



MARYLAND STATEWIDE  
INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL

**Operations Manual**

15800 Crabbs Branch Way, Suite 300  
Derwood, Maryland 20855  
(301) 637-5723 Office  
[www.msilc.org](http://www.msilc.org)

**Amended:** March 25, 2021

# Table of Contents

Philosophy	<b>1</b>
Vision, Mission, Values	<b>3</b>
<hr/>	
Membership & Duties	<b>3</b>
What Every MSILC Member should know (Self-Administered Test)	<b>5</b>
Recruiting New Members	<b>8</b>
Public Engagement & Membership Committee	<b>8</b>
Monitoring Membership	<b>9</b>
Job Description- MSILC Member	<b>10</b>
Council Potential Member Recommendation Process	<b>11</b>
Quorum	<b>11</b>
<hr/>	
Member Responsibilities	<b>12</b>
MSILC Code of Respectful and Responsible Conduct	<b>12</b>
Council Involvement Beyond the Term Limit	<b>16</b>
MSILC Officer Elections Process	<b>16</b>
Job Description- MSILC Chair	<b>18</b>
Job Description- MSILC Vice Chair	<b>20</b>
Job Description- MSILC Secretary	<b>21</b>
Job Description- MSILC Treasurer	<b>22</b>
<hr/>	
Committee Selection Process	<b>23</b>

MSILC Committees Structure and Duties	<b>23</b>
Executive	<b>25</b>
Finance	<b>25</b>
Infrastructure	<b>26</b>
Public Engagement	<b>26</b>
Membership	<b>27</b>
Outcomes	<b>27</b>
Legislative	<b>28</b>
<b>Principles of Proper Conduct</b>	
Principles of Proper Conduct	<b>30</b>
Council Members- Behavior and Conduct	<b>31</b>
Council Conduct with one another	<b>31</b>
Robert’s Rules of Order	<b>34</b>
<b>Conduct at a Site Review</b>	
Conduct at a Site Review	<b>35</b>
Council Conduct with Other Public Entities	<b>35</b>
Council Conduct with Media	<b>36</b>
Public Hearing/ Forum Protocol	<b>37</b>
Request for Training and Reimbursement	<b>37</b>

## **Philosophy**

The MSILC is grounded in the “independent living movement philosophy”, the set of values, principles and beliefs that people with disabilities have the right to live and work independently in the community. Having personal choice and control over acceptable options for doing so are the key to independent living. The independent living philosophy is one of consumer control, peer support, self-help, self-determination, equal access, and individual and systems advocacy.

Embracing and promoting these beliefs maximizes and empowers the leadership, productivity, and independence of Marylanders with disabilities. The outcome is their integration and full inclusion into the mainstream of Maryland communities.

Maryland Centers for Independent Living bring this philosophy to life every day with their core services of information and referral, peer support, independent living skills training, self-advocacy, transition from institutions to the community and youth transition.

### **Emancipation through Legislation**

The Independent Living Philosophy dictates that individuals have protection and empowerment under the law and shall not be discriminated against on the basis of their disability.

Laws protecting and empowering people with disabilities include the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Air Carriers Act (as amended), the Human Rights Act and the Fair Housing Amendments Act.

The Independent Living Movement embodies the access and the freedom that continues to blossom as a result of this legislation.

The MSILC is governed by federal, state, and local laws and guided by this MSILC Operations Manual.

### **Establishment and Structure**

The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council, known as the “MSILC” or “the Council” throughout this manual, is established to develop and monitor the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

The MSILC members are appointed by the Governor of the state of Maryland, pursuant to the mandate as stated under the Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 1992. The members are

chosen based on recommendations provided by the Council after a recruitment, interview, and nomination process.

These recommendations from the Council are then forwarded to the Governor.

The membership makeup of the MSILC is also mandated by the Rehabilitation act (as amended). The MSILC will have a CIL Representative appointed by the Governor. The CIL Representative is chosen by the Maryland Centers for Independent Living pursuant to the mandates of the Rehabilitation Act. The MSILC will also have Governor appointed ex-officio, non-voting members, representing various state agencies and/or providers. The membership is comprised of 51% voting members who are individuals with disabilities who are not employed by a state agency or a Center for Independent Living. The minority (49%) may be employees of Centers for Independent Living throughout the State of Maryland including the CIL Representative chosen by the CILs. As per federal mandate as stated in the Rehabilitation Act, members will be chosen by consideration of type of disability and geographical location so there is representation of diverse disabilities and throughout the State of Maryland.

Funding for the MSILC is federal funding from Health and Human Services (HHS) provided by Title VII, Part B of the Rehabilitation Act, through Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). All policies governing the activities and operations of the SILC are stipulated by the Rehabilitation Act. The Council is supported by an Executive Director. The Council operates with a fiscal agent. The Executive Director is interviewed, hired, and supervised by the Council and financial operations are monitored by the Designated State Entity (DSE) via the fiscal agent in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

## **Vision**

The vision for Independent Living (IL) in Maryland is for people with disabilities to have information, choices and control over the supports and services in their lives so they can participate fully in all aspects of society.

## **Mission**

The mission of MSILC is to promote, support and enhance opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities to maximize choices to independently live, work and play.

## **Values**

The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council is committed to the following values: freedom of choice; diversity; respect for others; quality of life; equality; excellence; fiscal responsibility; self-reliance; self-sufficiency; and inclusion. These values are reflected in the work of the Council and our documents. To ensure we remain true to our values, the MSILC will conduct annual reviews of the Operations Manual, policy and procedures and committee structure and duties.

## **Membership & Duties**

Recruiting, nominating, and monitoring membership is an ongoing process for the MSILC. All Council members have equal votes. No Council member has more power than another Council member, and all should be treated with equal respect. The Chairperson has the tie-breaking vote. All Council members should:

1. Fully participate at full Council meetings, committee meetings and other public forums while demonstrating respect, kindness, consideration, and courtesy to others.
2. Prepare in advance for Council meetings and be familiar with the issues on the agenda
3. Be respectful of other people's time. Stay focused and act efficiently during MSILC meetings.

4. Represent the MSILC at meetings and ceremonial functions at the request of the Council.
5. Serve as a model of leadership and civility to the community.
6. Inspire public confidence in the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council.
7. Demonstrate honesty and integrity in every action and statement.
8. Participate in committees to increase team effectiveness.

The duties of the Council are to:

1. Jointly develop and submit the Maryland State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL), in conjunction with the Designated State Entity (DSE), and Centers for Independent Living (CILS), as required by Section 704 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
2. Monitor, review, and evaluate implementation of the Maryland State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL); and
3. Coordinate activities with the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council (MSRC) established under section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; other councils that address the needs of disability populations and issues under other Federal laws; and other councils, commissions, boards, committees dealing with matters of concern to people with participation in Council activities pursuant to Section 705 (f) of the Rehabilitation Act as amended.

## ***WHAT EVERY MSILC MEMBER SHOULD KNOW*** ***(A Self-Administered Test)***

MSILC will conduct an annual orientation where all members will gain a broad understanding of the following self-administered test of “What Every MSILC Member Should Know.”

The list below includes basic information that each member of a MSILC should know and understand to be an effective voting member of a statewide planning body. Assess your knowledge of the following issues by placing a check mark beside the items you know and leave blank the items you do not know. Be tough minded.

- 1. The history of independent living related to and including the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992, particularly Title VII.
  
- 2. The history of how Centers for Independent Living developed in the United States.
  
- 3. The independent living philosophy—its tenets, principles, values, and how it is practiced.
  
- 4. The name, location, size, and Executive Director of each independent living center in the state.
  
- 5. The designated state entity (state vocational rehabilitation agency or blind agency) through which Title VII funding flows, its director, its staff related to Title VII programs, and how to reach these individuals.
  
- 6. Agencies in the state providing services to persons with disabilities, their missions, general information about what they provide, and their relationships to each other and within state government.

- 7. The functions of the Health and Human Services Agency for Community as they relate to Independent Living.
- 8. The number of funds allocated to the state under Title VII, Part B and how such funds are being spent.
- 9. The state plan for independent living.
- 10. How the state spends its Social Security Reimbursement Funds, particularly if such funding supports centers for independent living or independent living services within the state.
- 11. Amount of state funds for independent living centers and how they are distributed.
- 12. Any state laws written for creation, definition, or maintenance of centers for independent living centers.
- 13. The definition, assurances, standards, and indicators for centers for independent living.
- 14. The roles, responsibilities, and authority of members of the MSILC.
- 15. The communication system established for effective functioning of the MSILC.
- 16. The individual members of the MSILC, what they represent on the MSILC, their offices or responsibilities, if any, and contact information on each.
- 17. The contents of the MSILC's resource plan or Part B.
- 18. The budget guiding MSILC expenditures, the source(s) of MSILC funding, and how such fiscal matters are managed.
- 19. The staff of the MSILC and how they relate to the MSILC as a

whole as well as to individual members of the MSILC.

20. How staff of the MSILC are hired, trained, supervised, and evaluated.

21. The nature and funding for any MSILC-approved project funded under Title VII, Part B or any other state funding incorporated into the state's independent living plan.

22. The basic concepts, definitions, and provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

## **Recruiting New Members**

The full Council may be involved with recruiting new members on an ongoing basis. When a Council member wants to recommend an individual for membership, s/he should give name, contact information, and a letter of support to the Executive Director. When an individual expresses interest in membership and a Council member does not have personal knowledge of that individual, s/he may direct that person to send their application and resume to the MSILC Executive Director.

The Executive Director is responsible for obtaining resumes and/or supporting documentation for potential members.

The Executive Director will contact potential nominees and coordinate interviews in person, virtually, or by teleconference.

A list of potential new members will be developed on an ongoing basis and utilized when recruiting MSILC members. This list will be maintained by the Secretary and Executive Director.

## **Membership Committee**

The Membership committee shall convene quarterly to recruit, review initial applications, facilitate interest meetings, interview potential nominees, and bring forth recommendations to the full Council. The purpose of the interest meeting is to educate the potential applicant on the MSILC and CILs. Click this link to access our [membership application](#). Interest meetings will be held with individuals interested in applying to serve on the Council. It will also provide an opportunity for an explanation of the responsibilities of serving on the Council and its Committees. Additionally, it will be a time for the potential applicant to advise the Committee of their personal interests and expertise. The committee members will include a member of the Infrastructure committee, a member of the Public Engagement Committee and a CIL Director to participate in each interest meeting. The follow up will be the Membership committee shall develop a list of questions from the attached list as developed and approved by the

full Council. Any additional questions must be approved by the full Council and added to the attached list, but follow-up questions are appropriate. Prior to the interview, the Membership committee and the Executive Director shall review and discuss resumes and supporting documentation for each candidate. During the interview committee members will take turns asking questions.

Each interview shall average one hour. Candidates will be advised of the following expectations:

- attend at least 51% of full Council meetings, in person or via teleconference.
- the Council strongly suggests physically attending at least one meeting per year.
- Serve on at least one committee (which averages one hour per month).

At the conclusion of the interview, the committee will discuss the responses once the candidate leaves the call.

### **Monitoring Membership**

The Secretary or designated representative and Executive Director are responsible for monitoring MSILC membership. At each full Council meeting, the Secretary or designated representative will report on the status of the composition of MSILC membership. The Executive Director regularly monitors the composition of the MSILC according to the Rehab Act. Attendance and membership will be monitored/ documented through full Council meeting minutes.

## **Job Description-MSILC Member**

### ***ESSENTIAL DUTIES***

1. Participate actively in Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (MSILC) meetings and activities.
2. Work actively on at least one committee or work team of the MSILC.
3. Facilitate development of new independent living leaders within the state.
4. Assist in the development of a state plan.

### ***VALUES DESIRED***

1. Commitment to the issue of “consumer control”, meaning that people with disabilities should have control over their lives and decision-making.
2. Belief in principles of equal access and equal opportunity.
3. Commitment to full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.
4. Possession of honesty, integrity, and respect for the values of others.
5. Possession of strong personal code of ethics, including maintaining confidentiality, avoiding apparent conflict of interest.

### ***QUALIFICATIONS***

1. Knowledge of teamwork.
2. Experience/ knowledge with the independent living movement.

### **TIME PER MONTH (excluding travel time)**

8 hours-MSILC meetings

2 hours-MSILC telephone calls

2 hours-reading and preparation for MSILC meetings.

**10 hours - Total**

## **Council Potential Member Recommendation Process**

The Membership committee will present a list of candidates that they recommend for MSILC membership, as well as providing supporting documentation, at the following full Council meeting. Time limited discussion about the candidates will take place during an Executive session where a vote will be taken. The list of recommended names will be forwarded to the Governor.

Ex-officio candidates representing state agencies will not be interviewed by the membership committee. But will be approved by the Governor. The full Council will be notified in advance at full Council meetings of these ex-officio candidates. Other potential ex-officio candidates from state agencies will participate in an interview.

Ex-officio members may serve and vote on committees. Ex-officio members are nonvoting members at full Council meetings.

The CIL Representative chosen by the Directors of the Maryland Centers for Independent Living is a voting member of MSILC ; and exempt from an interview by the Membership Committee and therefore, is not voted on by the full Council. The full Council will forward the selection of a CIL representative to the Governor.

### **Quorum**

1. A simple majority of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. No official decision shall be made in the absence of a quorum.
2. In the absence of a quorum, the Council may adopt a motion or motions to go into a committee of the whole or to go into a quasi- committee of the whole.
3. Twenty- five percent of the voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for committee(s) of the whole or quasi committee(s) of the whole.

## **Member Responsibilities**

1. Support the Council’s mission “to ensure persons who have disabilities have access to community-based resources that promote personal choice and facilitate the achievement of their independent living goals.”
2. Become informed about the issues and priorities of the Council by reviewing the information provided by Council staff and other members.
3. Provide information to the Council on relevant issues based on personal and/or professional knowledge and experience.
4. Actively participate in the Council and committee meetings and vote on matters requiring Council action, abstaining when there is a conflict of interest.
5. Support the ongoing work of the Council by serving on committees, contacting policymakers, and supporting and demonstrating the independent living philosophy.
6. Respond to communications from Council staff and/or other members and notify the Executive Director when unable to attend a meeting.
7. Notify Council staff of accommodations you may need to be an active member of the Council.

## **MSILC Code of Respectful and Responsible Conduct**

*All of this information is covered in the Pledge. The Pledge must be signed during orientation.*

Respectful conduct and honest and ethical fiscal management are necessities of the MSILC. We believe they are vitally important as they will stand as a hallmark of excellence for our members to follow during their service to the MSILC. The following Code and Pledge describe our standards and request a commitment of each MSILC member.

## **MSILC Pledge of Respectful and Responsible Conduct**

*The following MSILC pledge of respectful and responsible conduct will be given to new Council members directly after their official appointment by the Governor. This form shall be presented to candidates for the MSILC at the time of their interview or as shortly as possible thereafter. Candidates will understand that they will be expected to read and sign the form if they are appointed by the Governor. Signed copies will be returned to the Executive Director and will be kept on file. All pledges will be signed and returned to the MSILC Executive Director no later than the conclusion of MSILC orientation.*

I promise to demonstrate respectful behavior toward my fellow Council members and staff at all times. I pledge the following:

- My decisions/statements/actions will not violate the trust, rights, or good will of others.
- My conduct will be favorably evaluated by people whose integrity and character I respect.
- My actions or words will not be conducted at someone's painful expense. My conduct will not destroy their trust or harm their reputation.
- My conduct will be fair, moral, and just.
- My conduct will give others reason to trust me.
- My conduct will not cause public embarrassment to another individual.
- If I have to justify my conduct in public tomorrow, I will be able to do so with pride and not shame.
- I will take a public and ethical stand that makes clear what I represent.
- I will take pride in the way I conduct myself and the example I set.
- I will listen without interruption while others are speaking.
- I will listen and try my best to understand the views of others.
- I will courteously and intelligently question those points which I do not understand.
- I will question and discuss different points of view in a constructive manner.

- I will work to resolve differences and come to a mutual agreement.
- I will support my fellow MSILC members and show respect for their ideas.
- I will conduct myself in a manner that reflects the mission of MSILC
- I will act with honesty and integrity, avoiding actual or apparent conflicts of interest in personal and professional relationships
- I will provide stakeholders with information that is accurate, complete, objective, fair, relative, timely and understandable, including in our filings with and other submissions to the Division of Rehabilitation Services, the Health and Human Services and other independent living and community partners.
- I will comply with rules and regulations of federal, state, provincial and local governments, and other appropriate public and private regulatory agencies
- I will act in good faith, responsibly, with due care, competence, and diligence, without misrepresenting material facts or allowing independent judgment to be subordinated.
- I will respect the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of MSILC work except when authorized or otherwise legally obligated to disclose.
- I will disclose all fiscal knowledge related to the work of the MSILC with the Treasurer, Chair and Executive Director.
- I will not use confidential information acquired in the course of work related to the MSILC for personal advantage.
- I will achieve responsible use, control, and stewardship over all MSILC assets/funds and resources that are employed or entrusted to MSILC.
- I will not unduly or fraudulently influence, coerce, manipulate, or mislead any authorized audit or interfere with any auditor engaged in the performance of an internal or independent audit of MSILC financial statements or accounting books and records.
- I will report in writing any suspected or known violations of this Code of Professional Financial Conduct or other MSILC policies or procedures, the member has a duty to promptly report in such concerns to the Chair, and Executive Director.

- I will always fully disclose all financial information to the Treasurer and Chair. Thus, after an election where there is a change of officers, all financial information including credit cards, bankbooks, and other fiscal records will be immediately disclosed to the new Treasurer and MSILC Chair in order to provide for a smooth fiscal transition.

This Pledge shall be submitted in writing, as well as verbally. I may ask for a copy of this Pledge.

I may submit concerns anonymously to the Executive Committee regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters.

The MSILC will handle all inquiries discreetly and make every effort to maintain, within limits allowed by law, the confidentiality of anyone requesting guidance or reporting questionable behavior and/or concern regarding issues of ethics or compliance.

MSILC members shall face no retribution for alleging misconduct against another member, whether founded or not. It is every member's right to question anything which he or she considers suspect.

I have read and I understand the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council's Code of Respectful and Responsible Conduct. I agree to abide by the rules described above and understand that if I do not do so I will face consequences as determined by the Chair up to and including a formal recommendation to the Governor's office requesting removal from the Council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Council Involvement Beyond the Term Limit**

Council members may continue working on the Council in an volunteer capacity beyond the term limit. Volunteers may serve on committees and attended all Council meetings with the exception of executive sessions. Volunteer members may be eligible to for reimbursement at the discretion of the Council. Individuals may reapply for membership one year after their term limit has expired.

### **MSILC Officer Elections Process**

1. During the June full Council meeting an election announcement will be made the Chair of the Council, that the Council is seeking officer nominations.
2. or those being nominated, their names may be submitted on the floor at the June meeting, or their names may be sent to the Executive Director via email.
3. Names of individuals being nominated/or are seeking nomination for the announced officer positions will be announced via email to Councilmembers one week after nominations have closed.
4. Once an individual has accepted their nomination they will be asked to complete and officer's nomination application, provided by the Council's Executive Director.
5. The following week after nominations, each nominated individual will be contacted by the Executive Director to schedule a formal interview by the Council's nominations committee. The Nominations Committee will consist of the Council's Executive Director, a member of the Infrastructure Committee, a current elected officer of the Council and a general board member.
6. Interviews will be scheduled with the candidates immediately following individuals accepting their nomination.
7. It will be mandatory for an individual seeking an officer's position to be present at their interview, in person or by phone or video conference. Each candidate will be required to bring their completed officers nomination application and a current resume with them or send in advance by email.
8. The nominations committee will have one week to debrief and reach a decision on suitable and qualified recommendations to bring forth to the Council during the full Council meeting in September.

9. During the September full Council meeting, the Council as a whole will vote on each viable candidate by paper ballot. Those participating by phone may email their vote.

- Officers shall be eligible to serve two (2) terms. No officer may serve more than two (2) full consecutive terms.
- The positions of Vice-Chair and Secretary will be elected in odd number years, and positions of Chair and Treasurer in even number years.
- MSILC shall be composed of four officers - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Below are sample job descriptions developed by ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization):
- The line of succession is Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

## Job Description-MSILC Chair

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES

1. Chair all meetings of the MSILC and/or MSILC Executive Committee.
2. Represent the MSILC in supervising MSILC staff; attend meetings and activities with individuals, other entities and groups; and speak publicly on the MSILC's behalf.
3. Lead planning efforts of the MSILC.
4. Sign the State Plan for Independent Living on behalf of the entire MSILC.
5. Oversee and coordinate the work of any and all MSILC-designated committees or work teams.
6. Facilitate the development of new independent living leaders within the state.

### AUTHORITY

The Chair of the MSILC has the authority to act or to execute any activity on behalf of the entire MSILC body if such authority is granted to him or her by state laws, the MSILC's Operations Manual or by any specific resolution of the MSILC.

### VALUES DESIRED

1. Commitment to the issue of "consumer control", meaning that people with disabilities should have control over their lives and decision-making.
2. Belief in principles of equal access and equal opportunity.
3. Commitment to full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.
4. Possession of honesty, integrity, and respect for the values of others.
5. Possession of strong personal code of ethics, including maintaining confidentiality, avoiding conflict of interest, and avoiding self-dealing.

### QUALIFICATIONS

1. Ability to lead.
2. Experience with independent living.

### TIME PER MONTH (excluding travel time)

8 hours-MSILC meetings  
4 hours-MSILC telephone calls  
4 hours miscellaneous MSILC business  
4 hours-reading and preparation for MSILC meetings

### **20 hours - Total**

The MSILC Chair will chair full Council meetings, unless the Vice Chair or another member of the Executive committee or another Council member is designated as Chair of the full Council meeting.

The meeting Chair will:

1. Manage the time of the agenda, and will maintain order, decorum, and the fair and equitable treatment of all speakers.
  2. Keep discussion and questions focused on specific agenda item under consideration.
  3. Make parliamentary rulings with advice, if requested, from the Executive Director who acts as an advisory parliamentarian. Chair rulings may be overturned if a Council member makes a motion as an individual and the majority of the Council votes to overrule the Chair
- Chair will conduct meetings according to Robert's Rules.

## **Job Description-MSILC Vice-Chair**

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES

1. Chair all meetings of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (MSILC) or MSILC Executive Committee in the absence of the chairperson.
2. Represent the MSILC at the direction of the MSILC in the absence of the Chairperson.
3. Assist chairperson in leading planning efforts of the MSILC.
4. Oversee and coordinate the work of any and all MSILC-designated committees and work teams delegated by the MSILC Chairperson.
5. Facilitate development of new independent living leaders within the state.

### AUTHORITY

The Vice-Chair of the MSILC has the authority to act or execute any activity on behalf of the entire MSILC body if such authority is granted to him or her by state laws, the MSILC's Operations Manual or by resolution of the MSILC.

### VALUES DESIRED

1. Commitment to the issue of "consumer control", meaning that people with disabilities should have control over their lives and decision-making.
2. Belief in principles of equal access and equal opportunity.
3. Commitment to integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.
4. Possession of honesty, integrity, and respect of the values of others.
6. Possession of strong personal code of ethics, including maintaining confidentiality, avoiding conflict of interest, and avoiding self-dealing.

### QUALIFICATIONS

1. Ability to lead.
2. Experience with independent living.

### TIME PER MONTH (excluding travel time)

- 8 hours-MSILC meetings
- 2 hours-MSILC telephone calls
- 2 hours miscellaneous MSILC business
- 2 hours-reading and preparation for MSILC meetings

**14 hours - Total**

## **Job Description-MSILC Secretary**

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES**

1. Recording of minutes of meetings of the Statewide Independent Living Council (MSILC) and MSILC Executive committee and IL Partners Minutes.
2. Represent the MSILC at the direction of the MSILC body as designated by the chair.
3. Assist the chair with planning efforts of the MSILC.
4. Facilitate the development of new independent living leaders within the state.

### **AUTHORITY**

The secretary has the authority to sign or attest to any document prepared for and approved by the entire MSILC body. In the absence of the secretary, the Chair will have that authority.

### **VALUES DESIRED**

1. Commitment to the issue of “consumer control”, meaning that people with disabilities should have control over their lives and decision-making.
2. Belief in principles of equal access and equal opportunity.
3. Commitment to full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.
4. Possession of honesty, integrity, and respect for the values of others.
5. Possession of strong personal code of ethics, including maintaining confidentiality, avoiding conflict of interest, and avoiding self-dealing.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Ability to take meeting minutes.
2. Experience with independent living.

### **TIME PER MONTH (excluding travel time)**

8 hours-MSILC meetings

2 hours-MSILC telephone calls

2 hours-reading and preparation for MSILC meetings

4 hours-preparation, editing, and distribution of meeting minutes.

**12 hours- Total**

## **Job Description: MSILC Treasurer**

### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES**

1. Chair of Finance Committee
2. Oversee fiscal management and reporting of funds distributed to and by the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (MSILC).
3. Report current fiscal status of MSILC at regularly scheduled or special meetings of the MSILC.
4. Work with designated state unit staff on budget development for the state plan of independent living.
5. Develop budget for MSILC resource plan.
6. Facilitate development of new independent living leaders within the state.

### **AUTHORITY**

The treasurer has the authority to develop a budget for the MSILC in conjunction with any MSILC staff. Such budget must be approved by the entire MSILC staff.

### **VALUES DESIRED**

1. Commitment to the issue of “consumer control”, meaning that people with disabilities should have control over their lives and decision-making.
2. Belief in principles of equal access and equal opportunity.
3. Commitment to full integration of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.
4. Possession of honesty, integrity, and respect for the values of others.
5. Possession of strong personal code of ethics, including maintaining confidentiality, avoiding conflict of interest, and avoiding self-dealing.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

1. Knowledge of budgets and finance.
2. Experience with independent living

### **TIME PER MONTH (excluding travel time)**

8 hours-MSILC meetings

4 hours-MSILC telephone calls

3 hours-reading and preparation for MSILC meetings

8 hours-preparation of treasurer’s report.

**16 hours - Total**

### **Committee Membership Process**

Committees are vital as they essentially do most of the required SILC tasks. Their activities advance the goals of the SILC. Most importantly, they typically develop and monitor the implementation of the SPIL. Committees greatly contribute to the overall functioning, efficiency, and productivity of the SILC. Encourage all council members to serve on a committee. This will help new members learn and ensure that everyone contributes. The Chair of the Council will meet with all members to help them make a conscious decision as to which committee(s) they would like to serve on; after reviewing their skills.

### **Committee Structure and Duties**

MSILC will be comprised of the following committees: Executive, Infrastructure, Public Engagement & Membership, Legislative, and Outcomes. Throughout the year the MSILC may develop new committees or work groups on an as needed basis.

### Committee Duties

1. Meetings must have two (2) members present when conducted.
2. Committee Chair nominations made to Council in the form of a [Nomination Letter](#).
3. Conduct an annual review of the Operations Manual, and other documents including Title VII.

### MSILC Committee Duties

Each Committee will:

1. Identify and invite others who could enhance the work of the committee.
2. Be comprised of at least three people.
3. Establish a regular schedule for meetings and conference calls.
4. Identify the resources, information and/ or training needs to accomplish the goals and objectives.
5. Establish ways to collect and record data, and document progress.
6. Report progress to the MSILC at full Council meetings.
7. Review and discuss committee structure and effectiveness annually.
8. Identify nominees and present to chairperson for appointment to the position of Committee chair.
9. Provide meeting minutes to the Executive Committee.

### Committee Chair Duties

1. Distribute meeting announcements consisting of a meeting agenda, call in information, and attached documents for review (as needed).
2. Conduct meetings
3. Document progress of committee meetings
4. Report committee progress minutes using designated form via email to the Executive Committee members prior to the monthly Executive Committee meetings.

## Executive Committee - Officers

**Purpose:** Provide leadership to the full Council  
**Duties:**

- Review and/or approve Council training requests up to \$1000,
- Monitor progress of Committees,
- Develop agendas for full Council meetings,
- Establish calendars, timelines, and priorities.
- Monitor and coordinate with all MSILC committees.
- Participate in the supervision of the Executive Director.
- Planning events such as annual retreat, CIL conference, and other events.

One or two Executive Committee members may be present at an ACL site review at the discretion of the Chair and CIL Executive Director. The Executive Director is, based on the current Memorandum of Understanding (MOA), to be supervised by the Executive Committee. The MSILC Chair and Vice Chair will provide written feedback to the Executive Director's supervisor by April 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup>- one month prior to the Executive Director's performance evaluation. The Chair and Vice Chair will use the SILC performance standards along with the position description and knowledge of the work performance. When there is a disagreement with the Executive Director, this situation should be brought to the attention of the MSILC chair in writing and the concerns will be addressed by the Chair and Vice Chair and others as deemed necessary

## Finance Sub-Committee

**Purpose:** To review the budget for the coming year and make a recommendation to the Council for budget approval. This is a subcommittee under the executive committee. The Treasurer will work with a team of three people, to review the budget for the coming year and make a recommendation to the Council for budget approval.

**Duties:**

- The members will include the Treasurer, Chair, and Executive Director.
- The Treasurer will seek input from the Executive Director and Committee Chairs for specific budget items. The Finance

Committee will work closely with the state fiscal agent for a final review.

### Infrastructure Committee

**Purpose:** To sustain operational management of the MSILC

**Duties:**

- Develop and review the Operations Manual.
- Coordinate election of officers.
- Monitor MSILC composition.
- Develop and communicate roles and responsibilities of all.
- Plan orientation of new members.

### Public Engagement

**Purpose:** To promote the Independent living philosophy by educating the public on the work of our statewide network of CILs and the MSILC.

**Duties:**

- Create and update MSILC website.
- Create and update MSILC brochure and outreach materials.
- Develop outreach strategies.
- Collaborate with Maryland IL Partners to create a unified statewide message on independent living
- Coordinate public forums as needed
- Propose statewide venues for outreach activities
- Follow-up with the MSILC with names and contact information for potential Council membership and MD CILs with names and contact information for potential consumers and their families.

### Membership Committee

**Purpose:** To recruit MSILC members. The committee will meet at least 4 times per year. Committee members will include the Chair of the Infrastructure Committee, a member of the Public Engagement Committee, Chair of the Council, and a CIL Representative.

- Membership recruitment: identify Council needs, recruit potential candidates on an ongoing basis, and interview potential Council members

- Recruit potential candidates in the areas identified by the Secretary and Executive Director, and the Public Engagement Committee.
- Contact the MD CILs for recommendations for potential candidates
- Review qualifications of candidates and hold interest meetings and interviews. Interest meetings will be held with individuals who are interested in serving on the Council. The Committee will also include a member of the Infrastructure Committee and the Executive Director when conducting the interest meetings and interviews.
- Committee will choose potential candidates and present their supporting documentation to the full Council, MSILC Chair and Executive Director before the close of business the next day.
- Committee will present potential candidate information at a full Council or special meeting in order to discuss and propose candidates. Time limited discussion will take place and a vote will be taken at that meeting. The list of recommended names will be forward to the Governor.
- Promote/Educate about MSILC and statewide network of CILs.

### Outcomes Committee

Purpose: To ensure consumer satisfaction through a measurable process. To collaborate with the IL Partners and the Executive Director to write the State Plan of Independent Living (SPIL). The SPIL describes how Maryland’s network of independent living programs and services will meet the independent living needs of people with disabilities in Maryland. The committee will, document progress on the SPIL objectives and coordinate different activities as described in the SPIL.

#### Duties:

- Collect relevant data.
- Develop standards.
- Identify means of measuring SPIL progress.
- Review annual PPR.
- Review and utilize consumer satisfaction surveys.
- Identify trends from data collected by CILs.
- Draft SPIL: The MSILC Executive Director will lead a collaboration between the Outcomes committee, the MSILC Chair and the CIL Directors to draft the SPIL Narrative and hold public hearings The Executive Director will write the SPIL Draft and the partners will work

with the Outcomes committee to make edits based on public hearings and other input from DORS and ACL.

- Conduct periodic needs assessment surveys.

#### MSILC Legislative Committee

Purpose: To educate IL Partners on the legislative process and related activities; To educate legislators on the work of the CILs and matters related to and impacting independent living; and, to facilitate partnerships between MSILC members and Centers with local government officials.

Duties:

- To work with CIL Directors and other stakeholders develop and update, and work with a policy platform which addresses the issues that impact Marylanders with disabilities.
- Organize and plan activities at the Legislative Assembly
- Collaborate with MSILC Executive Director
- Conduct training sessions on the legislative process and the details of pending legislation or hearings of interest
- Conduct necessary outreach to IL partners and consumers to provide information on legislative activities and encourage participation.
- Provide updates to MSILC and IL partners on the status of legislation affecting the community

## **Council Members-Behavior and Conduct**

- MSILC members who repeatedly do not follow proper conduct may be reprimanded or formally censured by the Council, lose committee assignments, or be asked to not attend a Council meeting.
- Council members will point out to the offending Council member infractions of the Code of Conduct. If the offenses continue, then the Executive Committee will take action for the infractions.
- In the event any MSILC member believes actions by another member to be detrimental to the Council and / or in violation of the Codes of Conduct, the Council should.
- Send an email to the Chair specifying the details of the event to include date, time, forum, names of other members in attendance, and a narrative. The narrative should provide a description of the event as well as the perceived violation that occurred. The email sent to the Chair specifying the details of the event must include in the address line at least one member that will separately concur with the contents of the email. This concurrence can be in the form of an email reply stating their agreement with the email contents.
- Upon a formal review and approval by the Executive Committee, consequences as determined by the Chair up to and including a formal recommendation to the Governor's office requesting removal from the Council may occur.

## **Principles of Proper Conduct**

Proper conduct means

- Keeping promises
- Being dependable
- Building a solid reputation
- Participating and being available
- Demonstrating patience
- Showing empathy
- Holding onto ethical principles under stress
- Listening attentively
- Studying thoroughly
- Keeping integrity intact
- Overcoming discouragement
- Going above and beyond, time and time again
- Modeling a professional manner

### **Proper conduct IS NOT**

- Showing antagonism or hostility
- Deliberately lying or misleading
- Speaking recklessly
- Spreading rumors
- Interrupting a fellow Council member or guest at a meeting
- Stirring up bad feelings, divisiveness
- Acting in a self-righteous manner

### ***It all comes down to respect!***

Respect for one another as individuals, respect for the validity of differing opinions, respect for the democratic process, respect for the community we serve and before all else, **respect for ourselves.**

### **Council Conduct with One Another**

The Maryland Statewide Council of Independent Living is composed of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, opinions, and goals. Despite this diversity, we have chosen to serve on the MSILC, and we all share the mission:

The mission of Maryland’s Independent Living programs and services is to maximize the independence and productivity of people with disabilities and promote meaningful integration into the community. All programs and services have at their core, the ideals of consumer control and the independent living philosophy. Through systems advocacy, the MSILC and its partners are creating a system of services based on the concept of consumer direction and choice. Consumer choice is provided when there is a range of service options to meet the diverse needs of consumers. Consumer control must go beyond the range of services and include opportunities for consumers to decide when and where the services will be provided, and how and by whom tasks will be performed. The MSILC, in its mission, will follow the principles of The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, in that it will promote programs that provide meaningful participation, independence, financial security and other safeguards. People with disabilities should have the opportunity to participate in their Maryland communities in ways that are equivalent to their peers.

In all cases, this common mission should be acknowledged and celebrated even as Council members may “agree to disagree” on contentious issues.

**Practice civility and decorum in discussions and debate:**

Difficult questions, tough challenges, to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of a true democracy in action. However, this does not allow Council members to interrupt or to make belligerent, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive or disparaging comments. No shouting or physical actions that could be construed as threatening will be tolerated. Such actions will be declared out of order by the Chair.

**Honor the role of Chair in maintaining order:**

It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the command of the Council members on track during meetings. Council members will honor efforts by the Chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is a disagreement about the agenda or the Chair’s

actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason, through a motion following procedures outlined in parliamentary procedure.

**Avoid personal comments that could offend other Council members:**

If a Council member is personally offended by the remarks of another Council member, the offended Council member should make notes of the actual words used and call for a “point of personal privilege” that challenges the other Council member to justify or apologize for the language used. The Chair will maintain control of this discussion.

**Demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches:**

Council members have a public stage to show how individuals with different points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the Council or the IL community as a whole.

**Give the appearance of active listening:**

It is disconcerting to speakers to have Council members not to look at them when they are speaking. It is fine to look down at documents or to make notes but reading for a long period of time or gazing around the room gives the appearance of disinterest. Be aware of facial expressions, especially those that could be interpreted as “smirking”, disbelief, anger, or boredom.

**Remember that the Disability Community is small:**

Council members are observed by the community. Their behaviors and comments serve as role models for proper behavior. Honesty and respect for the dignity of each individual should be reflected in every word and action taken by Council members, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, it is a serious and continuous responsibility.

**In private encounters:**

Continue respectful behavior in private. The same level of respect and consideration of differing points of view that is deemed appropriate for public discussions and Council meetings should be maintained in private discussions. Be aware of the insecurity of

written notes, voice mail messages, e-mail, and social media:

Technology allows words written or said without much forethought to be distributed far and wide. Would you feel comfortable to have such a message faxed to others? How would you feel if this voicemail message was played on a speaker phone in a full office? What would happen if this e-mail message was forwarded to others? Written notes, voicemail messages, e-mail, and social media should be treated as potentially “public” information.

## ***RULES OF ORDER***

The rules contained in the current edition of [Robert’s Rules of Order](#) Newly Revised shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with Federal or State Law or regulations, these, and any special rules of order the Council may adopt.

### ***MEETING***

1. The Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council will hold regular meetings at times and places determined by the Council as needed throughout the year. There will be a full Council meeting at least quarterly, and a schedule of meetings will be posted will be posted on the MSILC website.
2. Special or emergency meetings can be called by the Chairperson, or Vice Chair, in the Chairperson’s absence, and/or by a majority of the SILC’s voting members. Notification of Emergency Meetings shall be dependent on the nature of the emergency. Notification of all Council members must be made in good faith by any combination of methods necessary to reach each member. The effort to schedule the emergency meeting should be conducted in a manner which best suits and accommodates the prospective attendees in order to reach a decision, i.e., by phone, emails, mail, etc.
3. In accord with Section 3-303 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Open Meetings Act (State Government Article,

Annotated Code of Maryland); the presiding officer shall enforce the rules of the parliamentary authority regarding the conduct of individuals attending meetings.

4. “Executive Session” (Robert’s, page 81) shall be in compliance with

Section 3-305 of the General Provisions Article of the Maryland Open Meetings Act (State Government Article, Annotated Code of Maryland). A motion to go into “Executive Session” is only in order when it fully complies with Section 3-305 of the Maryland Open Meetings Act. It shall be the obligation of the maker of the motion to go into “Executive Session” to provide the presiding officer with the written statement required by section 3-305(d) of the Maryland Open Meetings Act. All other meetings shall be in open session in full compliance with section 3-301 of the Maryland Open Meetings Act.

### **Conduct at an HHS Site Review**

An executive committee member(s) may be present at a CIL site review at the discretion of the MSILC Chair, HHS and the CIL Director.

### **Council Conduct with Other Public Entities**

- Be clear about representing the MSILC or personal interests:
- If a Council member is representing the Council at a meeting with an agency or others outside the Council, the Council member must support and advocate the official MSILC position on an issue, not a personal viewpoint.
- If a Council member appears before another agency or group to give a statement on an issue, the Council member must clearly state if his or her statement reflects personal opinion or is the official stance of the MSILC:

whether this is the majority or minority opinion of the Council.

- If a Council member is representing another organization whose position is different from the MSILC, the Council member should withdraw from voting on the issue if it significantly impacts or is detrimental to the MSILC's interests. Council members should be clear about which organizations they represent.
- MSILC letterhead will be used only when the Council member is representing the MSILC.
- Council members may attend any Board or Committee meeting, which are always open to any member of the public. However, they must be sensitive to the way their participation could be viewed as unfairly affecting the process. Any public comments by a Council member at a Board or Committee or other public meeting should be made clearly as individual opinion and not a representation of the feelings of the MSILC.

### **Council Conduct with the Media**

- The best advice for dealing with the media is to never go “off the record:”
- If an individual Council member is contacted by the media, the Council member's response first must be cleared and approved by the Executive Committee if their comments represent the official MSILC position.
- Choose words carefully and cautiously. Comments taken out of context can cause problems. Be especially cautious about humor, sardonic asides, sarcasm, or word play. It is never appropriate to use personal slurs or swear words when talking to the media.

- All MSILC members are given several of the Executive Director's business cards. When/if approached for comment, politely tell the person asking that official MSILC comments must go through the Executive Director, and hand that person a business card.

***All written articles representing the viewpoints of the MSILC must be cleared through the Executive Committee before submitting.***

### **Public Hearing/Forum Protocol**

The MSILC Chair will determine how much time will be allowed for each speaker, with 3-5 minutes the standard time granted. The Chair has the responsibility to run an efficient Public Hearing and has the discretion to modify the Public Hearing process in order to make the meeting run smoothly.

Council members will not express opinions during the public hearing portion of the meeting except to ask pertinent questions of the speaker or others present. "I think" and "I feel" comments by Council members are not appropriate until after the close of the Public Hearing. Council members should refrain from arguing or debating with the public during a Public hearing and should always show respect for different points of view. The MSILC Secretary or the Executive Director will be responsible for recording public comment on the State Plan of Independent Living or Independent Living services in Maryland.

## **Requests for Training and Reimbursement**

### **Procedures for requesting the following:**

- Training.
- Transportation and accommodations for Council meetings.
- Transportation and accommodations for Council approved meetings.
- Reimbursement for Council approved meetings meals, transportation, personal assistants, and other Council approved accommodations.

Please Note:

- For meetings mandated by the Council, members are eligible for meal reimbursement up to the State of Maryland standard meal allowance.
  - Only SILC members who are not state employees are eligible for meal reimbursements. Reimbursements will not exceed state standard meal allowance.
  - Members will not be reimbursed without a receipt or a proof of purchase from the vendor.
  - Members will not be reimbursed for purchase of alcoholic beverages.
  - For training and conferences, only members officially representing the Maryland SILC and registered for the training/conference will be reimbursed for meals.
  - The current State of Maryland standard meal allowances are listed below:  
Standard Meal Allowance for FY 2021 (including tax and tip)
- Breakfast     \$13.00
  - Lunch           \$15.00
  - Dinner          \$28.00

For Washington, D.C. only (to include the NCIL Conference)

- Breakfast     \$13.00
- Lunch           \$14.00
- Dinner          \$23.00

1. The Executive Committee will develop a prioritized list of areas for training, based on the SPIL. This list will be presented, discussed, modified, and voted on by the full Council. Requests in other areas will be given secondary consideration.
2. MSILC members may request to attend MSILC related training programs and meetings. Council members may learn about these

training programs and meetings from the Executive Director or other sources. The following steps will be taken when requesting approval to attend training or meetings.

3. To attend a training/meeting via teleconference that is advertised by the Executive Director, members will respond by phone or e-mail as directed by the Executive Director. Members will be cognizant of deadlines as communicated.
4. Council members will submit the “Training Request Form” to attend a meeting or training. This form will address how the training will complement the work of the MSILC along with cost. These forms will be submitted at least a month in advance if possible. The request should demonstrate how the training/meeting will benefit the work of the MSILC. The “Training Request Form” is found in Appendix C of this manual.
5. Submit the [Training Request Form](#) to the Executive Director.
6. The Executive Director will submit the “Training Request Form” to the MSILC Officers. Requests up to \$1000 will be reviewed at the executive committee meeting, by phone or e-mail to determine if the requested training/meeting will benefit the work of the MSILC, and if there is enough money in the budget.
7. Requests over \$1000 shall be approved by the full Council.
8. Should the request be approved by the Executive Committee and /or the full Council, the approving body will determine the nature of feedback that is expected. The executive committee or the full Council will require feedback in the way of oral or written report or a training session based on the meeting that was attended.
9. Depending on time constraints, the reviews by the Officers or full Council may be conducted by phone, e-mail, or any means necessary. Every Council member will be given the opportunity to vote within a specified timeframe.

10. To request personal accommodation, personal assistants, or other accommodations for Council meetings, members shall contact the Executive Director one week in advance. If the Executive Director arranges for transportation to a Council meeting, it is not necessary to complete an expense account form.
11. Members who drive to meetings will complete the state expense account form to be reimbursed for mileage. The state reimbursement rate for mileage is currently \$0.58 per mile.
12. Requests for personal accommodations, personal assistants, or other accommodations for other meetings, Council members shall contact the Executive Director two weeks in advance. And the expense account form must be completed.
13. Once a request has been approved and the Council member attends the event, they must complete the [Expense Report](#), attach receipts, and submit the form to the Executive Director.
14. Receipts are needed for Metro or Metro Access.
15. Council members may hire their personal assistants at the approved state rate. Such accommodations shall be reimbursed by invoice from MSILC members and paid based on budgetary constraints.
16. Council members may request reimbursement for equipment that directly relates to the work of the MSILC. To request these items, Council members will complete a form and submit this form to the Executive Director. The request will then be submitted to the Executive committee. If there are adequate funds in the budget, and the item will be used for priority areas of the Council, the request shall be brought to the full Council via meeting, phone call or e-mail, and a vote shall be taken.
17. Receipts and expense accounts must be submitted within 60 days of the incurred expense. Receipts and expense accounts submitted after 60 days WILL not be reimbursed.

18. The MSILC may sponsor members of the Executive committee and the Executive Director to attend the SILC congress. The MSILC may also sponsor Council members to attend the Maryland Rehabilitation conference, and the NCIL conference.