: Colette reported that support services for the BVR and SILC are provided through an agreement between the Division and Black Hills Special Services Cooperative. The current contract began January 1 and will expire on December 31. The contract budget operates on a calendar-year cycle.

The budget report distributed to members reflects expenditures through August and shows minimal expenditures to date. The majority of expenses are expected to occur during September, October, and November and are associated with key activities, including the Governor's Awards Ceremony, National Disability Employment Awareness Month events, BVR and SILC member participation in the Fall Conference, and attendance by Center for Independent Living (CIL) staff at the Fall Conference.

OTHER BUSINESS: Continuity of Care/Services Concern: Brett shared a concern regarding continuity of services when an individual receiving waiver services experiences an unexpected situation that causes a provider to temporarily suspend in-home services. Brett described a recent situation in which his home health attendant care services were suspended after bed bugs were identified in his apartment. He was able to rely on his parents for personal care assistance and accessible housing until treatment of his apartment was completed.

Brett contacted Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) to ask what options would be available to an individual in a similar situation who does not have family, friends, or other informal supports available to step in. LTSS identified possible alternatives, including temporary assistance from friends or family, a short-term assisted living stay, adult day services, contacting another provider to determine whether accommodations could be made, and working with the individual's case manager.

Brett expressed concern that these options may not fully address the immediate care needs of an individual who has no informal support system, particularly when assistance is needed with essential daily care. He asked the CIL Directors and other members whether they were aware of additional resources or solutions that could help ensure continuity of care in these circumstances. Discussion highlighted the broader concern of what safeguards or contingency options are available when an individual's regular services are unexpectedly interrupted and no family or other natural supports are available to assist.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: please share agenda items/topics with staff. Next Meeting: a doodle poll will be disseminated to identify a date in December

Adjournment: Ryan asked if there were any objections to adjourn, hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 1:43 pm.